ATTORNEY GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

1 GRANITE PLACE SOUTH
CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03301

JOHN M. FORMELLA
ATTORNEY GENERAL

JAMES T. BOFFETTI
DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

62

November 18, 2024

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu
and the Honorable Council
State House
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Your Excellency and Members of the Council:

REQUESTED ACTION

That approval be and hereby is given to the Attorney General to appoint Shawna Bentley to Position #9U375 (Appropriation #02-20-20-200510-2620-500132) as an Attorney at a salary level of $88,000, effective upon Governor and Executive Council approval or December 13, 2024, whichever is later.

EXPLANATION

Ms. Bentley, a Belmont resident, earned her Bachelor of Arts with majors in English Language and Literature and English Education, *summa cum laude*, from Southern New Hampshire University in 2013. Following graduation, she completed long-term substitute teaching placements at Concord High School—teaching Advanced Writing, Argumentative Writing, Media Literacy, American Literature, World Literature, and Fiction—and served as 21st Century Assistant Site Coordinator at Rundlett Middle School. She enrolled in University of New Hampshire Franklin Pierce School of Law in 2015 where she was Networking Director of the Women's Law Student Association, a Teacher's Assistant for Legal Research and Information Literacy, and a Daniel Webster Scholar. After graduating law school in 2018, she joined Wescott Law, PA, in Laconia, as an Associate; her practice included civil litigation, landlord/tenant law, family law, personal injury, and estate planning. In addition to her law practice, Ms. Bentley taught at University of New Hampshire Franklin Pierce School of Law as a Professor of Legal Research and Information Technology (2021 – 2022) and Professor of Legal Analysis, Writing, and Research (currently). She has been active in the community as Treasurer of the Belknap County Bar Association, Secretary of the Belknap Mill Board of Directors, Leadership Academy Director for Girls Incorporated of New Hampshire, and a United Way Volunteer. She has been admitted to practice law in New Hampshire since 2018. Considering Ms. Bentley's experience, I am requesting she be appointed as an Attorney at a salary of

$88,000. She will be assigned to the Civil Bureau's Civil Litigation Unit. A copy of her resume is attached.

RSA 21-M:3 and RSA 94:1-a, (I)(c) provide that designation of positions, salary levels, and salary increases for attorneys at the Department of Justice shall be determined by the Attorney General, subject to approval of the Governor and Council, within appropriations made to the Department of Justice.

I am very pleased to offer Ms. Bentley's appointment as an Attorney at the above-referenced salary for your approval and respectfully urge your favorable consideration. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

John M. Formella
Attorney General

#4764903

Shawna Bentley

Education

University of New Hampshire Franklin Pierce School of Law, Concord NH **J.D. 2018**

- Daniel Webster Scholar Honors Program
- GPA: 3.39
- Teacher's Assistant - Legal Research and Information Literacy (two semesters)
- Networking Director of the Women's Law Student Association

Southern New Hampshire University, Manchester NH **B.A. 2013**

- Double Major in English Language and Literature and English Education
- GPA: 3.8, *Summa Cum Laude, Pi Lambda Theta Education Honor Society*

Employment

Associate Attorney, Wescott Law, PA, Laconia NH **2018 – Present**

Lead Associate – Wescott Law **2021 – Present**

- Advocate for associations, municipalities, businesses, and individuals in various civil litigation matters
- Represent clients in a variety of jurisdictions, including New Hampshire District, Family, Probate, Superior, and Supreme Courts, the US District Court for the District of New Hampshire, and various Zoning Boards
- Develop own book of business, practicing primarily civil litigation, landlord/tenant law, family law, personal injury, and estate planning
- Develop appellate practice, handling appeals for various attorneys throughout firm
- Represent clients from initial consult to close of representation, serving as main point of contact for client throughout process
- Review and approve client invoices, monitor client accounts receivable and trust fund balances, address collection issues as needed
- Mentor various junior associates, meet regularly regarding cases, provide feedback and direction regarding client interactions and legal strategy, writing, and research
- Draft and proof marketing media, develop and implement marketing strategies in coordination with outside marketing consultant

Personnel Liaison to Directors – Wescott Law **2021 - Present**

- Onboard new attorneys, legal interns, and staff, process new-hire paperwork, coordinate IT setup, payroll, benefits
- Directly supervise receptionists, legal interns, and law clerks, coordinate and lead regular staff meetings
- Develop personnel policies, reference documents, employee handbook, and training curricula for various new hires
- Conduct staff performance reviews
- Recruit associate attorneys, law clerks, and staff

Associate Attorney – Wescott Law **November 2018 – 2021**

Law Clerk – Wescott Law **January 2018 – June 2018**

Professor of Legal Analysis, Writing, and Research **August 2024 - Present**
University of New Hampshire Franklin Pierce School of Law

- Teach first-year hybrid law students fundamentals of legal analysis, writing, and research
- Train students to effectively utilize various features of Lexis and Westlaw
- Discuss research strategies across various print and online sources
- Instruct students on strategies for effective legal writing, from grammar and structure to substance and analysis
- Develop and implement various lesson plans and formative assessments
- Work collaboratively with team of Legal Writing professors to support students and further curriculum
- Supervise and coordinate with teaching assistant to support student learning

Professor of Legal Research and Information Literacy **Fall 2021, Fall 2022**
University of New Hampshire Franklin Pierce School of Law

Judicial Intern (Hon. Edward M. Gordon) **August - December 2017**
Franklin Circuit Court – Family Division, Franklin, NH

Judicial Intern (Hon. James D. O'Neill, III) **May 2017- August 2017**
Belknap County Superior Court, Laconia, NH

Legal Intern **May 2016- October 2017**
National Education Association of New Hampshire, Concord NH

21st Century Assistant Site Coordinator **September 2014- June 2015**
Rundlett Middle School, Concord NH

- Worked closely with administration to enforce program behavior policies and routines
- Supervised and evaluated performance of club instructors on a daily basis

English Teacher (Various Long-Term Substitute Placements) **December 2013- June 2015**
Concord High School, Concord NH

- Taught Advanced Writing, Argumentative Writing, Media Literacy, American Literature, World Literature, and Fiction

Leadership Academy Director **June 2013- August 2015**
Girls Incorporated of New Hampshire, Manchester NH

- Designed and implemented curriculum to develop leadership skills in girls ages 10-16

Community Involvement
Treasurer – Belknap County Bar Association, Secretary – Belknap Mill Board of Directors, Volunteer – United Way

Interests and Hobbies
Working on home improvement projects, gardening, quilting, hiking, learning new skills