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Conference of Circuit Judges

MARYLAND JUDICIAL CENTER
187 HARRY S. TRUMAN PARKWAY
ANNAPOLIS, MD 21401

Meeting of the Conference of Circuit Judges

A meeting of the Conference of Circuit Judges was held Monday, May 22, 2023, via Zoom for Government, beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Members Present

Hon. Audrey J. S. Carrión, Chair
~~Hon. Fred S. Hecker, Vice Chair~~

Hon. James Bonifant
Hon. Donine Carrington-Martin
Hon. DaNeeka V. Cotton
Hon. Kathleen Duvall
Hon. Jeffrey Getty
Kristin Grossnickle
Hon. Ruth Jakubowski
~~Hon. Stephen Kehoe~~

Hon. Stacy Mayer
~~Hon. Dana Middleton~~
Hon. Vicki Pauler
Hon. Richard Sandy
Hon. S. James Sarbanes
Hon. Brenda Sexton
~~Hon. Brian Shockley~~
~~Hon. Richard Trunnell~~

Also, Present Were:

Melissa Canada
Nancy Faulkner
Matt Pipkin

1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes

Judge Audrey Carrión welcomed attendees and reminded everyone the meeting is livestreamed as the Conference is subject to the Open Meetings Act. She welcomed Judge Brenda Sexton who recently replaced Judge Keith Baynes following his stepping down as administrative judge. She asked for any additions or corrections of the minutes for March 27, 2023. Judge Donine Carrington-Martin moved for adoption of the minutes and, after hearing no objections, the minutes were unanimously approved.

2. Case Information Reports

Nancy Faulkner stated that a Case Information Report change request was recently received from Montgomery County involving the Advanced Science and Technology Adjudication

Resources (ASTAR) program. An internal inquiry revealed that the program has not been funded in several years and, therefore, the request was denied. Ms. Faulkner suggested that the Conference form a workgroup, supported by Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) staff, to review both the Civil and Domestic Case Information Reports for appropriate updates. The group would ideally consist of judges, clerks, and court administrators.

Following a request for interest in the workgroup Judge James Bonifant volunteered to take the lead. Judge S. James Sarbanes and Judge Carrión also nominated their Court Administrators, Melissa Lahey and Lionel Moore. Ms. Faulkner offered to send an email to all clerks and court administrators in the state to help recruit additional members. Judge Carrión asked how many forms need to be reviewed and Ms. Faulkner responded that there are two. Judge Carrión then asked that the matter be placed on the next agenda for an update.

3. Complex Litigation Subcommittee Nomination

Judge Carrión followed up on a request for recommendations for the Conference of Circuit Judge's Complex Litigation Subcommittee membership. Judge Robert J. Thompson, from the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County, was recently nominated by Judge Richard Trunnell. Judge Jeffrey Getty motioned to approve Judge Thompson and several members seconded. After hearing no objections, Judge Thompson was approved as a member of the Complex Litigation Subcommittee.

4. Administrative Order: Appointment of Juvenile Judges or Magistrates

Judge Carrión reminded everyone of the Administrative Order issued by Justice Fader in October 2022 that requires confirmation by the administrative judge that each new juvenile judge or magistrate successfully completed the required juvenile education. Each judge or magistrate newly appointed to hear juvenile matters must complete a 2-week in-house orientation with an experienced mentor and complete a foster care improvement program (i.e. CANDO conference). The confirmation from administrative judges can be sent to Justice Fader via letter.

5. Administrative Order: Body-Worn Cameras in Court

An Administrative Order recently issued by Judge Susan Hazlett in Harford County District Court addresses the use of body-worn cameras in the courtroom. The order makes a couple of exceptions for law enforcement with regards to the Rule that prohibits the use of electronic devices in court. There has been increasing concern with the public's misuse of recording devices, and Judge Carrión encouraged everyone to develop a protocol on how those situations are handled locally. Judge Cotton shared information on phone storage cases that have been successful in Prince George's County Circuit Court. When necessary, phones are placed in locked cases while members of the public are inside the courtroom and a bailiff or sheriff magnetically unlocks the case when they exit.

6. For the Good of the Order

Judge Ruth Jakubowski announced that this was her last meeting as she is set to retire on June 16, 2023. Judge Dennis Robinson will be her successor. Judge Carrión spoke on behalf of

the Conference and thanked Judge Jakubowski for her valuable input and guidance over the years.

Judge Fred Hecker reminded everyone that Title 21 governing remote electronic participation goes into effect on July 1, specifically Md. Rule 21-103, and encouraged everyone to review their DCM plans accordingly. The matter was added to the next meeting agenda for further discussion. Another matter added to the agenda will be clarification and guidance from Judge Stacy Mayer, Chair of the Legislative Committee, on the new Probation Before Judgement bill.

Having no further items to discuss, the meeting ended at 9:55 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled as a joint meeting with the District Court Administrative Judges on Monday, September 18, 2023, at the Maryland Judicial Center, beginning 9:30 a.m.

Having no further items to discuss, the meeting ended at 9:55 am. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 18, 2023, via Zoom for Government, beginning 9:30 a.m.