

# CONFERENCE OF CIRCUIT COURT ADMINISTRATORS MEETING

**Minutes**  
**March 28, 2017**

**Conference Members Present:**

Timothy Sheridan (Chair)  
Doug Hofstedt (Vice-Chair)  
Matthew Barrett  
Melissa Batie  
Sondra Battle  
Amy Craig  
Emanuel Demedis  
Missy Gallagher  
Pamela Harris  
Michael Howard  
Jennifer Keiser  
Joy Keller  
Susan Leary  
Judy Lohman  
Faye Matthews  
Lionel Moore  
Eunice Plank  
Judy Rupp  
Teri Scherer  
Sandy Smith  
Lori Tabor-Finch  
Bobbie Warnken  
Debbie Zrioka

**Administrative Office of the Courts:**

Lynne Wheeler

**Deputy Court Administrator Guests:**

Richard Abbott  
Nancy Faulkner  
Stephanie Medina  
Lisa Mohink  
Joanne Molloy  
Erica Payne-Santiago  
Melinda Sweeney

A meeting of the Conference of Circuit Court Administrators was held on March 28, 2017, at the Judiciary Education & Conference Center, beginning at 10:00 AM. Tim Sheridan began the meeting by welcoming everyone. He then called for approval of the minutes from the January 24, 2017 meeting. Jenn Keiser moved for their approval. The motion to approve was seconded by Matthew Barrett and passed.

## **DATA DASHBOARD – *Jamie Walter/Dominique Johnigan***

- Jamie gave a PowerPoint presentation and announced that the dashboard would most likely go live this afternoon. She explained that the Judiciary has a contract with Infojini, who created it.
- Next, Dominique walked everyone through the live site.
  - The first page reflects the total filings per year and the county map showing filings per county.
  - Statewide data by court type (Circuit or District) is also available, and can also be viewed based on jurisdiction sizes. The information can be viewed in either chart or data view format.
  - There are 3 options when viewing information: Activity, Data, and Comparison views
  - The data is already available to the public, but it will be more enjoyable and more easily accessible for them. In the interest of upholding the Judiciary’s goal to maintain transparency, this is a more user-friendly option that will contribute to that.
  - Improvements and additions can be made as needed along the way.
- Adding trending information is something that will be discussed at some point.

## **TELECOMMUNICATIONS PROJECT – *Pam Ortiz***

- Two handouts were disseminated, one being the “Phone Inventory” form, and the other being the “Contact Person for Telecommunications Project” form. Administrators were asked to fill out the forms and return them to Lonni Summers today, if possible.
- Pam then introduced the telecommunications project, which has the end goal of linking all phone access for the public.
  - Two of the questions to be answered are, “How could a call center be built that links two phone systems?”, and “What could allow transferring calls between systems (AOC and courts, etc.)?”
- Optivor, a short-term consultant, has been engaged to research and catalog the phone systems over the course of 4 months, then giving a pictures of what is operated and what the potential solutions might be for building a call center given what we have in place. The preference would be not to remove the phone systems in every location.
  - Optivor techs will be visiting all court locations, commissioner locations, etc. Once Pam has collected contact person information from all Administrators, they will be notified when the techs are coming. The techs will be badged for identification purposes, and will spend one to two hours in each location. They will need to be shown the location of the phone closet.
  - The phone inventory or a copy of the bill would help to gauge the size and complexity of each system, and if any lines are not being used. Anything beyond the inventory is speculative.
- This project might or might not be feasible now or in the future, but they are doing to research to find out.
- Lonni Summers is the primary contact person for the project.

## **SERVICENOW – *Susan Bowen/Carlton Nickels/Michelle Deal***

- Susan presented an overview of ServiceNow, the newly-introduced platform for IT service management to integrate business processes. She explained that it replaced the Magic tool.

- Self-service submission of requests/incidents can be done through [www.mdcourts.servicenow.com](http://www.mdcourts.servicenow.com). This eliminates the need for phone calls, allowing users to avoid a long wait on the telephone.
  - With the Attorney Information System (AIS) going live soon, there will be an increase in traffic. Email and self-service will be the best, most efficient modes for submitting tickets.
  - Carlton performed a walk-through of the site to demonstrate how to submit a ticket. This included showing everyone the pie chart that displays a user's ticket history and status, as well as the knowledge base where resolutions are posted that might answer your question.
- Next, a demonstration of incident management was given. The steps involved in an incident are:
  - Creation of the helpdesk ticket
  - Tracking of its status, including its assignment
  - Resolving the incident
    - All incidents sit in resolved status for 24 hours to provide employees with the opportunity to change it back to active status should it not be fixed. After 24 hours, it is automatically considered closed.
  - You may add people to the "Watch List" to give them access to track your incident's status, as well.
- Future Implementations:
  - Asset Management (FY2017) – Fixed assets & IT assets
    - May 22<sup>nd</sup> go-live date
  - Forms (beginning with security access forms FY2017)
    - The goal is to put all JIS forms in a repository in ServiceNow.
  - HR Onboarding/Off-boarding Workflow (Requirements in FY2017, implementation in FY2018)
    - They are looking to automate the process from start to finish. Obtaining the proper badge, furniture, equipment, etc. would all occur as the result of one process.
    - There is no date yet, but Jennifer Boswell is gathering requirements from the security group.

**ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE UPDATES – Michele McDonald**

- Michele listed the various people/agencies she represents, as an overview for the Conference and provided insight into several pertinent topics.
- **Circuit Court Employees**
  - She explained the employees of the Circuit Court serve at the pleasure of the Administrative Judge of that court, per policy. It is the judges' decision as to how the work is accomplished.
  - Counties are expected to pay for positions and provide benefits, but they are not the employing authority. How employees are hired and fired depends on your own policies.
  - Circuit Court employees are paid by the county, but are not technically county employees. State Circuit Courts are part of the state.
- **New Rule Change to 16-806 (Judicial Absences)**
  - The change has been approved and is effective as of April 1<sup>st</sup>

- **Policies**

- It is crucial to ensure that policies are documented in employee manuals. These policies include:
  - Harassment & Discrimination
  - ADA Claims
  - Anti-Nepotism
  - Religious Tolerance
- The best of the policies will be made into a prototype policy to be distributed.
- Michele advised against modifying the at-will relationship. When new employees are onboarded, they should sign the at-will acknowledgement form. Make sure these forms are placed in their personnel files.
  - She recommends holding on to this paperwork, as well as medical forms, until it becomes burdensome to do so.

- **Service Process**

- Any suits the Circuit Court receives should be sent to Michele (the Attorney General's office) immediately.

- **FMLA & Judges' Assistants**

- Federal forms are to be utilized, not the state ones.

### **DIRECTION OF THE JUDICIARY FOR 2017 – Pam Harris**

- Pam delivered a presentation, in which she covered the current “State of the Judiciary”. She reminded everyone of the Judiciary mission statement, as well as the goals of the Judiciary, and addressed several relevant topics.
- The main issues faced by the Judiciary are currently MDEC, budget, and legislation and rules.
  - **MDEC**
    - Pam presented the rollout schedule and groupings. She also explained what the MDEC Executive Steering Committee and Advisory Board do.
    - The proposed MDEC rule changes would be:
      - Redaction
      - Commissioners
      - Deficiencies
      - Ability to see records in all court kiosk locations
      - Appellate record changes (eliminates massive creation of a PDF file)
      - CaseSearch (Proposed Rule 16-911)
  - **Legislation & Rules**
    - Pretrial Release/Bail: There were 7 bills on this topic, including Senate Bill 983/House Bill 1215.
    - Expungement: House Bill 840 seeks to repeal the “unit” rule and require that individual charges be removed from CaseSearch. This would apply only to MDEC cases visible through CaseSearch, and would not take effect until 2021. It is not possible with the current iteration of CaseSearch.
    - Indigency Determinations: Senate Bill 714. The 24-hour requirement was dropped.
    - Paid Sick Leave: House Bill 1 could require additional expenditures to provide leave to those who do not currently receive paid sick leave and are covered by law.

- Guns/Disqualifying Crimes: House Bill 1424/Senate Bill 727 would require that a person convicted would be notified that they cannot possess certain firearms, and that proof of firearms transfer must be provided to DPSCS.
- Judicial Absences from Court: Rule 16-801 takes effect on April 1<sup>st</sup>. The policy has been promulgated by the Court of Appeals and sent to all administrative judges.
- Filings by Commissioners Proposed Rule 20-201(m): This authorizes pilot programs in which District Court commissioners would file pretrial release proceedings directly into Circuit Court cases.
- **Budget Concerns**
  - Judiciary General Fund Budget: The total FY18 General Fund request was \$505,179,782. The employees and contractual employees totaled 5,123. Unfortunately, the governor's budget did not include merit increases.
  - Grant Budget: The Judiciary is requesting an increase of \$1,767,893 for FY18.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

- Joint Conference
  - Doug asked if others were still interested in planning a Joint Conference. Everyone agreed that they were.
  - The second week in September would be optimal.
  - A request for funding will be submitted.
  - The potential for moving the conference to the Westin in Annapolis was discussed.
- The September CCCA meeting needs to be canceled due to schedule conflicts.

## **COMMITTEE UPDATES**

- ❖ **JUDICIAL COUNCIL – *Tim Sheridan***
  - Much of what Pam Harris presented today was also discussed by the Judicial Council.
- ❖ **CONFERENCE OF CIRCUIT JUDGES – *Tim Sheridan***
  - Certain costs in criminal matters cannot be waived. This is subject to whether or not the person could pay the fees over the next 12 years.
  - The mentoring program has been successful thus far.
  - Judges will be required to advise the defendant regarding surrendering firearms. There is a form for Circuit Court judges from the Forms Subcommittee.
- ❖ **CONFERENCE OF CIRCUIT COURT CLERKS – *Doug Hofstedt***
  - The Joint Conference was discussed. He will email the minutes next week.
- ❖ **COURT TECHNOLOGY – *Matthew Barrett***
  - Matt emailed the January minutes. The March minutes are not yet approved.
  - Jamie presented the Dashboard.
  - Recommendations concerning the email retention policy have not been presented yet, but will be in May.

- Papervision:
  - Video Conferencing Subcommittee – Baltimore County is close to getting their equipment. Language has been added to forms to include video bond review.
  - Video Interpreter Workgroup – Ksenia presented new polycom technology. A draft manual has been put together for short hearings with exotic languages.
  
- ❖ **COURT ACCESS – *Judy Lohman***
  - There has not been a meeting yet. It is scheduled for Monday.
  
- ❖ **SPECIALTY COURTS & DOCKETS – *Judy Rupp***
  - Judy needed to leave. No update provided.
  
- ❖ **ADR – *Tim Sheridan***
  - A meeting was held in February.
  - The MACRO meeting will be held on Thursday.
  
- ❖ **SENIOR JUDGES – *Sondra Battle***
  - They have not met since January.
  
- ❖ **JUDICIAL ASSISTANTS – *Teri Scherer***
  - The day of the meeting ended up being a snow day. They will meet again in a month.
  
- ❖ **COURT OPERATIONS – *Sandy Smith***
  - A meeting was held on March 6<sup>th</sup>.
  
- ❖ **JURY USE – *Sandy Smith***
  - The jury manual is underway, and a consensus was reached at the last meeting. It will be submitted to Court Operations in June, and then hopefully to the Judicial Council.
  
- ❖ **CASE MANAGEMENT – *Tim Sheridan and Jenn Keiser***
  - Nothing reported.
  
- ❖ **COURTHOUSE EQUITY – *Stephanie Medina***
  - A meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday. The minutes will be circulated afterward.
  
- ❖ **FORMS – *VACANT***
  - Doug has offered Nancy Faulkner’s services to sit on the subcommittee.
  
- ❖ **COURT REPORTING WORKGROUP – *Teri Scherer***
  - There has not been a meeting, so there is nothing to report.
  
- ❖ **GRANTS ADVISORY WORKGROUP – *Sondra Battle***
  - This workgroup no longer exists.
  
- ❖ **RECORDS RETENTION WORKGROUP – *Jenn Keiser***
  - Legal has reviewed the proposed policy and made comments. The workgroup would like it to be presented to Court Operations soon.

❖ **EDUCATION – *Judy Lohman***

- A meeting was held on March 21<sup>st</sup>. Orientation and mentoring are continuing. The goal is to get the magistrates into similar educational programs to those of the judges.
- They are also considering revamping the law clerk orientation.

❖ **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT – *Tim Sheridan***

- They were not able to meet due to the snow day.
- A Change Management course is being offered, which could benefit those employees who are entering the MDEC world.

❖ **TECHNOLOGY TRAINING – *Doug Hofstedt***

- Post-go-live transitional training is beginning. He will email the minutes.