

CONFERENCE OF CIRCUIT COURT ADMINISTRATORS MEETING

Minutes
September 12, 2017

Conference Members Present:

Timothy Sheridan (Chair)
Doug Hofstedt (Vice-Chair)
Matthew Barrett
Melissa Batie
Emanuel Demedis
Belinda Hershman
Jennifer Keiser
Joy Keller
Susan Leary
Judy Lohman
Judy Rupp
Marilyn Saulsbury
Teri Scherer
Sandy Smith
Lori Tabor-Finch

Administrative Office of the Courts:

Lynne Wheeler

Deputy Court Administrator Guests:

Nancy Faulkner
Stephanie Medina
Joanne Molloy
Debra Stemple

Others:

Jessica Kuhn (on behalf of Bobbie Warnken)

A meeting of the Conference of Circuit Court Administrators was held on September 12, 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 May 30, 2017 meeting. Joy Keller moved for their approval. The motion to approve was seconded by Matt Barrett and passed.

NEW DIRECTOR OF JUVENILE & FAMILY SERVICES – Stacy Reid-Swain

- Stacy has been with the Judiciary for two months now. Previously, she was Assistant Director at PG County DSS, and she was in the State's Attorney's office in DLLR before that.
- Since the restructuring of the department, staffing has not changed. Resources are simply being used differently.
- She is currently working with subcommittees and workgroups to see what is going on with policies.

- Human trafficking and guardianship related to elder care policies are being reviewed, and she is continuing to advance those two initiatives.
- Questions/Comments:
 - Tim Sheridan shared that the Family Services grant is the main reason for contact with Juvenile & Family Services. He would appreciate feedback about what to pursue in his grant, and asks for advance notice so they can plan.
 - Tim also asked if FCCIP is staying the same.
 - According to Stacy, their function will remain the same, but staffing is pulled together.

LAW CLERKS & THE MEDIA – *Terri Charles*

- Terri is leaving the Judiciary to work for the community college in Baltimore County, so she said goodbye and thank you. Administrators may use the main Communications line, x1488, to reach staff beginning Friday, 9/15. Immediate help will be available even though staff is low right now.
- All law clerks should know what Communications does and the services they provide to them. Court administrators should let them know that the team exists, so things are handled correctly and judges are not bombarded with questions.
- Communication is different now (Twitter, FB, etc.), so we have to be extra careful these days. The main point is for law clerks to know Communications is there to assist with PIA requests and questions, to serve as a line of defense.
- Terri handed out a cheat sheet for media interviews that can be used by law clerks, as well. It's good to have a point of contact for when these things occur.
- Reporters have many sources, both inside and outside any organization, so we must respond carefully, or sometimes not respond at all.
- This information can be mentioned in law clerk training.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS STUDY RESULTS – *Pam Ortiz/Lonni Summers*

- The study looked at a potential project conducted by Optivor, with the goal of creating a central point of contact for the public.
- One of the questions posed was, how connected are our phone systems? The study revealed that some courts cannot transfer calls internally, in their own building.
- The study also concluded that we are not in the position to run a Judiciary-wide phone system/call center right now.
- NEC, Cisco, and Avaya are the top current systems. If all courts were to convert to NEC, it would be easier to connect. If courts have the option of upgrading to a higher level of NEC, it is recommended that they do it. The Judiciary wants to move in the direction of NEC and encourages courts to take advantage of participating in the process.
- At Pam Harris's request, an RFP is being put out for the planning of a telecommunications system between courts.
- The intermediate goal is to build an integrated network between the Annapolis self-help center, the traffic processing center, ServiceNow, and JIS, for a central phone traffic system.
- We should be aware of what types of telecom centers exist, but we will not be creating a single VOIP system for Maryland.

- We are a patchwork system, but we have a responsibility to plan ahead. The first step in the process would be branding a single phone number.

SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS RESOURCES – Pam Ortiz

- In her PowerPoint presentation, Pam gave an overview of what Access to Justice does. She also reminded everyone that the Maryland Law Help App is available. The app features:
 - Civil Legal Services Delivery System
 - Four Levels of Inquiry
 - People’s Law Library
 - Maryland Court Legal Help Pages
 - Videos
- Self-Help Centers offer the following services to the public:
 - Monthly webinars
 - A Live Chat button, which can be added to court websites, along with the center’s phone number.
 - Extended hours for phone and chat, now available until 8:00 PM.
 - Four District Court walk-in self-help centers: Baltimore City, Glen Burnie, Upper Marlboro, and Salisbury
 - Tim Sheridan asked if there is any user satisfaction data. Lonni has feedback from chat users showing that 90% of users are happy, based on their comments. Capturing satisfaction data proves more of a challenge with phone calls. A comprehensive evaluation will be completed soon.
 - Forms & Form Finders – Circuit Court sites can link directly to this for easy access to forms.
 - Courts & Court-Based Services – This includes special needs, mediators, court, and language services.
 - Maryland Public Law Libraries
 - State Law Library
 - Gateway to Maryland Laws (free online) – on the app
 - Ask Us Now
- Joy Keller mentioned her concern regarding the difference between legal information and legal advice. Clerks sometimes do not provide the public with the form(s) needed because they are confusing the two and are afraid to give too much information, or inaccurate information.
 - Pam explained that the “What Can I Do to Help You?” materials are still available on the website. She also offered to provide staff to come and teach a course to staff. She also has posters and booklets that could be used.

ACCESS TO REMOTE ASL INTERPRETING – Pam Ortiz

- The use of telephone interpreting is expanding. It will not help with deaf or hard of hearing people, though, so computers are being made available at counters in clerks’ offices and in commissioners’ offices. It is recommended that laptops be brought to wherever the interaction will take place in the courthouse. The person will be able to immediately connect with an ASL interpreter certified by the state. The only person who needs to see the screen is the deaf or hard

of hearing person, as long as the interpreter can hear the clerk's voice. The laptop will need a camera, and it should be a dedicated laptop used solely for that purpose. JIS can come and put the Polycom application on the laptop, and Access to Justice can provide signage and instructions.

CASEFLOW REPORTING IN ODYSSEY – *Jamie Walter/Dominique Johnigan*

- This was more of a Q&A session, to allow for a better understanding of the system.
- The Caseflow Assessment is not in MDEC. It will still be in Caseflow Assessment application for now.
- All Quick Reference Guides have been updated on the MDEC website. They are located on CourtNet, under Circuit Courts. The codes being captured in Caseflow Assessment are listed in the Quick Reference Guides. Both the old codes for UCS counties and the new ones for MDEC counties will be available.
- There will be a dedicated staff member at Tyler Technologies handling specific work tickets for issues with MDEC, such as converted cases, and starts and stops. Time standards ECR's will be available to look at once the quality check is complete.
- Data will be available on Monday, October 2nd for case time standards. The quality check deadline is October 30th, and data will not be reviewed until November 30th.

Questions/Concerns:

- Will there be exceptions for MDEC Counties?
 - The West is exempt from the data quality check, but data still needs to be reviewed and put into the statewide report. If possible, it would be good to look at really long case times, but it is not required.
- Matt Barrett asked whether start and stop issues were only in converted cases.
 - According to Jamie, they are occurring in both converted and non-converted cases.
- Matt also shared that there is an excess of codes that are still available, and asked if there are any efforts being made to get everyone on the same page with clerks' offices using the same codes, or eliminating some of the codes.
 - Jamie explained that a code review will be occurring.
- Matt Barrett and Doug Hofstedt brought up the topic of jury usage/yield data.
 - The reports out of Jury Plus have not been great, according to Jamie. Efforts are being made with the vendor to find a way to double check the Jury Plus database to ensure the numbers are correct. Bradley Powers directly handles jury data issues.
- Judy Rupp asked if the only way to work with the report is to print it out and re-type it.
 - According to Jamie, yes, that is the only way.
- Tim asked if all circuit courts are using JSI Plus.
 - Everyone but Garrett County is using it.
- Doug expressed that he would like to expand who else can access the data/report.

JOINT COMMUNICATION & ACCESS SUBCOMMITTEE REP – *Tim Sheridan*

- Brad Powers has requested a representative. If interested, let Tim know.
 - Court Administrators would like more information. Tim will inquire.

OTHER BUSINESS

- COOP plans are due on 9/22. Court administrators would like guidance as far as what to include in their plans. Tim will invite Terri Vukovich to the next meeting in November to discuss.
- If coming to MAACM, Joy Keller asked that Maryland-themed items be donated to be placed in the Maryland basket.
- 2018 meeting schedule: 4th Tuesday of every other month
- The Joint Conference is in the works. Doug Hofstedt and Amy Craig hope to present ideas at next meeting.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

- ❖ **JUDICIAL COUNCIL – *Tim Sheridan***
 - Has not met yet.
- ❖ **CONFERENCE OF CIRCUIT JUDGES – *Tim Sheridan***
 - Has not met.
- ❖ **CONFERENCE OF CIRCUIT COURT CLERKS – *Doug Hofstedt***
 - Meets next week.
- ❖ **COURT TECHNOLOGY – *Matthew Barrett***
 - The last meeting was held in July. A presentation was given by JIS on data center updates/consolidation efforts.
 - Proposed records retention schedules were reviewed.
 - A review of the strategic checklist was done to monitor progress on initiatives. The addition of jury kiosks in Cecil and St. Mary’s counties has occurred, and security awareness contract of JIS and ServiceNow is in place.
 - JIS has contracted with a vendor to do vulnerability testing.
 - Video Conferencing Workgroup: Certain counties plan to stay as they are because they feel they are compatible with JIS.
- ❖ **COURT ACCESS – *Judy Lohman***
 - Met on 7/24. Next meeting is 10/16.
 - There are concerns with sheriff’s service fees. They are looking into it now.
 - Pam Ortiz presented about the Access to Justice Department.
- ❖ **SPECIALTY COURTS & DOCKETS – *Judy Rupp***
 - The Specialty Courts and Dockets Committee met on August 29th and invited B&T Judges from Montgomery County and Baltimore City to attend the meeting to discuss the MSBA B&T Case Management Program Task Force recommendations. Judge Wallace facilitated a discussion with three Task Force members, the B&T judges, and committee members to review the task force recommendations. Of particular note was the recommendation to centralize the B&T court function. The

Committee will draft a position for submission to the Conference of Circuit Court Judges and ultimately the Judicial Council.

❖ **ADR – *Tim Sheridan***

- He was not able to attend the last meeting.
- The 40-hour mediation course is happening this week for court employees.
- The subcommittee is working on a revision to the Code of Mediator Conduct Standards.

❖ **SENIOR JUDGES – *Sondra Battle***

- Sondra asked Tim to canvass for any questions for next meeting. She asks that fellow Court Administrators send her any questions and concerns.
 - Eunice feels it would be nice if they had a designated person to call with questions, and other issues with Payroll, IT, etc.
 - It would also be nice for Senior Judges to have access to do work at home, using a state-issued laptop.

❖ **JUDICIAL ASSISTANTS – *Teri Scherer***

- Teri was not present, but sent her notes to Tim.
- The course is not quite ready to be taught, but will probably be offered in the new year.

❖ **COURT OPERATIONS – *Sandy Smith***

- Sandy was not here to offer updates.

❖ **JURY USE – *Sandy Smith***

- They have not met for a while, but a meeting will be coming up next month.

❖ **CASE MANAGEMENT – *Tim Sheridan and Jenn Keiser***

- They have not met, and are still trying to figure out what the subcommittee will be doing.
- One idea is to look for best practices out of new case management plans.

❖ **COURTHOUSE EQUITY – *Stephanie Medina***

- Another meeting will be occurring on 9/19. Stephanie will forward minutes from the meeting once approved.
- There are no minutes from the 8/15 meeting yet.
- They would like to create a formula for applying funding across grants.

❖ **FORMS – *VACANT***

- Judge Stone is retiring, who runs the committee.

❖ **COURT REPORTING WORKGROUP – *Teri Scherer***

- The workgroup has not met.

❖ **RECORDS RETENTION WORKGROUP – *Jenn Keiser***

- The workgroup has not met.
- The draft new policy is being reviewed by other groups for eventual presentation to Judicial Council.
- Interpreters' invoices were discussed. Most people follow a 3-year maximum.

❖ **EDUCATION – *Judy Lohman***

- A conference call was held.
- CPC is taking enrollments now.
- The next meeting will take place on 9/19.
- The staff recognition banquet will occur on 10/26.

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

- The group has not met, but will be meeting next Wednesday to review journal entries from CPC students.

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

- A conference call was held on 7/27.
- If there is any additional training needed, they would ask that Court Administrators let them know.