



TEXAS JUDICIAL COUNCIL

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CHAIR:
HON. THOMAS R. PHILLIPS
Chief Justice, Supreme Court

DIRECTOR:
MS. ELIZABETH KILGO, J.D.

VICE CHAIR:
HON. SHARON KELLER
Presiding Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIAL DATA MANAGEMENT

MINUTES OF MEETING

June 10, 2002

2:00 p.m.

Conference Room, Office of Court Administration
205 W. 14th Street
Austin, Texas

COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING

Judge Parsons called the meeting of the Committee on Judicial Data Management (Committee) to order at 2:10 p.m. in the 6th floor conference room of the Office of Court Administration.

ATTENDANCE OF MEMBERS

The Director of the Council, Ms. Elizabeth Kilgo, called the roll. The following members of the Committee were present:

Mr. Joseph Callier, Attorney at Law, Houston
Ms. Delia Martinez Carian, Assistant Criminal District Attorney, San Antonio
Hon. Jim Parsons, Judge, 3rd Judicial District Court
Hon. Olen Underwood, Judge, 284th Judicial District Court
Ms. Bonnie Wolbrueck, District Clerk, Williamson County

With a quorum established, the Committee took the following action:

Judge Parsons requested an overview of the Judicial Data Management Project (JD Project) from Mr. Mike Griffith, Director of the Judicial Committee on Information Technology (JCIT). Mr. Griffith informed the Committee that the purpose of the JD Project is to replace the aging in-house database, which supports the Judicial Council's annual report. As part of the project JCIT is reviewing the prospect of receiving electronic case-level data through the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to supplement or replace the paper summary-level reports that the OCA currently gets from district and county courts. JCIT is also exploring the possibility of building an expanded system for civil case-level reporting to the OCA. Mr. Griffith explained the requirements of the proposal.

The Committee discussed the benefits and the costs of the proposal, including the financial impact to the counties. The members addressed the impact on the OCA and expressed concern as to whether the OCA would be able to properly protect sensitive or confidential information. The Committee addressed the consistency of the data collection whereby only those courts reporting electronically could report case-level data, while the majority of the courts would be producing summary-level paper reports. The Committee also discussed JCIT's current summary-level web-based reporting system for justice of the peace and municipal courts, and JCIT's plans to expand the option to the district and county courts.

The members discussed the need to make the current system more accurate and efficient. The Members also discussed the concept of a civil case cover sheet that would require each attorney who files a case to complete a form that identifies certain data about the case for reporting purposes. The Committee likewise addressed the need for simpler, clearer definitions of the data elements reported to the OCA.

Upon proper motion, the Committee adopted the following recommendations: (1) JCIT should continue to pursue a summary-level web-based reporting option for civil and criminal cases in the district and county courts; (2) the OCA should maintain a summary-level data collection process that is independent of DPS's process; (3) the OCA should ask DPS whether or not DPS could provide summary-level data needed by the OCA; and (4) a Subcommittee of clerks and other interested persons should be established to review the current data elements collected by the OCA. The Subcommittee should revise the elements to be collected and provide clear definitions for those elements. The Subcommittee should draft a proposed civil cover sheet that would provide the OCA with more accurate data.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Subcommittee should report back to the Committee or the Council as appropriate.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:00 p.m.

Judge Jim Parsons
Chair