

Supreme Court of Nevada
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

KATHERINE STOCKS
Director and State Court
Administrator



JOHN MCCORMICK
Assistant Court Administrator

Judicial Council of the State of Nevada

August 18, 2023

2:00 p.m.

Summary prepared by: Seth Easley

Members Present

Chief Justice Lidia Stiglich, Chair
Judge Steven Dobrescu
Judge Shirle Eiting
Chief Judge Michael Gibbons
Judge Kelley Giordani
Steven Grierson
Judge Eileen Herrington
Alicia Lerud
Judge Mike Montero
Judge Randall Soderquist
Judge Gloria Sturman
Judge Dawn Throne
Judge Ryan Toone
Chief Judge Jerry Wiese

AOC Staff

David Gordon
Stephanie Gouveia
Jamie Gradick
Almeda Harper
Shyle Irigoin
Brandi Jinkerson
John McCormick
Sheldon Steele

Absent

Associate Chief Justice Elissa Cadish, Vice Chair
Chief Judge Kevin Higgins
Judge Joanna Kishner
Judge Victor Miller
Judge John Schlegelmilch
Judge Gus Sullivan

Absent Excused

Chief Judge Lynne Simons
Katherine Stocks

- I. Call to Order
 - Chief Justice Stiglich called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.
 - Ms. Harper called roll; a quorum was present.
- II. Review and Approval of Previous Meeting Summary
 - The meeting summary from May 12, 2023, was unanimously approved.
- III. Business and Action Items
 - Specialty Court Funding & Policy Guidelines Handbook Update*
 - Ms. Gouveia updated the Council on the changes made to the Specialty Court Funding Guidelines and Criteria Handbook. She explained that there were three updates with the consolidation of funding and now a single application process.
 - Funding caps were doubled to ensure funding would be consistent with previous years.
 - The reference to NRS 176.059 was removed from the handbook, as it is no longer pertinent with the passage of SB448.
 - The handbook was updated to reflect a new accounting policy regarding unspent funding and carry-forward balances.
 - The Council was asked to approve the changes made to the Specialty Court Funding Guidelines and Criteria Handbook.
 - Judge Montero made a motion to approve; Judge Dobrescu seconded the motion. The updates were approved unanimously.
 - Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Review the 2019 NCJFCJ Family Court Study

- Mr. McCormick informed the council of an assessment of Nevada’s family courts completed by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) in 2019, which included recommendations.
- Mr. McCormick explained that the intent is to create an Ad Hoc subcommittee to review and prioritize the report’s recommendations, conduct a survey of judicial officers and court staff on their current business process needs, and develop/implement a plan to improve the delivery of family court services in Nevada.
- The Ad Hoc Subcommittee would have the ability to establish workgroups. Membership will be appointed by the Chief Justice as provided in the bylaws and will receive support from the AOC and the National Center for State Courts (NCSC).
- The initial iteration will be comprised of judges and administrators who deal with family law cases with the goal of having a report produced for the full council, advising on how to approach the recommendations in the NCJFCJ assessment. The subcommittee’s work will accompany the Family Court Triage tool we are creating.
 - Judge Throne expressed concern over the assessment being completed in 2019 and asked if the data may be out of date.
 - Mr. McCormick acknowledged the concern and believed there is an intent to conduct another survey of judicial officers and court administrators on the matter. He added that a benefit of creating the subcommittee is that it could re-examine the report to determine if it is still informative and if another course of action would need to be considered.
- Ms. Lerud asked if the Ad Hoc Subcommittee would be considering the possibility of resources being dispersed statewide in the context of family court services rather than in the urban areas exclusively.
 - Mr. McCormick stated that the intent is to include rural jurisdictions. He added that he believes a holistic approach is important.
- Chief Justice Stiglich asked if a membership list has been created.
 - Mr. McCormick will forward the list to the Chair.
- Chief Judge Wiese expressed concern over a potential conflict the Eighth Judicial District Court may have as they have positioned themselves to pursue new legislation using the NCJFCJ assessment.
- Judicial Perspectives on Civility
 - Judge Toone provided the council with an overview of the judicial perspectives on civility, stating that the Nevada State Bar has highlighted the need for improvement in this area and recently adopted a creed of professionalism and civility.
 - He added that his intention in recommending this as an agenda item is that it may lead to additional discussion with judges.
 - He shared that it may be tempting to get frustrated when attorneys and litigants become uncivil but has found in studying the issue, there are things one can do to better model civility.
 - He referred the council to the materials attached to the agenda to help better understand and anticipate stressors that lead to incivility. He recommended the council take this topic and materials back to their regions for discussion and training.
 - Chief Justice Stiglich thanked Judge Toone and acclaimed the materials on page 24 as being a good addition to a bench book.
- First Amendment Auditors
 - Chief Judge Wiese reported that the individual who prompted the discussion around First Amendment Auditors in the 8th Jurisdiction is in custody for another matter and is no longer causing issues.
 - He added that they prepared an Administrative Order that addresses First Amendment rights and recording in a courthouse. The order has been implemented in Clark County and signs have been posted in the building.
 - Judge Sturman shared a company called “Yondr” that is popular with performers. The company provides guests with cases that remain locked during an event, preventing them from accessing

the phone until the conclusion of the event when the case would be unlocked. She presented this as an option for courts dealing with First Amendment Auditors. Please contact her directly for additional information.

- Ms. Lerud informed the council that the Second Judicial District has a similar system in place for use during specific trials, such as when there are safety concerns for witnesses and jurors. She was confident the system is from Yondr. Please contact her directly for additional information.
- Chief Judge Wiese pointed out that this solution may be better tailored for specific trials as opposed to use throughout the whole courthouse.

IV. Standing Committee Reports

- Court Administration Committee
 - Mr. McCormick reported that the committee welcomed new court administrators. The Committee has been discussing ADA issues and accommodations. They are working on a draft ADA “cheat sheet” that is being vetted through the committee.
- Court Improvement Program
 - Mr. McCormick reported that [AB148](#) passed without the language change on the term “master” to “magistrate.” Going forward they would like to find a word that meets everyone’s needs and remove the term “master” from statute.
 - The program is embarking on the Judicial Court and Attorney Measures of Performance data project.
 - The program is continuing to work on spreading the message regarding the Juvenile Dependency Mediation program.
 - They are increasing the amount of collaboration work they are conducting with Nevada tribes.
 - The Community Improvement Council summit will be held in September.
 - The Judicial Roundtable will be held on September 27th. The full summit will be held on September 28th and 29th at the Atlantis in Reno.
- Specialty Court Funding Committee
 - Ms. Gouveia reported that the committee reviewed and approved their final budget allocations for the fiscal year 2024. Specialty Court Funding payments have been dispersed. Please contact Ms. Gouveia directly if payment has not been received.
 - The committee hosted its first Nevada Treatment Court Workers Social Hour. At this event, all people involved in specialty courts in Nevada were invited to network and interact. They hope to continue this event in the years to come.
 - She reported that the National Association of Drug Court Professionals will be known as “All Rise” moving forward.
 - The Las Vegas Justice Court began a new mental health specialty court, presided over by Judge Nadia Wood who assisted with [AB405](#) in providing statutory authority for limited jurisdiction courts to establish a mental health court.
 - The committee completed a full peer review process in the Sixth and Seventh Judicial Districts and are working on setting up the next round of peer reviews.
 - The Nevada Specialty Courts Conference will be held from October 16th to 18th, 2024 in Reno.
 - Chief Justice Stiglich asked if there are changes in enrollment numbers in specialty courts and if there are still those who hesitate to refer people to specialty courts.
 - Ms. Gouveia replied that there has been a sharp decline in participants but buy-in among judges is improving. She offered to share a full peer review report during the next JCSN meeting which will be useful in encouraging buy-in from those who are not familiar with specialty courts.

V. Report of Regional Council Meetings

- Clark Regional Judicial Council

- Chief Judge Weise stated the Council discussed First Amendment Auditor policies, legislative updates, and AOC updates.
- He informed the council that their Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program is quickly growing and that they will be using CASA funds to broadcast a commercial during the Super Bowl this year which is expected to reach a million residents of Clark County. They are hoping to recruit more CASA volunteers.
- North Central Judicial Council
 - Judge Soderquist stated that they also discussed First Amendment Auditors. He thanked Chief Judge Wiese for the Administrative Order. They are tailoring it for use in the Fourth Judicial District.
- South Central Regional Judicial Council
 - Judge Dobrescu reported that the meeting primarily focused on updates. Please refer to the meeting materials for more information.
- Washoe Regional Judicial Council
 - Ms. Lerud reported that they did not hold a meeting but took the opportunity to notify the council that Washoe County Courts have seen an increase in activity in criminal cases. She added that the Reno Justice Court changed some of their scheduling orders to move cases faster.
 - Chief Justice Stiglich asked if there was an increase in cases, trials, or both.
 - Ms. Lerud stated that they are researching what the cause may be. She acknowledged that some cases have been languishing over the last few years but stated that she believes many of them are the result of new filings. She added there is speculation that people are being encouraged to invoke their right to a speedy trial and may not be as likely to enter negotiations.
 - Chief Justice Stiglich stated that they are also seeing an increase in filings but that she is not certain what the driving factor is, or if these numbers will be the new standard.

VI. Other Items/Discussion

- Mr. McCormick to provide an overview of the AOC's current projects.
 - Legislative funding was granted to build a training facility in the Carson City Law Library which will increase the AOCs ability to deliver in-person and distance education.
 - The state-wide e-filing system, state-wide jury management system, and self-help portal are still in the works.
 - The Civil Traffic CMS is still being worked on as well as a new CMS option for courts.
 - Additional positions awarded during the Legislative Session will be utilized in the Audit Unit allowing them to update their auditing cycle. Additional positions were also added to the Judicial Education department to address the gap in front-line staff training.
- Mr. Grierson shared with the members that Tomilynn Clark will be running for Mrs. Nevada in the upcoming Mrs. America pageant. She is a CASA volunteer and will be promoting the program during her campaign.

VII. Future Meetings

- November 3, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

VIII. Adjournment

- There being no further discussion or public comment, the meeting was adjourned at 2:44 p.m.