



TEXAS JUDICIAL COUNCIL

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CHAIR:

HON. NATHAN L. HECHT
Chief Justice, Supreme Court

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

David Slayton

VICE CHAIR:

HON. SHARON KELLER
Presiding Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals

TEXAS JUDICIAL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

**February 1, 2019
10:00 AM**

**Tom C. Clark Building
(1st Floor Conference Room)
205 W. 14th Street
Austin, Texas**

COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING

On February 1, 2019, Chief Justice Nathan L. Hecht called the meeting¹ of the [Texas Judicial Council](#) ("Council") to order at approximately 10:00 a.m. in the 1st floor conference room of the Tom C. Clark Building in Austin, Texas.

The following members of the Council were present:

*Hon. Nathan L. Hecht, Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Texas
Mr. Carlos Z. Amaral, Deloitte Consulting, LLP, Dallas
Hon. Bill Boyce, Former Justice, 14th Court of Appeals, Houston
Hon. Bill Gravell, Jr., County Judge, Williamson County
Hon. Jeff Leach, Representative, Allen
Hon. Kelly Moore, Judge, 121st Judicial District, Terry & Yoakum
Hon. Valencia Nash, Justice of the Peace Pct. 1, Place 2, Dallas County
Mr. Kenneth S. Saks, Oliva Saks Garcia & Curiel, LLP, San Antonio
Hon. Edward J. Spillane, III, Presiding Judge, City of College Station
Hon. Vivian Torres, Retired Senior Judge, Hondo
Hon. Judith Zaffirini, Senator, Laredo*

Members attending by phone were Presiding Judge Sharon Keller, Chief Justice Sherry Radack, Representative Andrew Murr, Judge Gary Bellair, and Ms. Ashley Johnson.

¹ The meeting may be viewed on the State Bar of Texas website <http://www.texasbarcle.com/CLE/TSCSearch2.asp>

Members not in attendance were Senator Brandon Creighton, Judge Scott Jenkins, Judge Polly Spencer (Ret.), Ms. Allyson Ho, and Mr. Evan Young.

MINUTES

After two minor corrections, the [September 14, 2018](#), meeting minutes were approved by acclamation.

REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS

[Texas Indigent Defense Commission](#)

Edwin Colfax, Grant Program Manager, Texas Indigent Defense Commission, gave the [report](#) for the Commission.

Report of the FY 18 Statistical Information for the Texas Courts

Angela Garcia, Judicial Information Manager, Office of Court Administration, presented highlights from the [FY 18 Annual Statistical Report for the Texas Judiciary](#).

Legislative Update

David Slayton reviewed the status of Council [proposals](#). He also reported on other filed bills that were not Judicial Council proposals: SB 39 and SB 346 by Zaffirini, both regarding court costs and filing fee structure; SB 387 by Huffman regarding the judicial pay structure; and SB 560 by Kolkhorst regarding reporting of attorney appointment plans for CPS cases. Also, regarding judicial pay, Mr. Slayton advised that the House had recommended a 10% across-the-board pay increase for the state-paid judges.

Both the Senate and House budgets included funding for the Guardianship Compliance Project and restoration of General Revenue funding for Basic Civil Legal Services. The House included funding for nine new child protection courts. Both the Senate and House budgets cut technology funding by \$5.5 million. He added that OCA had requested two additional court security officers to assist Hector Gomez, Court Security Director; and additional staff attorneys to assist the trial and appellate courts.

Report on Guardianship Reform Implementation

Mr. Slayton reported on the success of prior sessions' guardianship reforms and provided highlights from the recently issued report on [Texas Guardianship Reform](#).

NEW BUSINESS

Chief Justice Hecht recognized and presented Judge Victor Villarreal a certificate in honor of outstanding judicial oversight in guardianship cases. Senator Zaffirini added that, in 2015, the Guardianship Compliance Pilot Project found 90% of the Webb County Court at Law #2 guardianship cases to be noncompliant before Judge Villarreal took office. Through the diligent work of Judge Villarreal and his team's efforts, guardianship cases in Webb County Court at Law #2 are now 100% in compliance.

Scott Griffith, Research & Court Services Division Director at OCA, provided a status update for the seven jurisdictions participating in the Centers for Excellence project. Mr. Slayton expects one or two jurisdictions ready for certification by the next Council meeting.

Lastly, Chief Justice Hecht announced Mr. Griffith's departure to accept a position at the Vermont Office of the State Court Administrator.

NEXT MEETING

Chief Justice Hecht noted that the next meeting of the Council will be June 28, 2019.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:55 a.m.

Nathan L. Hecht
Chair

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