



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

MINUTES OF MEETING

April 9, 2021

10:00 AM

Via Zoom Due to COVID-19 Pandemic
Public Livestream at

<https://www.youtube.com/c/TexasCourts/videos>

COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING

On April 9, 2021, Chief Justice Nathan L. Hecht called the meeting¹ of the [Texas Judicial Council](#) ("Council") to order at approximately 10:00 a.m.

Chief Justice Hecht introduced the new members of the Council, Justice Ken Wise, Judge Missy Medary and Judge Claudia Laird.

The following members of the Council were present:

Hon. Nathan L. Hecht, Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Texas

Hon. Sharon Keller, Presiding Judge, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals

Mr. Jon Gimble, District Clerk, McLennan County, Waco

Hon. Bill Gravell Jr., Constitutional County Judge, Williamson County

Hon. Jeff Leach, State Representative, Allen

Hon. Missy Medary, Judge, 347th District Court, Corpus Christi; Presiding Judge – Fifth Region

Hon. Emily Miskel, Judge, 470th District Court, McKinney

Hon. Valencia Nash, Justice of the Peace Pct. 1, Place 2, Dallas County

Hon. Kathleen Person, Judge, City of Temple Municipal Court, Temple

Ms. Rachel Racz, Vista Proppants & Logistics, Fort Worth

Hon. Sherry Radack, Chief Justice, 1st Court of Appeals, Houston

Mr. Kenneth S. Saks, Oliva Saks Garcia & Curiel, LLP, San Antonio

Hon. Maggie Sawyer, Justice of the Peace, McCulloch County, Brady

Hon. Edward J. Spillane, III, Presiding Judge, City of College Station

Hon. Ken Wise, Justice, 14th Court of Appeals, Houston

Mr. Evan Young, Baker Botts, Austin

Hon. Judith Zaffirini, State Senator, Laredo

¹ The meeting may be viewed on the Office of Court Administration YouTube site at <https://www.youtube.com/user/TexasCourtAdmin/>.

Members not in attendance were Mr. Kevin Bryant, Ms. Sonia Clayton, Senator Brandon Creighton, Judge Claudia Laird, Representative Jeff Leach, and Representative Reggie Smith.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The [September 24, 2020](#), meeting minutes were approved as presented.

REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS

Texas Indigent Defense Commission Report

Mr. Geoff Burkhart, Executive Director, Texas Indigent Defense Commission, presented the [TIDC Report](#).

Presentation on Remote Proceedings During the Pandemic

Judge Antonia Arteaga, 57th District Court, Bexar County, Judge Emily Miskel, 470th District Court, Collin County, Judge Karen Crump, 250th District Court, Travis County, and Judge Roy Ferguson, 394th District Court, Brewster County, presented on their experience with remote proceedings and virtual jury trials during the pandemic: specifically noting how remote proceedings have worked for every type of case and every type of proceeding; how it has improved participation in terms of parties and how parties are able to participate; how virtual jury trials have worked in terms of jury participation and how attorneys, judges, litigants feel about them; and how courts can and should use them going forward.

Report of the FY20 Statistical Information for the Texas Courts

Ms. Angela Garcia, Chief Data Officer, Office of Court Administration, presented on the current statistical data for Texas courts in the 2020 Fiscal year showing significant decreases in case filings related to the pandemic.

Presentation on the Protective Order Registry and Citation by Publication Database

Ms. Kim Piechowiak and Mr. Brandon Bellows, Assistant General Counsel, Office of Court Administration, jointly presented on the Protective Order Registry and Citation by Publication Database.

Update on eFiling Contract Renewal and Uniform Case Management System Procurement

Mr. Casey Kennedy, Director of Information Services, Office of Court Administration gave a brief updated to the Council on the renewal of the eFiling contract and the uniform case management system.

Legislative Update

Ms. Megan LaVoie, Director of Public Affairs and Special Counsel, Office of Court Administration gave an update on the 87th Legislative Session.

NEW BUSINESS

Justice Valencia Nash inquired if there would be more guidance coming for Justice Courts on evictions.

Mr. Jon Gimble asked a question regarding space and social distancing on in-person proceedings. Mr. Slayton mentioned guidance would be forthcoming.

Next Meeting – TBD

Adjourn – 12:02 pm



Nathan L. Hecht
Chair