

JUDICIAL COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
MEETING MINUTES

11:00AM – 1:00PM – August 28, 2018

Office of Court Administration – 1st Floor Conference Room

I. Call to Order

Justice Simmons called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m.

JCIT Voting Members:

Chair, Justice Rebecca Simmons

Vice-Chair, Bob Wessels

David Escamilla

Honorable Woody Gossum (*phone*)

Honorable Dan Hinde

Roland Johnson (*phone*)

Honorable Brian Quinn (*phone*)

Todd Smith

Dennis Van Metre

Honorable John Warren

Honorable Sheri Woodfin

JCIT Liaison Members:

Honorable Jeffrey Boyd

Miles Brissette (*phone*)

Randy Chapman

Honorable Judy Crawford

Honorable Annie Elliott

Honorable Roy Ferguson (*phone*)

Laura Garcia

Doug Gowin (*phone*)

Honorable Blake Hawthorne

Honorable Laura Hinojosa

Tracy Hopper

Gary Hutton

Honorable Velva Price

Sian Schilhab

David Slayton

Michelle Spencer (*phone*)

Mark Unger (*phone*)

Honorable Kevin Yeary

Others in attendance:

Honorable Tom Gray, Chief Justice, Tenth Court of Appeals

Charlotte Brooks, Office of Attorney General

Bobby Gutierrez, Travis County
Adam Henderson, Tyler Technologies
Elaine Hosage, Travis County
Joyce Hudman, Brazoria County
Laurelea Lindquist, Tyler Technologies
Jame Pantel, Travis County
Manuel Perez, iDocket
David Robinson, Tyler Technologies
Lisa Rush, Tarrant County
Steve Schenk, ProDoc
Deborah Woltershorf, Office of Attorney General

Office of Court Administration Staff:

Casey Kennedy, Director, Information Services
Mena Ramon, General Counsel
Amanda Stites, Project Manager, Information Services

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The minutes for the May meeting were tabled until the next meeting. **Motion** to approve the June minutes as presented by. **Motion by John Warren, second by Bob Wessels – no opposition.**
Motion carries.

III. Committee/Workgroup Reports

A. eFile Texas Civil/Criminal Update

Laurelea from Tyler Technologies reported another successful criminal eFiling mandate happened on July 1st and that they are on track for no issues with the January 1st mandate.

The committee discussed the various reports awaiting release including the time to process report and the return for correction report. The time to process report would provide an indication to the clerks and filers the length of time between document receipt and acceptance/return. The return for correction report summary would allow JCIT and the clerks to review the return for correction for a particular jurisdiction to target additional training and outreach. A detail report for each clerk will show the various return for correction reasons used as well as the firms in their jurisdiction that receive items returned for correction. Tyler will work with Casey to get sample reports out to JCIT prior to the next meeting as well as establishing a mechanism for clerks to receive these reports.

The group recommends working on a plan to release these reports to the clerks ahead of time, then to the public later. Mr. Hawthorne also discussed the continuing need for a real-time clerk report to show who in the office is working on what filing.

Laurelea also introduced David Robinson to the group. David will be taking over as the Tyler representative for eFiling.

B. re:SearchTX Update

Adam from Tyler Technologies gave an update on re:SearchTX. He reported that a new landing page has been moved to production. Adam then shared the development roadmap for continuing improvements to re:SearchTX.

The issue of the attorney of record on a case not being the actual attorney working the case was raised by the group. Ms. Woodfin indicated that the clerks usually enter the attorney signing the document as the attorney of record. Justice Simmons suggested revisiting the definition of “attorney of record” to include firm users and that it would become a larger problem in the event that criminal is eventually added to re:SearchTX. Justice Simmons asked Carlos Soltero and John Warren to use the re:SearchTX subcommittee to review and revise the language as appropriate, keeping in mind Rule 8, and the needs of governmental agencies.

Ms. Woodfin also indicated the need for other clerks to leverage the eService email address list provided by OCA.

IV. Discussion on items to be restricted from attorneys that are not on the case

Before the meeting, the group was circulated a list of statutes and known rules that would restrict cases from attorneys that are not on the case. Justice Simmons reviewed the list of known restrictions based on the group’s research on the topic. Justice Simmons also asked everyone to suggest additions or modifications to the list as they see them.

Ms. Woodfin talked about the issue of local rules needed to be added. Sian Schilhab alerted the group to the fact that the Court of Criminal Appeals and the Supreme Court have been inundated with local rule revisions and that both courts are in the process of reviewing them. She also mentioned that the process may take time because they’re seeing conflicts between local rules and TRCP/Rules of Criminal Procedure. Justice Simmons asked the group to let Casey know if any local, Supreme Court approved rules prohibit case types to publication online.

V. Discussion on the possibility of mandating that orders at the trial-court level be eFiled through eFileTexas

Judge Hinde spoke to the need of not supplanting existing systems that store orders electronically today. Casey assured the group that the APIs in place for re:SearchTX can continue to be used in order to get the document information to re:SearchTX, but leverage the existing case management system in place in the county.

Ms. Woodfin then raised the issue of needing additional staff or additional judicial training. This is due to some judges not be willing to perform their duties electronically. Ms. Crawford relayed similar issues in proposed orders taking up to two weeks to process the electronic route.

The group also talked about the need to make sure that the infrastructure in the counties can handle the traffic as well.

Mr. Slayton recommended to the group that a subcommittee be established to look at what solutions would be available to facilitate the entry of orders into re:SearchTX. Ms. Woodfin, Ms. Crawford, Justice Quinn volunteered to be on the subcommittee. Justice Simmons indicated that additional attorney stakeholders would be appointed.

VI. Discussion on the possibility of mandating Juvenile cases be eFiled through eFileTexas.

The committee talked about the fact that Juvenile was originally slated on **Motion** to begin a process to recommend rule changes needed to facilitate the electronic filing of Juvenile cases. **Motion by Bob Wessels, seconded by Brian Quinn – no opposition. Motion carries**

Justice Simmons recommended setting up a subcommittee of juvenile law experts to get started.

VII. Open Discussion

Judge Hinde raised the issue of more frequent outages with eFiling and that it must stop. Laurelea from Tyler responded with the details of the outages. Tyler has resolved several issues, but also did talk about the need to continue working with Chase to have mitigation plans in place for payment engine outages.

Justice Boyd let the group know that while their terms expire in a few days, that the court has reappointed everyone for an additional year. He also expressed the court's appreciation for all the work that JCIT has done.

Justice Simmons adjourned the meeting at 1:25 p.m.