

Minutes
Conference Call, October 26, 2005, 8:00
Board of Judicial Policy and Administration

The Board of Judicial Policy and Administration met by conference call on October 26, 2005. Chief Justice William Hill, Justice Michael Golden, Justice Marilyn Kite, Judge John Perry, Judge John Brooks, Judge Mike Huber, and Judge Bob Skar attended. Holly Hansen, Joann Stockdale, Jim Bivona and Ronda Munger also attended. Laramie County District Court Clerk Gerrie Bishop and several Laramie County employees participated at the beginning of the call.

Chief Justice Hill opened the Board call by reading a letter from Judge Kautz, which requested the Board's favorable recommendation for a permanently assigned vehicle. Chief Justice Hill and John Brooks both spoke in favor of approval, and Joann Stockdale, Court Services Officer, endorsed the request as well. Joann reported that if the Board approved the request it would be a cost savings to the state of approximately \$4,000. Justice Golden moved and Judge Skar seconded a motion to approve Judge Kautz request for a permanently assigned vehicle. The motion passed unanimously.

The second item the Board addressed during the call was a grant request from Laramie County. Gerrie Bishop, Laramie County District Court Clerk, and the Laramie County Commissioners applied for a technology assistance grant through the Judicial Technology Task Force (JTTF). The Board first addressed this grant request during the September 8, 2005 Board meeting in Casper, when Jim Bivona made a presentation to the Board outlining the Laramie County request for money to provide document imaging and file tracking for document sharing. Jim reported that the JTTF recommended approval of the Laramie County request. Holly Hansen asked Gerrie to comment on Laramie County's position as far as converting from the FACTS case management system to the FullCourt system. Gerrie expressed her surprise in being asked to consider converting from the FACTS system. She explained that Laramie County has been through several conversions and is not likely to agree to another one. Gerrie explained the history of the seven FACTS courts believing they were selecting a system endorsed by the Supreme Court, but that the Court withdrew from purchasing the FACTS system at the last hour. Gerrie also expressed concern that converting to the FullCourt system would set them back a couple of years of progress, and that she was not willingly going to go down that path. Gerrie reiterated Laramie County's request for the grant funds to purchase the scanning and document imaging system. Chief Justice Hill thanked Gerrie and her staff for participating in the call and asked them to disconnect.

Jim Bivona reaffirmed the Supreme Court's commitment to the FullCourt system. He believes, barring any unforeseen problems, that the partnership with JSI will continue for at least the next ten years. He said his plan is to move forward, bearing in mind that there will in all likelihood not be one uniform system across the state. In light of this information, the Board discussed the prudence of providing Laramie County will \$114,000 to support a system that is not the same as the current statewide system. Holly recommended the Board approve the Laramie County request. Judge Perry moved and

Justice Golden seconded a motion to approve the grant request. After further discussion, the Board, in a 3 to 4 vote, defeated the motion and did not approve the grant request. Justice Golden asked Holly to draft a memo for the Board outlining the purpose of the fund.

The final issue for discussion during the Board's conference call was the Clerk's Weighted Workload Assessment (CWWLA) authored by Dr. Karen Gottlieb. Holly explained that the CWWLA was commissioned because the Joint Appropriations Committee wanted substantive proof that the requests for additional clerks in the circuit courts were truly justified and not based on local operating practices. Holly explained that the Court Services Office would be applying a five part test with regard to this staffing issue: 1) The minimum number of clerical positions necessary to operate a circuit court will be predicated on the number supported by the weighted workload assessment; 2) Every effort will be made to manage the need for clerical positions within the circuit court system. We will only submit budget requests to the Legislature for additional clerks in the circuit courts, if a substantiated need cannot be addressed internally; 3) Vacant positions will no longer be automatically refilled. The circuit courts will need to contact the Court Services Officer or the Court Administrator with respect to vacancies. However, the workload model will be updated twice a year and that information will be provided to the circuit courts, so the courts will know in advance where they stand with respect to staffing patterns; 4) Attrition will be used to bring the courts with excess resources to a level that can be supported by the weighted workload study. When a circuit court with a surplus of clerks experiences a termination, the position will not be refilled until that court's workload can justify it. However, no circuit court will lose a position unless the circuit court has an excess of at least one and a half full-time positions; and 5) When a vacancy occurs in a court with excess resources, the vacant position may be transferred to a court that has a need for additional resources.

Board Adjourned 9:00 a.m.