

Minutes
Conference Call, November 17, 2003, Noon
Board of Judicial Policy and Administration

The Board of Judicial Policy and Administration met by conference call on November 17, 2003. Chief Justice William Hill, Justice Marilyn Kite, Justice Bart Voigt, Judge Ed Grant, Judge John Perry, Judge Jim Burke, Judge Mike Huber, Judge Terry Tharp, and Judge Wade Waldrip attended. Justice Larry Lehman, Holly Hansen, and Ronda Munger also attended.

Natrona County Bond Defeat. The Board discussed the defeat of the Natrona County Bond, which would have provided additional court facilities in Casper. Several theories on the reason for the defeat were discussed. Judge Huber reported that another citizens committee would be appointed to study the problem. In the meantime, the Casper courts have started to schedule court appearances in the Agricultural Building.

Legislative Committee Report. Justice Lehman made a report to the Board regarding the status of the proposed changes to the Judicial Retirement plan. Currently, the new Judicial Retirement plan reduces the amount of payout at retirement by an actuarial amount if the retiree does not meet the time requirements for full retirement. The actuarial reduction is based on the number of judges enrolled in the plan and projected retirement dates. Justice Lehman reported that he and the Supreme Court administrative staff are scheduled to have a meeting to discuss the issue with the State Retirement System staff on Friday, November 21, 2003. When the new retirement plan was implemented it was thought that the phrase "actuarially reduced" meant proportionally reduced, but that is not the case. Justice Lehman will report back to the Board and will recommend a plan of action.

Office of Children's Representative. Judge Nena James' letter of October 28, 2003 was discussed by the Board. Judge James expressed some concern over the proposed creation of an Office of the Children's Representative. After discussing the content of Judge James' letter, the Board agreed that it would be necessary to get a consensus of the district bench before the Board takes a position on the proposed office. Holly Hansen will contact Judge Tom Sullins in an attempt to ascertain the will of the district bench. The issue will be raised again at the Board's December 4, 2003, meeting.

Board Adjourned 12:47 p.m.