

**Utah Judicial Council's Standing Committee on
Resources for Self-Represented Parties Meeting Minutes**

Matheson Courthouse
Large Conference Room A
May 3, 2019
12:30 PM – 2 PM

Members	In attendance	Excused	Via phone conference
Judge Suchada Bazzelle	X		
Sue Crismon	X		
Monica Fjeldsted	X		
Leslie Francis	X		
Nicole Gray		X	
Susan Griffith		X	
Carl Hernandez			X
Judge Catherine Hoskins	X		
Jacob Kent	X		
Judge Barry Lawrence - Chair	X		
Shawn Newell		X	
Nathanael Player	X		
Judge Brook Sessions		X	
Charles Stormont	X		
Peter Strand		X	
Virginia Sudbury		X	
Judge Doug Thomas		X	
Janet Thorpe	X		
Jessica Van Buren	X		
Guests	In attendance	Excused	Via phone conference
Heidi Anderson	X		
Jymn Edwards	X		
Ryan Steffensen	X		
Amy Hernandez (ex officio)	X		
Nick Stiles (ex officio)	X		
Kara Mann (ex officio)		X	
Amy Sorenson (ex officio)		X	
Staff	In attendance	Excused	Via phone conference
Nancy Sylvester	X		

(1) Welcome and approval of minutes

Judge Lawrence welcomed the committee members and guests to the meeting and asked for a motion on the minutes. A motion was made and seconded and the minutes were approved.

(2) Exploring the possibility of a remote access pilot program

Heidi Anderson, IT Director, and her staff demonstrated how Zoom would work for a remote access pilot program. The technology allows participants to have private conversations (client-attorney) and also participate with the court. It also allows the sharing of documents. The set up that was demonstrated is a 2nd District media cart that costs about \$20,000. . The 2nd District media cart was purchased for remote witnesses, video conferencing, etc. The committee discussed that a pilot program could start with pro se domestic calendars. Judge Hoskins said Commissioner Conklin doesn't have enough attorneys for her pro se calendar, so perhaps that could be a pilot site. It noted that with any pilot, an important consideration is protecting the record and fit with the judge (someone who is willing to try this) and the courtroom itself. The quickest fit will be a room that is already video conferenced. Ogden District Court has a video conferenced room. Commissioner Morgan has a pro se calendar in Farmington and the media cart is going there (but this would have to be cleared with leadership). IT can set up a trial run with the help of the Self-Help Center and Law Library. Judge Lawrence is going to find out which judge is the most enthusiastic about this. Janet Thorpe (St. George Justice Court) mentioned that ODR is doing really well and that may obviate the need for this technology in debt collection cases. Ms. Anderson will send Judge Lawrence a list of the courtrooms that are best suited for a pilot.

(3) Update on FAQ videos, website proposal

Judge Lawrence explained the proposal from the Supreme Court to create FAQ videos and redesign the website. The consensus of the working group formed to address the request was that if there are resources to be used for those projects, they should go to the Self-Help Center, which wasn't funded last year. The group was concerned about the impact on IT and others; there are already many projects going on. Adding FAQ videos to ODR is a smaller task, but that request needs to be clarified. The committee discussed that resources would also be better spent on getting courtroom video conferencing up and running so that people can have representation. Heidi said that if the website were to be redesigned, it would have to go through the RFP process and the courts would hire someone that is involved in the user experience (UX). That's not the skill set of people already working in IT and it would take people away from the more important projects they are working on.

(4) Update from the Access to Justice Commission

Nick Stiles said he got funding to hire another attorney for his office. Nick will focus more on policy.

(5) Update on Rule 55 Form

Judge Lawrence, Charles Stormont, and Nancy Sylvester met with debt collection lawyers regarding a proposed Rule 55-complaint form for purposes of a uniform process.

The form proposed wasn't what the debt collection lawyers liked. There will be more conversations about the form. The debt collection lawyers' perspective that all the judges do things differently is compelling and the bench would like something uniform, too.

(6) Draft Resolution Regarding Open Access to the Courts

Judge Lawrence introduced the draft resolution he'd like to see the Judicial Council adopt. At the justice court conference last week, this topic was discussed and judges said they ask litigants to take off their coats, for example, for safety reasons. The safety concerns may be taken care of by the draft decorum paragraph. The committee discussed updating the memo to include those who aren't litigants yet (those with business in the courthouse). Judge Hoskins asked that a safety provision be added to the decorum paragraph. Judge Bazzelle asked about adding language regarding impartiality, and freedom from bias and undue influence, or necessary to further the appearance of the administration of justice. Judge Lawrence will rework the language.

Mr. Stormont moved to approve requesting the Judicial Council to issue a resolution on open access to the courts. Judge Hoskins seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

This will go to the Management Committee of the Judicial Council first.

(7) Subcommittee updates

a. Education:

Judge Lawrence mentioned that he will be talking at the district courts conference next week. Judge Lawrence asked what the committee would like to have him discuss at the district court conference. He mentioned cell phones and child care. Jacob Kent mentioned that he has seen answers affirmatively denying (but done on notebook paper) being rejected by judges. Janet Thorpe mentioned that an FAQ on arraignment (1 minute video) would be super helpful. She says a lot of defendants look like deer in the headlights. They don't know when they get to tell their story. Jessica Van Buren mentioned that there is a new rights of defendants video, but it needs to be redone in one section based on legislation that passed this year. Judge Hoskins raised service vs. other animals as another possible topic. Ms. Sylvester mentioned that the General Counsel office has guidance on that.

b. Outreach:

Shawn Newell and Elizabeth Bevington have gone to NAACP, some local council meetings, and others. They are trying to educate the community leaders on how to access court resources. Sue Crismon said if anyone has other ideas on people to reach, please let her know. Ms. Van Buren has booked Living Traditions and a few others over the summer for outreach.

c. Rural Services:

Timpanogos Legal Clinic has quite a few new clinics around the state. The rainbow law clinic also has started using skype (University of Utah) to access people needing help in rural areas.

d. Self-Help Center/Non-lawyer Assistance/Court Updates Subcommittee

The Self-Help Center did not get funded at the Legislature but it is going to ask for one-time money from the Judicial Council. Rule 5 of the Rules of Civil Procedure has changed as of May 1 to allow service by email (after initial filing). The Forms Committee is working on LPP's being able to use OCAP. This will go to the Council in June. A workshop on process is now happening before pro se clinics (landlord/tenant) in Matheson.

(8) Adjourn:

With no additional items to report, the meeting adjourned at 1:47 pm. The next meeting will be held on June 28, 2019.