

Board of Judicial Policy and Administration
Minutes
July 20, 2012

The Board of Judicial Policy and Administration held a phone meeting on July 20, 2012. In attendance were Chief Justice Marilyn Kite, Justice Michael Golden, Justice Jim Burke, Judge Dan Price, Judge Jeffrey Donnell, Judge Tom Campbell, Judge Michael Deegan, Judge Peter Arnold, Judge Robert Castor, Judge Curt Haws, Carol Thompson, Joann Odendahl, and Ronda Munger. Chief Justice Kite explained to the Board that the purpose of the meeting was to develop a proposal to implement the required 4% cuts to the judiciary's budget, and that a written summary of the judiciary's proposal is due to the Joint Judiciary Committee within a week.

Joann Odendahl reviewed the proposed reductions to the 2013-2014 Biennium Budget. She pointed out that for the Supreme Court and circuit courts, a 4% budget cut would mean a total reduction of \$1.1 million dollars. In the district courts the reduction would be in the range of \$25,000 per court, depending on the individual court. Joann advised that in the Supreme Court's budget, the following areas are being considered for reductions: the law library collection, printing costs, and administrative costs. In the circuit courts, measures such as closing satellite courts, cutting vacant positions, and phasing out full-time magistrate positions are being investigated. Each district court judge is reviewing their court's budget. Joann explained that the only area that the judges have any wiggle room is in their transcript fees, and that the courts have prepared proposals with regard to transcript costs.

Satellite Courts

Joann reviewed the various costs of maintaining each satellite court and the proximity of each to its county seat. Lengthy discussion was held on this matter. Justice Golden moved and Judge Donnell seconded a motion to close the Powell, Dubois, and Lovell Satellite Courts. Motion carried 7 to 1.

Full-time Magistrates

Chief Justice Kite advised the Board that the Circuit Court Conference made a recommendation to phase out the full-time magistrate positions. Joann pointed out that this would not have an immediate effect on the budget, but that cost savings would be realized over time. Discussion was held on this issue and on the necessity of statute revisions to allow for the Supreme Court to determine whether a vacancy in a full-time magistrate position would be filled by a full-time magistrate or by a part-time magistrate. Justice Golden moved and Judge Donnell seconded a motion to accept the recommendation of the Circuit Court Conference to phase out the current full-time magistrate positions over time, as determined by the Supreme Court. Motion carried unanimously.

Court Reporters/Transcripts

Joann reviewed the District Courts' budgets with the Board. Lengthy discussion was held about the matter of transcript fees. Judge Castor moved and Judge Campbell seconded a motion that cost-saving measures on this matter be discussed with the Joint Judiciary

Committee, with possible legislative changes needing to be made to implement such measures. Motion carried 7 to 1.

Meeting was adjourned.

Approved by email on 12/19/2012

The Board of Judicial Policy and Administration's meetings are not open to the public unless the Board, in its discretion, determines that a particular meeting or agenda item should be open to the public. The Board will disclose what is discussed at the meetings at its discretion.