

Wyoming District Judges Conference

Business Meeting

December 13, 2024

The Winter 2024 meeting of the District Judges Conference was held on December 13, 2024, at the Thyra Thomsen Building in Casper, Wyoming. The meeting occurred in person and via the TEAMS platform. Present in person at the meeting were Judges Catherine Wilking, Josh Eames, Misha Westby, Dawnessa Snyder, Jason Conder, Suzannah Robinson, Joe Bluemel, Catherine Rogers, Dan Forgey, Scott Peasley, Peter Froelicher, Kerri Johnson, Darci Phillips, Kate McKay, Ben Kirvin, James Kaste, Micheal McGrady, Stu Healy, Steve Sharpe. Melissa Owens, Matthew Castano, and James Causey were present at the meeting via TEAMS. Absent were Judges Richard Lavery, Robin Cooley, Ed Buchanan, Bobbi Overfield, and Bill Simpson.

Chairman Bluemel called the meeting to order at 9:25 a.m.

Old Business

1. The minutes of the September 11, 2024, business meeting were presented and reviewed. Judge Phillips moved to accept the minutes as presented, and Judge Eames seconded the motion. The conference approved the minutes. The treasurer's report was presented. Judge Sharpe moved to approve the report, and Judge Westby seconded the motion. The conference approved the treasurer's report.
2. Chief Justice Fox provided a branch update.
3. The Action Planning Session Report was recently disseminated, and the conference will continue discussing the action planning objectives at the next meeting.
4. The AOC Administrator will refer inquiries specific to our conference to the conference chair.
5. Committee Updates:
 - a. WJC Report – WJC will meet on Monday
 - i. Focus Groups – As part of strategic planning, focus groups are getting ready to start. Judge Snyder will send out the questions that will be posed at the focus group sessions.
 - ii. Court Navigator – The judges are not aware of what cases are being filed utilizing court navigators; however, the forms committee is working to add a check box to domestic forms to gather more information.
 - iii. National Conferences – Cybersecurity Workshop. Judge Eames gave an update from the conference, and Judge McKay was asked about the Sublette County security breach.
 - b. WJC Legislative Relations Committee – Judge Condor gave a general update. Everyone is encouraged to meet with local legislators.
 - c. Legislative Liaison Committee – Judge Peasley gave a general update. The goal is to have a District Judge at all JJC meetings, and we may need judges at Joint Appropriations.
 - d. Court Reporter & Technology Committee and access to court report transcripts— fee payment. The committee discussed how to ensure court reporters are paid for

transcripts when they may be posted to electronic mediums and inconsistencies in the rules and statutes.

- e. HR Committee – Most of the committee work involved dividing up the Circuit Court clerk positions and cleaning up work for the employee handbook.
- f. Education Committee – Judge McKay discussed the committee exploring a mentoring program and whether it should be organized internally or by AOC. The suggestion of improving judicial orientation, including training from retired judges, was discussed. One recommendation is for judges to have two weeks before taking the bench shadowing other judges.
- g. Website – Judge McKay requested feedback on the new website design

New Business

- 1. Commission on Judicial Conduct & Ethics – Judge Forgey was asked to serve a second term
 - a. Judge Kaste moved, and Judge Kirvin seconded and passed.
- 2. E-Filing - FSX Discussion
 - a. Judges Eames will set up training for judges and ask his judicial assistant to present training for other JAs
- 3. Committee Assignments – Judge Bluemel explained we have high committee involvement and participation
- 4. Judge Bluemel is addressing limited entry of appearance with FSX and withdrawals of attorneys as it applies to FSX
- 5. Sharon Wilkinson requested that we update our bench books. The Bar is looking at a new format for the online bench books. Some judges shared concerns about the size of the bench book and the ability to provide all the requested information.

Good of the Order

Members present then addressed the Good of the Order

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned to meet with Senator Washut.

Submitted this 13th day of December 2024.



Dawnessa Snyder
Secretary/Treasurer