

District Court of Appeal Budget Commission

September 10, 2006

Ponte Vedra, Florida

(9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.)

Meeting Minutes

DCABC Members Present:

Judge Charles Kahn, Jr., Chair

Judge Matthew Stevenson, Vice Chair

Judge Carolyn Fulmer

Judge Gerald Cope, Jr.

Judge Robert Pleus, Jr.

Judge Edwin Browning, Jr.

Judge Stevan Northcutt

Judge David Gersten

Judge George Shahood

Judge William Palmer

Others Present:

Judge Chris Altenbernd

Marshal Don Brannon

Marshal Velma Johnson

Marshal Glen Rubin

Marshal Ty Berdeaux

Al Sadowski

Mary Siegel

Lisa Goodner

OSCA Staff

Absent:

Marshal Dottie Munro

Judge Charles Kahn called the District Court of Appeal Budget Commission (DCABC) meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Judge Kahn asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the August 21, 2006, meeting. Judge Kahn requested deleting the following sentence within the law clerk compensation plan: “The Commission also agreed to use a different allocation methodology for the law clerk compensation plan that was recommended by MAG.” Judge Cope requested the clerk and marshal equalization policy be amended to read: “Judge Cope moved (a) to approve the raises for the marshals & clerks to the same levels now in effect at the First DCA, (b) to request that the proposed policy language be added to the Chief Justice Budget and Pay Administration Memorandum, and (c) to have the DCA Budget Commission reconsider the pay for the clerks and marshals annually, after each legislative session.” The motion to adopt the minutes with the proposed changes was made by Judge Browning and seconded by Judge Cope. The motion was approved without objection.

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Discussion of FY 2007-08 Legislative Budget Request

Judge Kahn opened the floor for discussion of the final legislative budget issues for FY 2007-08. Judge Cope requested a modification to the measurement reported for the movable shutters/glass roof dimensions within the Third DCA from 29 to 39 feet in length. Judge Kahn asked about the entryway expansion issue in the Third DCA to make sure enough funds were requested. The estimate appeared lower than expected for such an extensive project. Judge Cope will review further and report back to the Commission.

Technology Updates

- **Electronic Filing Initiative Status**

Charlotte Jerrett referred the members to the handout outlining the progression of the electronic filing initiative. John Cook briefed the members on legislation which has impacted the progress of the project. The legislation, HB 1503, requires information technology systems that are implemented or updated on or after July 1, 2006, to be compliant with federal standards (Section 508) set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act. The e-filing system under development is largely compliant with 508 standards, but the major point of non-compliance is the portable document format (PDF). PDF's must be "tagged" in order to be in compliance with 508 standards. The software used to convert the e-filed documents to PDF does not create tagged PDF's. The OSCA is researching alternatives so that e-filed documents are in compliance with 508 standards.

Additionally, the SharePoint user interface for the system is also not completely 508 compliant. The OSCA is also researching alternatives and third-party software to ensure compliance. Mr. Cook stressed that resolution of the user functionality and 508 concerns will be remedied by the end of the year. Ms. Goodner commented that additional user input was needed and that upcoming meetings have been set with vendors, clerks, etc. to examine specific user concerns and to set timetables.

- **VoIP Phones Update**

John Cook updated the members on the current status of the VoIP phones. Mr. Cook explained that approximately 100,000 phones are in operation statewide and that approximately 100 phones have been deployed in the Supreme Court.

The members raised numerous questions regarding the VoIP system. In particular, Judge Cope asked about the cost per phone line calculation. Mr. Cook responded that the phone costs are broken into two distinct categories; non-

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recurring costs used to purchase new telephone and networking equipment and recurring costs used for service offering. The non-recurring cost for equipment is comprised of telephone and local area network devices.

The recurring cost for hosted VoIP service is broken into several components and all calls will utilize the existing state network. Mr. Rubin asked if Suncom would be affected by the new system. Mr. Cook answered that these figures do not include Suncom long distance charges and that the hosted VoIP service includes a service provision that provides 3,000 long distance minutes at no additional charge. After the 3,000 minutes have been utilized, long distance charges will be billed at six cents per minute. This equates, in essence, to free long distance calls for most all VoIP users. Additionally, Mr. Cook pointed out that the State is not phasing out Suncom and that the State has announced plans to change how Suncom calls are placed. Due to automation advances, the Suncom prefix is no longer needed to utilize the state contract price and Suncom services are evolving as the State continues to expand telecommunications infrastructure, including long distance services.

Judge Stevenson inquired if additional bandwidth would be required to implement the system. Mr. Cook said that the VoIP system requires prioritized network bandwidth and is likely to require additional bandwidth in some court locations. Currently, the Department of Management Services (DMS) is working on providing new networking rates. OSCA ISS staff anticipate providing for additional bandwidth requirements without the need to secure additional funding sources. Mr. Cook also stated that the VoIP offering is a managed service hosted by the State of Florida and various telecommunications providers. The managed service provides for provisioning and maintenance of call control functionality and access to the public telephone switched network. Judge Browning asked about the differences and features between a traditional phone versus a VoIP system. Mr. Cook explained that the new system consists of CD quality sound; faster dialing (advanced intercom); user centric personalization; supports point and click dialing; e-mail accessible voice mail; elimination of local soft costs (moves/adds/changes); emergency readiness; and remote or mobile office support.

The Second District Court of Appeal is scheduled to be the first appellate court to implement the new system. Bellsouth is the vendor and Mr. Cook and Ms. Goodner are pleased with their performance during the OSCA implementation and feel the system will work as well as expected compared to the existing phone system. Ms. Goodner suggested phasing in the system within various departments to work out kinks before implementing within an entire court location.

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- **DCA Automation Pool Funds Update**

Charlotte Jerrett referred the members to a handout outlining the DCA automation pool budget for the members review. The proposed budget for FY 2006-07 was approved by the Appellate Court Technology Committee. The working balance for FY 2006-07 is \$252,676. Additionally, committed expenditures with proposed increases for next year were discussed.

Judicial Certification Update

The Second and Fourth District Courts of Appeal have requested one additional judge in their respective appellate courts for FY 2007-08. Letters were submitted by Judges Stevenson and Fulmer outlining specific workload issues. Judge Pleus made the motion to approve the requests and the motion was seconded by Judge Stevenson. The motion passed without objection.

Other Business

Judge Stevenson made a motion to amend a previously approved motion relating to the clerk and marshal equalization policy recommendations from the August 21, 2006, meeting: “The DCABC shall not authorize a special pay increase for clerks and/or marshals except where all of the district courts have the salary dollars available to fund the special pay increase, unless in such case, the DCABC shall make those salary dollars available through the collective resources of funds available from other courts or through funding obtained in the LBR for such purpose.” The motion was not seconded and failed without adoption.

Upcoming Commission Meeting

The next Commission meeting date will be set prior to the next legislative session, which is scheduled to begin Tuesday, March 6, 2007.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.