

**District Court of Appeal Budget Commission  
Video Conference Call Meeting Minutes  
March 14, 2008**

**DCABC Members Present:**

Judge Stevan Northcutt, Chair  
Judge Paul Hawkes  
Judge David Gersten  
Judge George Shahood  
Judge William Palmer

Judge Edwin Browning Jr., Vice Chair  
Judge Carolyn Fulmer  
Judge Juan Ramirez  
Judge Robert Gross  
Judge David Monaco

**Others Present:**

Judge Martha Warner  
Marshal Jo Suhr  
Marshal Glen Rubin  
Lisa Goodner

Marshal Don Brannon  
Marshal Dottie Munro  
Marshal Ty Berdeaux  
OSCA Staff

**Absent**

Judge Darryl Casanueva

Judge Stevan Northcutt called the District Court of Appeal Budget Commission (DCABC) meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

**Budget Reductions Update**

Judge Northcutt briefed the members regarding budget reductions to the appellate court base budget for the next fiscal year and also gave an overview of reductions from FY 2007-08. The Senate Criminal and Civil Justice Appropriations committee is scheduled to meet next Thursday, March 19, and the State Courts System has been asked to testify before the committee regarding budget reductions the branch plans to offer for FY 2008-09. Based on the revenue estimating conference estimates from earlier this week, an 8% cut could be planned for FY 2008-09 and the appellate courts recurring dollar appropriation could be approximately \$5.2 million less than in FY 2007-08.

Judge Northcutt stated that the House has not released a cut allocation amount yet and that the Commission should discuss specific reductions. A proposal from the Commission to the legislature will include a fund shift to the Workers' Compensation Administration Trust Fund (WCATF) in the amount of \$1,000,000. The Commission would still need to come up with an additional reduction amount of \$600,000. Judge Northcutt stated that various allocation methods had been suggested by the commission members. These include: cost per case breakout; proportional cuts amongst the appellate courts; and case shifting. Discussions followed and Judge Northcutt stressed that a fair plan should be adopted with good faith efforts made by all courts.

Judge Northcutt informed members that meetings will be held in Tallahassee next week between various business community representatives to discuss civil litigation issues.

Judge Northcutt asked each court to identify specific cut reductions:

**1<sup>st</sup> DCA**

Judge Browning offered \$120,000.

**2<sup>nd</sup> DCA**

Judge Northcutt offered \$122,000 and 2.0 law clerk FTE's.

**3<sup>rd</sup> DCA**

Judge Gersten offered \$142,912 and 1.0 appellate judicial assistant FTE. Additionally, he offered \$200,000 in non-recurring dollars from surplus dollars for a fixed capital outlay (FCO) roofing project.

**4<sup>th</sup> DCA**

Judge Shahood offered \$100,000.

**5<sup>th</sup> DCA**

Judge Palmer offered \$100,800.

In addition to the reductions each DCA presented, the Council of Chief Judges membership dues invoice was discussed. Charlotte Jerrett reminded the members that an adopted motion from the January 25, 2008, DCABC meeting was approved to encumber the funds, totaling \$14,308. The consensus of the members was to unencumber the funds and offer the \$14,308 amount towards the reduction exercise.

Don Brannon asked if the \$299,732 previous reduction amount was also part of the proposed \$600,000 reduction amount. Judge Northcutt said it was not and that the \$299,732 amount reflects FY 2007-08 reductions. The \$600,000 amount is an additional proposed FY 2008-09 reduction to the appellate courts.

Ms. Jerrett asked the members to submit their FY 2008-09 reductions by category (via e-mail) no later than 4:00 p.m. today. Also, Ms. Jerrett stated that for those appellate courts offering FTE's, the total reduction amount may be adjusted slightly from the \$120,000 total, so that legislative appropriation system generated salary amounts could be applied.

Judge Shahood offered the motion to approve all DCA reduction amounts and to also unencumber the Council of Chief Judges funds. Judge Browning seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Other Business**

Judge Gersten discussed organizing an appellate chief judges conference in Orlando and that details would be forthcoming.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.