

FAMILY COURT MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 28, 2017

Those Present: Judges Sherry, Beach, Ghasedi, Donnelly, Hilton, Smith, Dodson, Commissioners Monahan, Cunningham, Greaves, and McKee, Terri Johnson, Ben Burkemper, Tom Weber, Kim Stewart, Christy Bertelson, Kylie Seiffert, and Michelle LaBeaume

Approval of Minutes from the September 26, 2017 Meeting

Motion was made to approve the minutes of the September 26, 2017 meeting. Motion seconded and passed. The minutes from the September 26, 2017 meeting were approved.

Report on Resource Center

Terri Johnson reported that they are able to move the cases quickly, but there are more complicated matters with interesting issues being filed as the years go by. She expressed her desire to have their new designated office space that will be located on the street level next to the Adult Abuse Office.

Judge Sherry stated that the permanency project with the Juvenile Court and the Resource Center seems to be progressing. The list of cases may be larger than previously expected. Terri said that she thought their role would consist of compiling the paperwork and preparing the judgments, but did not anticipate preparing the parenting plans. Judge Sherry stated the responsibility of drafting parenting plans should lie with the Guardians *ad litem*. At the next Lunch and Learn meeting, a discussion will be held to address this matter.

Judge Beach reported that the new space for the Resource Center has been approved and will be contracted out after the first of the year. He is going to follow up to get more information regarding the status.

Report on Adult Abuse

Michelle LaBeaume reported the promotions of Kylie Seiffert to the supervisor of the Adult Abuse Office and Ricky Bell to the assistant supervisor position.

Kylie stated that the number of filings for the year are approximately 5,900, and they are about the same as this time last year. By the end of the year, there will be more than 6,000 filings.

Christy Bertelson asked if there is something that they can put out as a press release on social media for tips for deescalating family tension. Kylie thought it may be helpful, but would like to discuss this with the advocates.

Judge Ghasedi has been working with Mike Wallis to find a way to merge Adult Abuse judgment forms and place them into a folder for the judge to access, complete, and print copies for the parties. The judge could then save it into a file and the Adult Abuse clerk would be able to retrieve the form and enter the judgment while being in the courtroom. Mike is also looking at a way to eliminate the need for the Adult Abuse clerks to scan the documents.

Report on Domestic Relations

Tom Weber reported that following the issuance of Judge Sherry's Amended Administrative Order No. 40A, attendance at the parent education classes has increased in the months of September and October. Prior to the issuance of the amended order, attendance had been down four or five months in a row. Tom thanked the judges and commissioners for their support.

Juvenile Court Update

Judge Sherry said she knows there has been a lot of questions regarding when the juvenile court gets involved and when they don't get involved. She is sensitive to the frustration of the domestic judges who are seeking the juvenile court's help and are not receiving their assistance. Judge Sherry suggested inviting someone from the juvenile court side and a representative from the Children's Division to the next Lunch and Learn meeting to speak about how they make decisions, how they pick referrals, etc. which may give the domestic judges a better idea of the process.

Judge Sherry will talk with Carol Bader and the Children's Division about sending someone to share their views and guidelines at the meeting.

Courthouse Update

Judge Beach had no update to report.

Mental Health Docket

Judge Beach stated that the Budget Committee may be interested in funding alternative courts. Judge Ghasedi said Judge Burton has done a tremendous job with getting BJC on board for a mental health docket. He has implemented a program where he can match services for people. The individual who expressed interest in providing funds for the program had a massive heart attack so it doesn't seem as though he will be available in December to meet as previously expected.

Christy has offered to assist Judge Ghasedi to pursue the idea of a Mental Health Resource Center and getting support for the Court to create a mental health intervention docket for orders of protection. Another idea is to possibly hire an administrator to run the Mental Health Resource Center. A letter of intent is due February 1, 2018. Once the letter of intent is submitted, an invitation will be extended to our court to present the funding proposal. Judge Ghasedi is optimistic that we may be able to obtain a three year grant of at least \$100,000 a year which would be a good start.

DMC Report

The following non-members joined by phone for the presentation of Disproportionate Minority Contract Report (hereinafter “DMC”) and were introduced by Ben Burkemper: Mark Greenwald, the DMC Expert, Emily Keller and Jacqueline Concannan from the Department of Justice.

On November 21, 2017, Ben e-mailed the Bi-Annual Disproportionate Minority Contract Report, his proposed plan, and the agenda to the Family Court Judges for review. It was also placed on the Court’s website. He stated that under the Department of Justice Agreement the Court will collect and make available data at certain decision points. That data is separated by sex, race, age, and most serious charged offense.

As the Family Court Administrator, Ben has the responsibility under the agreement to conduct an analysis of the data on a bi-annual basis, produce a report, and make any suggestions for changes to address the issues in the report.

Ben presented to the committee highlighted information from the report and discussed the proposed plan of the Family Court. He expressed the need for more data to get better information. Based on the report, Ben and Rick Gaines, the Chief Juvenile Officer, want to be able to establish performance measures in order to reduce the disparities at certain contact points.

Ben stated that one aspect of the plan includes the hiring of two Data Analysts who can collect data that will assist the Court in determining why black youth are more likely to be admitted into secured detention as opposed to white youth.

New Business

Christy reported that the Circuit Clerk and the Family Court newsletters are being merged. The first newsletter will be distributed by email on December 1, 2017 to all employees. If any judicial officer has an item to be included in the newsletter, please submit it directed to Christy.

Next Meeting

The next Family Court meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 23, 2018 at 12:00 p.m. in the Court en Banc on the 3rd Floor.

A Lunch and Learn meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 27, 2018 at 12:00 p.m. in Room 236S.