

MINUTES

HOUSE JUDICIARY, RULES, & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, January 13, 2015

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW42

MEMBERS: Chairman Wills, Vice Chairman Dayley, Representatives Luker, McMillan, Perry, Sims, Malek, Trujillo, McDonald, Cheatham, Kerby, Nate, Scott, Gannon, McCrostie, Nye, Wintrow

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: The sign in sheet will be retained in the committee secretary's office until the end of the session. Following the end of the session, the sign in sheet will be filed with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.

Chairman Wills called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM.

Chairman Wills welcomed the committee and those in attendance. He introduced the new committee secretary, **Katie Butcher** and House Page **Nicholas Wills**, a Rocky Mountain High School senior.

Senior District Judge Barry Wood addressed the committee and gave an overview of the structure of the Idaho Court System including: the Appellate Courts, Trial Courts, Judicial Districts and he concluded with a summary of today's presenters.

Administrative District Judge Lansing Haynes addressed the committee regarding the Felony Sentencing Committee and the Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI) which has seen great collaboration over the last year. Their work has been focused on standardizing the terms of probation throughout all of the courts, as well as developing a matrix of responses, identifying discretionary jail time, implementing a limited supervision unit and the implementation of early discharge from probation. Judge Haynes stressed that successful implementation depends on adequate training of probation officers. He also noted that there is concern over the March 1, 2015 implementation date and they hope for support to extend the implementation date to October 1, 2015.

Administrative District Judge John Stegner addressed the committee regarding a pilot program that was started as a part of Judicial Excellence and Education. The purpose of the pilot program is to anonymously evaluate judge's work for the purpose of improving their judicial performance. The program received a grant from the State Justice Institute, that funding was used to implement a better metric in order to gauge and improve judicial performance. Through the development it was discovered that the judges under evaluation would greatly benefit from being mentored and taught by a senior judge. At this time, the survey has not been completed, and their application for a second grant has been declined by the State Justice Institute. They are seeking further funding to finalize the survey and develop procedures for implementation.

Administrative District Judge Bradley Ford gave a status update on Idaho's drug courts and mental health courts. In the past year the program has had 578 graduates. He stated that Idaho's problem solving courts remain dynamic and evolving, while striving to efficiently use tax payer resources to achieve that end. The courts are subject to on going reviews to measure adherence to guidelines and compliance and the allocation of treatment dollars is closely monitored and tracked.

Administrative District Judge Timothy Hansen addressed the committee regarding the status of Veteran's Courts across the state and specifically in Ada County. He said it was important to note that the Veteran's Court is a collaborative court in partnership with the Veteran's Administration, Veteran's Services and the Veteran's Center. One issue the Veteran's Courts have encountered is that the nearest VA Hospital may be out of state and often requires time and additional resources to transport patients who need medical attention. The Veteran's Courts have had great success with graduates mentoring new patients and Ada Counties' standards and guidelines for Veteran's Courts are being considered for implementation statewide.

Administrative District Judge Richard Bevan reported on the funding for the statewide digital court management system, Odyssey. Twin Falls County is currently implementing the program and expects the implementation to be completed by May 11, 2015. The implementation will be regionalized with expected completion in all areas by 2017.

Administrative District Judge Stephen Dunn addressed Statewide and District Case Management Plans. The first district case management plan to be implemented was for felony criminal cases. Next they will address plans for civil cases, misdemeanor criminal cases, child protection, family law and juvenile cases that are individualized and consistent. Their focus is implementing time standards, uniformity and consistency while effectively protecting the rights of those in the system.

Administrative District Judge Darren Simpson updated the committee regarding the JoAn Wood Project and Idaho Falls Crisis Center. The JoAn Wood Project takes on higher risk individuals who often have co-occurring disorders. The Idaho Falls Crisis Center was implemented through Title 9 funding in 2014, and based on its intent, Judge Simpson said it has been successful. There has been a surprising number of individuals who self reported to the center and this facility has a high approval rating with law enforcement due to the fact that the individuals can receive immediate treatment.

In response to a question, **Judge Ford** stated he is optimistic about the success of JRI in maintaining public safety and handling the reintegration of offenders based on the success they have seen thus far. He noted he would like to see the same level of resources administered to problem solving courts, also administered to JRI.

In response to a question, **Judge Bevan** explained that the State Tax Commission is involved with Odyssey so that intercepted tax refunds can be used to fund the program.

In response to a question, **Judge Dunn** noted that measuring improvement based on the management plans is not yet possible. Although data has been gathered since 1985 they are still working to determine what slows a case by comparing similar cases in different areas. They need more information and are evaluating the rules of each court.

Rep. McDonald noted that the recidivism rates between prisons and treatment courts are very similar.

In response to an earlier question, regarding measuring improvement due to the management plans, **Judge Wood** noted that they are focused on identifying the interim case events for each district and case type to determine what causes the delay, it could be a rule, resources or the process.

In response to a question, **Judge Stegner** noted that measurable outcomes for systemic problems in judicial performance cannot be attained by measuring where they currently are. They need to further assess the program.

In response to a question, **Judge Bevan** reported that for members of the public who do not have digital access to use Odyssey, provisions have been made for them at their local courthouses.

For the record, no one else indicated their desire to testify.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:13 PM.

Representative Wills
Chair

Katie Butcher
Secretary