

## **Minutes of the Advisory Task Force on Composition of Judicial Districts**

**September 30, 2019**

The meeting was called to order on September 30, 2019 at 10:10 am Central Time by Chairman Telford Forgety.

Chairman Forgety joined Russell Johnson and Kim Nelson via video conference from Knoxville, TN. J.B. Cox, Craig Fickling participated at the AOC in Nashville. Jim Kyle, Mark Davidson, Bo Burk, and Kim Helper and John Fine joined the group via teleconference. John Ryder was unable to attend. Chairman Forgety also welcomed guests, including Chase Johnson and John Gleason from the Legislature. Patrick Frogge and Chelsea Curtis with the PDs Conference and Jerry Estes with the District Attorneys Conference were also present, along with Rachel Harmon and Ceesha Lofton from the AOC. 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial District Public Defender Vanessa Bryan participated via phone.

Russell Johnson moved to allow electronic participation by Task Force Members under Tenn. Code Ann. §8-44-108. The motion was seconded by J.B. Cox and carried upon a full roll call vote with ten ayes and one absent.

Minutes from the September 16, 2019 were approved following a full roll call vote.

Rachel Harmon with the AOC presented a cost breakdown for new judges: the first-year cost would be \$351,000 with \$324,400 as a recurring cost thereafter.

Chairman Forgety raised the issue of local contributions to the budgets of the District Attorneys and Public Defenders in some Districts. Discussion followed about recognizing those areas which provide local support.

Jim Kyle moved that the Task Force reconsider its position recommending three new judgeships designated for specific districts. J.B. Cox seconded the motion. Craig Fickling moved to lay the motion on the table pending the final draft of the report. His motion was seconded and approved with 9 ayes, one no, and one absent.

Chairman Forgety asked for input on his prepared response to the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. J.B. Cox moved that the Chairman's response be approved, the motion was seconded by Russell Johnson, and approved following full roll call vote.

PD Craig Fickling and DA Russell Johnson presented information on present and future personnel needs for their respective conferences. Craig Fickling moved, and Russell Johnson seconded the motion that the Task Force acknowledge the need for additional personnel resources for the District Attorneys and Public Defenders but defer to the respective conferences to detail those needs. The motion passed with ten ayes, and one absent.

Chairman Forgety and members recognized that the Task Force is now in position to prepare a draft report. The members tasked with preparing the draft anticipated having it available on October 11, 2019 at the next meeting which should be a face to face meeting.

With no further business, the Task Force meeting adjourned until October 11, 2019 at 10 am.

Respectfully Submitted:

Kim Helper