

Patsy Osmon
Courtney Riddle

Senate
House of Representatives

Representative Johnson called the meeting to order at 10:18 a.m. with a quorum present.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – REPRESENTATIVE KAREN JOHNSON

Members introduced themselves to new member, Representative Debbie McCune-Davis, who was recently appointed to the committee by House Speaker Flake. Rep. McCune-Davis serves in the Legislature as a Representative for District 14. She was welcomed to the committee by members.

Megan Hunter advised members of David Norton’s forced removal from the Committee at the request of his employer. They prefer to have someone from their Family Investigations Division as a representative on the Committee if the House Speaker wishes to draw from the Phoenix Police Department personnel. Members were unanimously opposed to Dave’s removal and expressed a desire to have him remain on the committee. Representative Johnson and Senator Anderson will be following up with a letter to Chief Harris in support of Dave’s membership on the Committee.

Megan announced that Isabel Gillett who has served the Committee for six years will be retiring at the end of the month. The members and staff thanked Isabel for her years of dedicated service.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – REPRESENTATIVE KAREN JOHNSON

MOTION: A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Bill Hart and seconded by Commissioner Adam. The motion was unanimously approved.

ORDER OF PROTECTION – JEFF ZIMMERMAN

Jeff stated that he was bringing the updated Order of Protection proposal to the Committee in David Norton’s absence.

The Committee discussed Section R, #2. Jeff explained that this proposal emanated from a combination of ideas, including the issue of some law enforcement officers not enforcing or serving an Order of Protection if it is not from their jurisdiction.

Megan stated that there is a regional effort to establish domestic violence forms, and the committee meets in February. Jeff suggested that the Domestic Relations Committee should recommend representatives from the Committee to attend this meeting. The decision of the members was to have the Court Procedures Workgroup work on a cover sheet and recommend this to the regional domestic violence forms group.

MOTION: Bill Hart made a motion to accept the proposal as submitted and forward it to Legislative Council before bringing it back to the full Committee for approval. Jeff Zimmerman seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

CUSTODY RE-WRITE – STEVE WOLFSON

Steve explained that the workgroup reorganized A.R.S. § 25-403 to make it more understandable, and that the workgroup members have not made any other changes to the statute. The modification sections of A.R.S. §§ 25-403 and 25-408 were moved into A.R.S. § 25-411.

MOTION: Nancy Gray made a motion to accept the proposal as submitted and forward it to Legislative Council, then bring back to the full Committee for approval. Ellen Seaborne seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

MARICOPA COUNTY FAMILY COURT REVIEW – JUDGE NORMAN DAVIS

Judge Davis provided an update on the progress of the Maricopa County Family Court regarding the suggestions made in the Greacen report. They have begun implementing many projects resulting from that report and have already seen positive results from them. One of the most important aspects to the changes is the importance placed on early intervention in family law cases because families are distressed when they come into the system and requiring them to wait on the system increases the distress and conflict. Some of the new procedures and projects include:

- The parties will meet with an attorney case manager to settle as much as possible prior to hearing.
- In uncontested default cases, parties may choose their own court date instead of waiting on the court.
- An automated system called eCourt for pro se litigants is being developed and should be implemented by December 1. The system asks a series of questions and produces the appropriate forms. This is a 21st century update of the Self Service Center.
- Various measures are being taken to increase job satisfaction for the judges. This is a stressful part of the court system. Several judges have opted to remain on the family bench longer than their assigned terms.

Representative Johnson asked Judge Davis to provide an update to the Committee in January.

INTEGRATED FAMILY COURT (IFC) – ELLEN SEABORNE

Ellen provided a recap of the IFC project developed in this Committee, and an update on the Coconino County pilot project that came out of the AZ Supreme Court. She approached the Coconino County Board of Supervisors with a proposal to increase filing fees to help cover the cost of the project. Coconino County is looking at a timeline of December 31, 2006 for the implementation of the Integrated Family Court pilot project.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC – REPRESENTATIVE KAREN JOHNSON

No requests were received for Call to the Public

BREAK/LUNCH

The Committee dismissed for lunch at 12:00 pm. and reconvened at 1:05 pm.

INTEGRATED FAMILY COURT – KAREN KRETSCHMAN

No report.

WORKGROUP REPORTS/UPDATES

COURT PROCEDURES – DR. BRIAN YEE, CHAIR

The group is still working toward a meeting with Governor Napolitano to discuss the family bench issue. The group will also work on suggestions for the domestic violence cover sheet. Dr. Yee will coordinate with Bill Hart and the court's domestic violence forms workgroup.

SUBSTANTIVE LAW – JEFF ZIMMERMAN, CHAIR

No report.

EDUCATION/PREVENTION – TERRILL HAUGEN, CHAIR

No report.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No requests were received for the Call to the Public.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on December 10, 2004 from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the Arizona State Courts Building, 1501 W. Washington, Conference Room 345, Phoenix.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Representative Johnson at 1:15 p.m.