



## MINUTES

### September 30, 2015 Civil Justice Committee Meeting North Carolina Judicial Center

**Present:** David Levi, Alfred Carlton, Sheila Eley, E.D. Gaskins, Rob Harrington, Calvin Hill, George Hausen, Julian Mann, Darrell Miller (reporter), Mike Mitchell, Osmond Smith

**Absent:** Janet Ward Black, Robert Ingram, Anne Lloyd,

**Attending ex officio:** Amanda Lacoff, Tom Thornburg, Will Robinson

The meeting began at approximately 12:35pm

D. Levi led the introductions.

It was decided that the commissioners would use first names for each other rather than honorifics.

D. Levi highlighted possible issues for the civil justice committee to focus on. Among those issues were access to justice (including small claims systems and family court), managing and helping the pro-se litigant; ensuring just, speedy, and inexpensive access to justice with regard to all other claims. Topics under this heading (of other claims) include case management, tracking, and assignment (including single judge assignment for the duration of the litigation), discovery and e-discovery, efficient deployment of judicial resources, use of specialty courts, including business court and complex litigation dockets. D. Levi raised the possibility of dealing with juvenile courts, which tend to be very busy. Other topics that may be of interest are resources for the judiciary, judicial selection, compensation, and the overall structure of the court system in North Carolina.

C. Hill raised the issue of different languages as an access to justice issue, and noted the presence of Hmong and Spanish in his courtroom. C. Hill also noted the use of language lines in phone service.

D. Levi noted the use of language services in hospitals as a model.

W. Robinson noted that there were some language services available in the NC system.

A. Carlton raised the issue of courthouse facilities and the ability to use special obligation bonds for debt financing of courthouses.

G. Hausen wondered whether there may be efficient use of subgroups within the civil justice committee to conduct studies.

M. Mitchell asked about the process by which we begin discussing the actual proposals, and the relationship with the NC legislature in that regard.

A. Carlton raised the issue of the baseline of committee's work; what is it politically possible to address.

D. Levi responded that issues of finance and judicial selection are not unique to our committee and may overlap with other committees. He reiterated that the focus of the civil justice committee was on civil justice and fairness and we could let go of things not within our charge.

O. Smith understood that our charge was to develop recommendations that are possible within the existing administrative framework.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:10 pm.