



**North Carolina Commission on the Administration of Law and Justice
Public Trust and Confidence Committee**

Meeting Minutes / September 28, 2016

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| MEETING DATE | September 28, 2016 |
| TIME | 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. |
| LOCATION | NCJC, 901 Corporate Center Drive, Raleigh NC, 27607 |

Attendees

Chair: J. Bradley Wilson

Members: Dean Martin Brinkley, Judge Wanda Bryant, Douglas Clark, Frank Emory Jr. (via telephone), Frank B. Holding Jr., John Hood, A. Dale Jenkins, Senator Floyd B. McKissick Jr., Dean Suzanne Reynolds, Dean Michael R. Smith (Ex-Officio), and Robert C. Stephens.

NCCALJ Staff: Will Robinson and Emily Portner

Reporters: Andrew Atkins and Mildred Spearman.

Approval of Minutes

The committee members unanimously approved the minutes from the April and May meetings.

Committee Action

The Honorable Wanda Bryant introduced Carolyn Dubay, executive director of the Judicial Standards Commission. Ms. Dubay gave a PowerPoint presentation about the Judicial Standards Commission, focusing on its mission, processes and statistical data for 2015. The members raised questions about the Commission’s composition and recent changes that allow less transparency of the Commission’s actions.

The Honorable Sam Ervin gave a brief presentation about current efforts to improve civics education about the judicial branch. The Judicial Branch has created a speakers bureau with more than 300 volunteers and is working with public education stakeholders to enhance knowledge of the role played by the courts. He noted that the anniversary of the courts is bringing attention to the courts, with many planned events. The NCAOC Communications staff also has developed materials for teachers and is conducting interviews of former judges and justices. He recommended seeking legislation in future years to hold appellate court sessions in historical locations in order to expose more people to the judicial system.

Will Robinson provided a summary of the public comments received during four public meetings in August. He indicated that many members of the public were concerned about

judicial selection and language access issues, which are two areas of interest for the PTCC. He addressed the upcoming meetings and the need to have a final report by the first week in December, focusing on the defining principles of access, fairness and efficiency.

Andrew Atkins presented information compiled by Emily Portner related to judicial qualifications and standards from other states. Ms. Portner's analysis provided a state-by-state analysis of which states have minimum qualifications for judges related to citizenship, residency, experience, in-state licensure, ethics and minimum / maximum age.

Ben Bollinger, a former NCAOC intern, presented preliminary conclusions about district court elections from 2008-2014. Bollinger and Elisabeth Stedman spent the summer analyzing judicial elections and found that district court races generally tend to be uncontested and challengers are not likely to unseat incumbents.

The committee discussed the preliminary recommendations and whether the members felt that they had enough information to make specific recommendations related to judicial selection. They suggested tweaks to the current language in the recommendation, including adding public accountability to the recommendation.

Administrative Matters

The final PTCC Committee meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, October 18, 2016, and Tuesday, November 15, 2016. The final full Commission is scheduled for December 2, 2016. The PTCC will need to present its final report to the Commission by the first week of December.

Prior to the next meeting, the members are expected to review the recommendations and send any suggested changes to the reporters to incorporate into an updated version of the recommendations. The Chair requested that the members inform the reporters of any additional information they need or any topics about which they would like to see a presentation at the final meetings.

Next Meeting

Date: Tuesday, October 18, 2016

Time: 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Location: North Carolina Judicial Center, 901 Corporate Center Drive, Raleigh NC, 27607