



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

1302 Pike Avenue, Suite C
North Little Rock, Arkansas 72114
Phone: (501) 682-3309 | Fax: (501) 534-3958
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Criminal Justice Task Force on Offender Court Costs and Collections
Virtual meeting
Tuesday, February 22, 2022

Members Present

Representative Robin Lundstrum
Senator Clarke Tucker
Representative Keith Slape
Judge Hamilton Singleton
Circuit Clerk Debbie Wise

Mr. Benny Magness
Ms. Kristin Clark
Ms. Ateca Foreman
Ms. Elizabeth Taylor
Ms. Robin White

Non-Members Present

Ms. Melissa Rangel (DOC Executive Assistant)
Mr. Brad Cazort (ACIC Director)

Members Absent

Senator Bob Ballinger
Sheriff John Montgomery
Judge Tommy Fowler
Ms. Lorie Mason Jordan
Mr. Bob McMahan
Mr. Rick Stallings

- I. Call to Order: Representative Lundstrum called the meeting to order after recognizing a quorum was present. There was a roll call.
- II. Approval of January Minutes: Judge Hamilton Singleton moved to adopt the minutes; Senator Clarke Tucker seconded the motion to adopt the minutes. The minutes were adopted.
- III. Contact updates: Rep. Lundstrum asked the task force members if they had any issues with contacting the Steering Committee members.

Mr. Benny Magness talked to Senator Flippo. Rep. Lundstrum reminded the Task Force members to make their phone calls. If anyone has issues or has any feedback, members can contact Rep. Lundstrum notified the members that the Supreme Court Justices are in favor of this action.

- IV. Subcommittee meeting overview: Sen. Tucker gave a summary of the subcommittee actions from the last few weeks. They are examining low hanging fruit of fines and fees that could possibly be removed

or adjusted, possibly during the next legislative session. Sen. Tucker will be sharing a newspaper article concerning the fines and fees in a legal matter with the group.

Rep. Lundstrum shared that one of her constituents had issues with a payment in another county. Senator Tucker agreed that there could be better communication.

Senator Tucker spoke of the need to hire more prosecuting attorneys and defense attorneys due to the high backlog of cases.

Mr. Benny Magness checked with the Prosecutors to see what the future might look for the Department of Corrections due to increase in cases. There are 73,000 cases pending in the State. There are 40,000 new cases and about 33,000 are probation/parole violations. There is a possibility that in 2 to 3 years there will be 10,000 new people either receiving a sentence to probation or incarceration. There are already 500 beds approved by the Governor at North Central. Some of these cases have been on docket for over 5 years.

Senator Tucker agreed with Mr. Magness in the Pulaski County Circuit Court alone there are about 1,000 to 1,200 cases in any given day. These issues compounded because of COVID-19. Once we hire more prosecutors and defense attorneys, there will be a need for more beds. Mr. Magness has been in the Corrections field for about 23 years and every year the population grows.

Representative Lundstrum encouraged the group to continue to make calls to the Steering Committee.

- V. There was no other business.
- VI. Next meeting date was not discussed.
- VII. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 3:22 pm.

After the meeting, Sen. Tucker set a meeting of subcommittee for Wednesday 3/9/22 for 3:00 p.m.