



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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Criminal Justice Task Force on Offender Court Costs and Collections
Virtual meeting
Wednesday, April 6, 2022

Members Present

Representative Robin Lundstrum
Senator Clarke Tucker
Judge Hamilton Singleton
Circuit Clerk Debbie Wise
Senator Bob Ballinger
Mr. Bob McMahan

Ms. Lorie Mason Jordan
Sheriff John Montgomery
Mr. Benny Magness
Ms. Kristin Clark
Ms. Elizabeth Taylor
Ms. Robin White

Non-Members Present

Ms. Melissa Rangel (DOC Executive Assistant)
Paul Loathian (DFA)

Members Absent

Judge Tommy Fowler
Mr. Rick Stallings
Ms. Ateca Foreman
Representative Keith Slape

Call to Order: Representative Robin Lundstrum called the meeting to order after recognizing a quorum was present. There was a roll call and the members who were absent were noted.

Approval of February Minutes: Senator Clarke Tucker pointed out a change to be made on page two, section 4a: "because" was left out. A motion was made by Chairman Benny Magness to approve the minutes as corrected; Senator Tucker seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Letter to CARE Committee: Rep. Lundstrum caught Paul Loathian up on the discussion of having an integrated system for all fines and fees. Mr. Loathian continued that there are 55 million dollars needing approval by the end of June some of these funds will be released this June. There are 780 million that will be released in middle to late July for the second round of funding requests. These two rounds of funding will conclude the funding cycle, so Mr. Loathian advised the committee to do a complete total funding request of the necessary funds rather than separate requests. One of the conversations he had about this issue was that there are multiple systems used around the state and there will need to be a sort of hub to allow everyone's communication to come into that and talk to the central hub because of the differences in systems across the state.

Sheriff Montgomery agreed that the hub will be the best method to use and will be least resisted across the state because if someone has a system that works for them, the hub will allow for their interface to be translated into a universal system. Rep. Lundstrum noted that Debbie Wise and Sheriff Montgomery each have different systems that are set up for their needs and are more current and replicating these two systems to integrate into the hub might be the best course of action. Each county can tweak the system currently used to their specific needs. At this moment, one county cannot see the data from another county, but the data is uploaded to the central Criminal Collects database every morning.

Mr. Loathian asked if the plan was for each county to pay for their own software, and if the requested funds would go to the development and maintenance of the state-wide hub. Rep. Lundstrum said yes, and that some counties would need some help to purchase the software so that may need to be factored into the funding request. She suggested grant matching so that if some counties could provide some of the funding, it can be matched by the state. Sheriff Montgomery estimated that \$7,500 is the price of the software and some annual maintenance, and Debbie Wise noted it was about the same cost for her. Rep. Lundstrum asked Ms. Kristin Clark if this would be something the courts could use to access the data, and Sheriff Montgomery jumped in and noted that the courts in his county have some access to the data that is uploaded every day. Sheriff Montgomery will provide Rep. Lundstrum the contact information from Tracy Smith Consulting.

Rep. Lundstrum noted that both systems will need to be updated. Ms. Clark noted that the current plan for the hub is separate from the request made by AOC, but she thinks it will still work out even though it will be a separate request. Ms. Clark noted that the CIC director Tim Holtoff may be able to answer some questions assist with some information. Ms. Clark will share the information discussed during the meeting with Mr. Holtoff.

Senator Tucker thanked the committee for their hard work. Rep. Lundstrum noted that the goal is for everyone who needs to be able see the fines, fees, and restitution to have access to this information. Mr. Loathian is going to get started with the conversations on the funding request. He agreed that this a great plan because it will help to those individuals that get reincarcerated because of missed payments.

Subcommittee Meeting Overview: Sen. Tucker gave an update from the subcommittee actions over the last few weeks. They examined installment plan fees and have cotton some information on this issue. Currently, there is a \$10 monthly installment fee in both circuit and district court for missed payments, and the goal is to lower these fees as much as possible. \$2.50 goes to technology in cities and counties, there is \$5 that goes to collections. That leaves \$2.50 in both circuit and district court that goes to the AROJ fund which adds up to 3 million a year. Sen. Tucker recommended that the state picks up the remaining \$2.50 for circuit court fees to lower the monthly installment from \$10 to \$7.50. The final piece is the remaining \$5.00 from district court that goes back to the state, and this fund averages \$4.8 million per year. If the funds could be found, the district court fees could be lowered from \$10 to \$2.50 but this would all need to be discussed by the group. After the meeting, Sen. Tucker set a meeting of subcommittee for Wednesday 4/26/22 for 1:00 p.m.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 1:42 pm. There was no other business, and the next meeting date was not discussed.