

Minutes
Court Technology Committee
Friday July 22nd, 2022
9:15 am

Members Participating:

Hon. Jerod Tufte, Supreme Court Justice
Hon. Rhonda Ehlis, Judge – Southwest Judicial District
Petra Hulm, Chief Deputy Clerk of Supreme Court
Michele Bring, Clerk of District Court – Burleigh County
Kristen Erickson, Recorder – Cass County
Lee Ann Barnhardt, Director of Education & Communication
Susan Hoffer, Clerk of District Court – Ward County

Members Absent:

Hon. Stacy Louser, Judge – North Central Judicial
Hon. Lonnie Olson, Judge - Northeast Judicial District
Hon. Robin Schmidt, Judge – Northwest Judicial District

Guests:

Don Wolf, Director of Finance

Staff:

John Tassava, Director of Technology
Sally Holewa, State Court Administrator
Cammie Schock, Business Analyst

The meeting was called to order by Chair Justice Tufte.

Approval of Minutes from May 21st, 2021 Meeting

Petra Hulm moved to approve the May 21st, 2021 meeting minutes. Susan Hoffer seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Odyssey User Group Update

Cammie Schock has accepted the Odyssey User Group chair position. She submitted a proposal to amend the charter to replace the Reporter/Recorder position with Chair and solicit input from a Reporter/Recorder as needed. Historically there has not been much on the agendas pertaining to that position. She also proposed updating the “justice or staff member of the Supreme Court” position to “Chair of the Court Technology Committee”.

There are 3 open seats on the committee which Ms. Schock recommends Judge Agotness, Bev Demers and Jodee Lawlar for these vacancies, all of which have expressed interest.

Odyssey 2019 Upgrade

Cammie reported that there have been several roadblocks in the quest to upgrade Odyssey from 2014 to 2019. Tyler Technologies had put all development on hold from December of 2021 to April of 2022. They released a new version of 2019 in April which had major show stoppers specifically surrounding forms. Last week Tyler Technologies committed to fixing the issues which would take 4-6 weeks. Once the new version is released it takes roughly 8-12 weeks for testing. This does not guarantee however that there won't be additional show stoppers in the new release. We also have to upgrade Session Works at the same time which adds a level of complexity to the upgrade of Odyssey.

General System Status Updates

Electronic Warrants and Probable Cause

John Tassava reported that search functionality, time zone on DUI, and watermarks on PDF's have been implemented in e-warrants. GPS and PRTT are now active in Cass County and the Northeast Central district. Probable Cause is live in Grand Forks and Nelson counties. Additionally the ability for judges to view warrants that are already under review as well as the ability to release a warrant for another judge to review has been added. Sally asked the committee if there was a need for being able to strike out or add language to the warrant. Judge Ehlis agreed that would be a great addition to e-warrants.

Courtroom Wi-Fi and Network Changes

IT is working on providing Wi-Fi within all of the courtrooms. This will allow internet access to everyone in the courtroom and does not require a user id and password. One courtroom within one county is remaining. Network jacks have also been changed so only court equipment can be plugged into them. Currently about half of the counties are complete and it is anticipated to have the remaining finished this fall. All cables and jacks will be labeled for easy reconnection.

Courtroom Recording Software

Software tests are being conducted to be able to submit recording and obtain computer generated rough draft transcripts through CourtSmart recording software. A CourtSmart software update is planned for all computers in Q4.

Juvenile System Update

An agreement has been entered into with Tyler Technologies to implement their Supervision product as a replacement for the Juvenile system. The project is currently underway with go-live planned for May 2023.

Software Upgrades

IT is on a good cadence with keeping computer operating systems and software updated which is important for cybersecurity. A reporting system has been implemented and given to the unit admins on a weekly basis which lists computers that have not been updated and are in need of attention.

C-Track Project

The discovery phase has been completed for C-Track to replace the current Supreme Court Docket system. The project proposal has been received and is being reviewed.

CyberSecurity

A staff phishing sampling was completed last fall with follow-up mandatory training. An additional sampling was done in Q1 with more training provided. A yellow bar was added to emails originating from outside of the courts to aid in the ability to identify possible phishing attempts.

New Technology Thoughts

John asked that if anyone has any thoughts regarding new technology to please let his office know and they will look into it. Susan Hoffer stated one of the new trends they are seeing is that parties want to present everything electronically. Justice Tufte suggested creating a workgroup to look into receiving electronic evidence.

Legislature Budget Updates

Operational expenses have increased for this budget including network, phones, computers, software and support costs. There are also 2 large projects, Juvenile and Supreme Court systems, being implemented which brings new maintenance and hardware costs. Another new component this year is leasing of the blade servers which levels out the costs and prevents large increases every 5-6 years. Courtroom sound and presentation enhancements, assisted hearing device replacements, document scanners as well as polycam replacements are also included in this budget.

Judge Ehliis moved to submit the proposed technology budget to Administrative Council for further consideration. Michele Bring seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Committee Membership and Future

Justice Tufte reviewed the purpose of the Court Technology Committee as described in Administrative Order 9 and stated the Court will be considering possibly restructuring some of the committees. Justice Tufte asked for thoughts on the current structure. Lee Ann stated that the committee is still useful to her in knowing the direction of IT and helps her department plan accordingly. Petra agrees that there is value in doing the biennial plan and continuing to have a group looking into technology as it is always changing and is a vital part of the Courts. Sally stated that section 3a and 3b of Administrative Order 9 could potentially be removed. 3a is handled under AR41. Section 3e no longer applies since the courts do not have locally developed systems. It was suggested that a longer term strategic planning session be held for this committee.

Due to the retirement of Rod Olson, there is now an opening on the Court Technology Committee. Sally will make recommendations to Justice Tufte for a replacement.

For the Good of the Order

The next meeting is not yet scheduled.