

**Judicial Committee on Information Technology**  
**October 11, 2024 – Texas Association of Counties**

**Meeting Minutes**

**I. Welcome and Call to Order**

Justice Simmons called the meeting to order at 10:02AM.

Voting Members Present

Honorable Rebecca Simmons

Bob Wessels

Honorable Lawrence Doss

David Escamilla (virtual)

Honorable Laura Hinojosa (virtual)

Tracy Hopper

Todd Smith (virtual)

Carlos Soltero

Dean Stanzione (virtual)

Mark Unger (virtual)

John Warren (virtual)

Ed Wells (virtual)

Non-Voting Members Present

Michael Cuccaro (virtual)

Doug Gowin (virtual)

Jessica Griffith (virtual)

Honorable Blake Hawthorne

Roland Johnson (virtual)

Megan LaVoie (virtual)

Cynthia Orr (virtual)

Sian Schilhab (virtual)

Aaron Varner

Honorable Beverley Walker (virtual)

Jennifer Williams

Deana Williamson (virtual)

Honorable J.R. Woolley (virtual)

OCA Staff Present

Casey Kennedy, Director, Information Services

### Others Present

Jesus Acevedo, Fort Bend County

Evan Acosta, Tyler Technologies

Jamie Gillespie, Tyler Technologies

Michelle Jochen, Fort Bend County

Chris Ricci, Tyler Technologies

Steve Schenk, Prodoc/Thompson Reuters

Stephen Stehling, Tyler Technologies

## **II. Meeting Minutes from the May 2024 meeting**

**Motion** to approve the minutes from the May 2024 meeting by **Lawrence Doss**, seconded by **John Warren**. No opposition. **Motion carried.**

## **III. Program Updates**

### **A. eFileTexas/re:SearchTX/Guide and File**

Evan Acosta with Tyler Technologies provided the committee an update on the programs. Mr. Acosta reported that the number of users for eFile has exceeded 875,000 and that there are now 234 JP courts electronically filing across 56 counties.

Mr. Acosta then spoke about the current return for correction rate along with the data broken down by case type on the top case types that are returned for correction. He relayed information about the eFile Analytics tool available to all clerks that allows them to drill down into their jurisdictional data for eFiling. Mr. Warren and Ms. Hinojosa asked if Tyler could provide training via webinar and/or recorded videos to clerks on the tool. Mr. Acosta agreed. Mr. Unger asked for analytic data on Bexar County and let JCIT know he was conducting a survey among the attorney of the county. Justice Simmons asked to see the results of the survey. Mr. Unger also pointed out the need for additional attorney training on the next steps after a filing has been returned for correction.

Justice Simmons asked that additional training be provided to clerks, then that the eFiling/Document Access subcommittee look deeper into the data to see if and what any issues there are with returns for correction.

Mr. Acosta reported on the Guide and File platform and that the number of interviews remains at 46 with 6 of them connected to eFile. Mr. Kennedy reminded the committee that in previous meetings, it was discussed that in some cases, local rules/standing orders stand in the way of successful eFiling the forms.

Mr. Acosta reported that the return for correction rate for guide and file was around 22%, however he observed that the additional comment lines indicated that the clerk's office were engaging the filers.

Justice Simmons asked that the Pro Se subcommittee explore which forms are unable to be connected due to local rules in addition to supreme court approved forms. Justice Simmons asked too that Tyler split the statistics for the counties to see what case types are being filed as well as any marketing those counties are doing to promote usage.

Mr. Acosta then reported on the re:SearchTX integration piece. Mr. Unger asked about initial issues with alerts and Mr. Acosta responded that the issue was resolved.

Tracy Hopper asked about the free case alerts and that the attorneys should not be able to opt-out. Justice Simmons asked that Tyler provide additional information on what is happening with free alerts to ensure that the attorneys know for sure that they're opting out of receiving notices.

Justice Simmons also asked about if a lawyer needed a re:SearchTX account and Mr. Acosta replied that attorneys did need an account. The committee discussed the need to add all attorneys on the case using the eservice address from the state bar file already provided.

Todd Smith requested that whatever the solution if training be offered to attorneys through the state bar, perhaps in the form of CLE.

Justice Simmons asked about integration with re:SearchTX. Evan reported that 52% of offices in the first phase were integrated on-time and expects most others with the 12/1 extension to be integrated by then. Evan committed to continue working with those counties to meet the deadline. He mentioned McLennan County having some issues with their integration but will continue to work with them. The group discussed Tarrant County's extension request and concluded that JCIT should recommend a March deadline.

Justice Simmons requested that the eFiling/Document Access Subcommittee make recommendations to JCIT regarding improvements to the process.

#### **IV. Subcommittee Updates**

##### **A. Subcommittee Assignments**

Justice Simmons reviewed the different subcommittees along with their charges. She encouraged JCIT members to let Casey know if any subcommittee assignments needed changes.

##### **B. Standard Committee**

###### **1. Discussion of visiting judges and access to re:SearchTX.**

Bob Wessels tabled the discussion until Judge Hinde was able to attend.

#### **V. Adjourn**

Justice Simmons encouraged in-person attendance and adjourned the meeting at 12:03PM. Next meeting date of JCIT was set to 12/6/2024.