

**Judicial Committee on Information Technology
February 21, 2025 – 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 (virtual)

Dan Hinde

Honorable Laura Hinojosa (virtual)

Tracy Hopper

Carlos Soltero

Honorable John Warren (virtual)

Ed Wells (virtual)

Non-Voting Members Present

Honorable Jeff Boyd (virtual)

Michael Cruz (virtual)

Michael Cuccaro (virtual)

Doug Gowin (virtual)

Jessica Griffith

Honorable Blake Hawthorne

Honorable Patty Henry (virtual)

Roland Johnson (virtual)

Honorable Velva Price

Sian Schilhab (virtual)

Honorable David Stith (virtual)

Aaron Varner

Honorable Deana Williamson (virtual)

OCA Staff Present

Casey Kennedy, Director, Information Services

Others Present

Jesus Acevedo, Fort Bend County

Evan Acosta, Tyler Technologies

Blanca Alamia, Fort Bend County

Honorable Juanita Allen, Caldwell County
Celso Amaro, Cameron County
Dalia Amezaga, El Paso County
Amelia Balderrama, iDocket
Diana Barnard, Bell County
Alicia Bentancourt, Fort Bend County
Honorable Brook Bussell, Franklin County
Honorable Loretta Cammack, Nacogdoches County
Heather Chastun, Montgomery County
Honorable Lila Deakle, Parker County
Terry Derek, Tyler Technologies
Kristy Ellison, Fannin County
Jamie Gillespie, Tyler Technologies
Brenda Gonzales, Comal County
Shane Holman, Harris County
Honorable Rhonda Hughey, Kaufman County
Honorable Ashley Inge, Llano County
Michelle Jochen, Fort Bend County
Sara Khan, Fort Bend County
Honorable Bobbie Koepp, Comal County
Honorable Sandy Layhew, Hamilton County
Michele Legg, Office of Attorney General
Sarah Long, Fannin County
Carlos Lopez, iDocket
Laura McLean, Fort Bend County
Bernadette Medrano, El Paso County
Honorable Juanita Miller, Bosque County
Kirsten Mills, Texas Association of Counties
Honorable Zonia Morales, Jim Hogg County
Honorable Karen Phillips, Smith County
Chris Ricci, Tyler Technologies
Honorable Laura Richard, Fort Bend County
Ri Rocha, El Paso County
Honorable Teresa Rodriguez, Caldwell County
Jean Salcido, El Paso County
Honorable Brenda Sanchez, Hudspeth County
Steve Schenk, ProDoc/Thompson Reuters
Leslie Speer, Webb County
Honorable Mark Staples, Anderson County
Honorable Sarah Vasquez, Brewster County

Honorable Casie Walker, Burnet County
Honorable Karen Wilson, Van Zandt County
Laura Yeager, El Paso County

II. Meeting Minutes from the December 2024 meeting

Motion to approve the minutes from the December 2024 meeting by **Bob Wessels**, seconded by **John Warren**. No opposition. **Motion carried.**

III. Subcommittee Updates

A. Standards Subcommittee

1. Version 9 of the Technology Standards

Mr. Wessels reported that version 9 of the Technology Standards was adopted by both high courts and has been distributed to Tyler Technologies and the clerks.

He reported that the subcommittee is already working on version 10 changes to support additional standardizations, including the possibility of bulk data and additional roles/permissions. He expects to bring that version for consideration at the next JCIT meeting.

2. Visiting judge access to re:SearchTX

Judge Hinde raised a question as to the practicality of a Visiting Judge having access to re:SearchTX in order to prepare for an upcoming docket.

Mr. Hawthorne expressed that OCA likely has the official list of visiting judges as appointed by the presiding judges of the administrative judicial regions. Mr. Kennedy confirmed that OCA is the keeper of the lists of visiting judges across the state and that there are no technical blocks to grant all visiting judges access as a judge.

The committee discussed the potential need to restrict visiting judges to a particular jurisdiction. Justice Simmons raised the point that visiting judges routinely transfer between administrative judicial regions and that by becoming a visiting judge, a person still must abide by all judicial cannons and is technically an officer of the court.

Mr. Kennedy committed to visit with OCA's General Counsel to ensure that all the appropriate processes were in place should the committee make recommendations to change access.

Justice Simmons asked the Standards subcommittee to review the Technology Standards to ensure that visiting judges would get the same access as a sitting judge.

B. eFiling/Document Access Subcommittee

Tracy Hopper gave an update to the committee on the “Case Notices”, opt-out functionality, communication/education to the legal community, requirements around notices and sealed cases, and future discussion items for the subcommittee.

The committee discussed the subcommittees opt-out recommendation for family case types for Case Notices. After discussion and direction from Justice Simmons, the committee tabled the opt-out functionality for all Case Notices, saying that if an attorney does not wish to receive a Case Notice, they must withdraw from the case through the usual process.

IV. Program Updates

A. eFileTexas/re:SearchTX/Guide and File

Terry Derrick with Tyler Technologies updated the committee on eFiling. He indicated that user volume continues to climb and that the number of filings per day has increased to approximately 47,000 filings per day (20% increase over the last year and a half). He reminded the group that there are now 234 JP courts across 56 counties that are live on eFile.

Mr. Derrick then spoke about the return for correction rates across the courts. The Texas rate is at 6.8% still well below the national average of 7.6%. He indicated the top reason for a return was Incorrect/Incomplete Info at 25% followed by Filer’s Request at 20%. Mr. Derrick then showed the committee return for correction rates based on case type in the district/county courts as well as in the JP Courts. The data indicated that case types that predominantly have self-represented litigants have higher return for correction rates.

Mr. Derrick reported on Guide and File – eight of the 46 interviews are integrated with eFiling. He reported that the completion rate hit an all-time high of 40% for January 2025. Additionally, usage hit an all-time high in January 2025 with more than half of the submissions sent electronically to the courts. He also commented on the return for correction rate on submissions sent for guide and file being on the high side at 19.3%. Justice Simmons asked Justice Doss to continue investigating ways to better enable self-represented litigants access to eFile through Guide and File.

Mr. Derrick then spoke about re:SearchTX and efforts to integrated local county case management systems in accordance with the Supreme Court mandate. In Phase 1, counties over 250,000, six of 46 clerk offices remain. In Phase 2, 14 of 68 clerk offices remain, with extensions expected for eight offices. For Phase 3, Mr. Derrick relayed the plan to split the final 329 clerk offices in to sub-phases for a completion of November 2025.

V. Adjourn

Justice Simmons adjourned the meeting at 12:15PM. Next meeting date of JCIT is 5/16/2025 at the Texas Association of Counties.