

DISTRICT JUDGES' CONFERENCE
September 9, 2008
Cheyenne, Wyoming

Minutes

A meeting of the District Judges' Conference was held on September 9, 2008, at Little America in Cheyenne. The following judges attended: Davis, Brooks, James, Grant, Fenn, Guthrie, Skar, Arnold, Price, Kautz, Park, Young, Perry, Deegan, Waldrip, Donnell, Ryckman, Cranfill, Sanderson and Skavdahl.

1. Minutes and Treasurer's Report. The minutes from the April, 2008 meeting in Lander and the treasurer's report were approved.

2. Chief Justice Voigt. Chief Justice Voigt reported on the challenges of technology facing the courts. One goal is to get the same case information system in all district courts, a move that is supported by the Clerks of Court. This will be the first step in electronic case filing. At the present time the official court file is paper; in the future it will be the electronic file. He advised that the judiciary will be asking for about three million dollars from the legislature to fund technology needs.

3. Youth Challenge Program. Tina Kirlin reported on the Wyoming National Guard Youth Challenge Program for 16-19 year olds. She advised that this is the largest mentoring program in the United States with primary goals of instilling discipline and helping participants get their GED's or high school diplomas. She reported that about 78% of participants successfully obtain their GED's. The program is quasi-military and is voluntary; participants cannot be court ordered to complete the program. Youth are not eligible for admission if they have a felony conviction. There is a "no tolerance" policy regarding violence and drugs. The program initiates two classes each year and targets high school dropouts.

4. Treatment Courts. The conference reaffirmed its resolution on treatment courts. Various draft legislation was discussed and it was noted that Chief Justice Voigt is working with Judge Hartman on a compromise proposal. The BJPA has not taken an official position on treatment courts. Judge Kautz discussed his concerns regarding separation of powers and Judge Grant expressed his opinion that there is no judicial function in treatment courts.

Judge Grant described a program he has initiated for neglect cases in juvenile court which he characterizes as intensive case plan supervision. Judge Perry described his

felony level treatment court, noting that he plays "6th judicial district dad".

Lack of uniformity in programs and lack of a funding formula are two areas of concern. Judge Skavdahl noted that the common thread in all the programs is increased intensive supervision. Judge Grant believes the DOC intensive supervision program is great and that it could be a basis for handling these cases.

5. Election of Officers. Judge Perry moved and Judge Guthrie seconded a motion to elect the following officers: Judge Brooks, Chairperson; Judge James, Vice-Chairperson; and Judge Young, Secretary/Treasurer. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.



Nena James, Secretary/Treasurer