

Approved Minutes
Friend of the Court Bureau
Advisory Committee Meeting
State Court Administrative Office – Lansing, MI
Thursday, June 22, 2006

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. William Brooks, Lynn Bullard, Murray Davis, Patti Holden, Fred Lebowitz, Anthony Paruk, and Erin House

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Numa Cabrera, Hon. Mabel Mayfield, Suzanne Hoseth, and Shawn Perry

STAFF PRESENT: Steve Capps

1. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:21 a.m.

- a. Appointments to Committee – Shawn Perry, Deputy FOC in Ingham County, Erin House, a Policy Analyst at the Michigan House of Representatives, and Numa Cabrera, a practicing psychiatrist in Ann Arbor, MI.

2. Routine Business

- a. Approval of February 9, 2006 Minutes – The meetings are amended to reflect changes under New Business section b. Remove the truncated sentence, ‘The Committee will be.’ The record reflects that Judge Mabel Mayfield and Suzanne Hoseth have excused absences. Mr. Paruk made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Davis seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- b. Public Comment – Leanne Lickman from Isabella County. She had no comment.
- c. Correspondence
 - i. Kevin Ferguson of Ottawa County expressed concern with respect to matters associated with child support. He discussed the legality of assets being used to pay child support. A friend of the court bureau customer service clerk responded to his letter informing him that the Committee cannot intervene in individual cases, and advised him of some procedural matters associated with changing child support. The Committee agreed that the response was appropriate.

The Committee stated that with all future correspondence addressed to the Advisory Committee that the Committee be courtesy copied on the response letter.

ii. Brian T. LaFerriere of Oakland County discussed the process of not receiving a child support credit due to overpayment on his case that has terminated without going through a hearing. The Committee requests that a FOCB customer service clerk respond to this litigant informing him that he may file a grievance, and he also has time to file an objection to the recommendation and schedule a hearing in front of the judge.

3. Unfinished Business

a. Child Support Program Funding

Mr. Wright charged the Committee with coming up with suggestions as to what is going to happen as of October 1, 2007 when the cuts from the federal program come down.

Discussion

The child support computer program that is in effect due to the federal requirements costs \$53 million every year to run MiCSES. How does this get funded? The Committee recommends that the issue of contracting out to run MiCSES to private vendor(s) versus the state hiring employees to do it is an idea that should be evaluated by whoever the appropriate person is. That an analysis be done on whether it would be financially smarter for the state to actually hire staff versus the cost effectiveness of bidding out contracts to private companies. It was suggested that millions of dollars not be continued to be poured into contracts with private companies to run the MiCSES system and the Michigan State Disbursement Unit (MiSDU) because of the question of efficiency. Mr. Paruk and Mrs. House will work together to research copies of birth certificates, marriage licenses and affidavit of parentage fees and their prospective in changing or increasing these fees to help increase revenue to fund MiCSES.

Child Support Program Review Committee (CASPER)

Mr. Capps informed the Advisory Committee about CASPER, which is an ad hoc committee that examines the system to determine if there are ways of finding increases in revenues or streamlining the system to the whole child support program to make recommendations to the Program Leadership Group (PLG). The Committee has nine people, (two from SCAO, two from OCS, one from DIT, and two from PAAM) and meets every two weeks at the Hall of Justice.

Murray Davis' Recommendations

Mr. Davis e-mailed the Committee with material with respect to providing assistance and ideas about how to increase revenue or cut costs. One alternative he would like considered is in addition to finding new and increased sources of revenue, to make up for the shortage, why not find ways to reduce the caseload. This will eliminate further growth of caseloads, and it could provide adequate services to the client bases as well. If there is a way to somehow reduce the demands on the court system for some of these active cases, then by shifting some

of the load off on to both parents, there may be an opportunity to reduce some of the caseload. He lists his three recommendations in his correspondence listed A-C on page 2 as well as supporting documents. The Committee discussed the recommendations, and decided that further discussion will be tabled for the next meeting.

Listening Tours

Mr. Capps informed the Committee that Dan Wright, Marilyn Stephen and other Bureau staff have been meeting with all the regions in the state to try to solicit ideas on how to increase funding for the computer system.

4. New Business

- a. Hot Topics – None

5. Closing

- a. Members Closing Comments – None
- b. Final Public Comment – Ms. Lickman suggested looking into the six sigma methodology with respect to streamlining work processes and identify overlaps, this methodology is designed for these purposes. She will e-mail the Committee with more information and a contact person.
- c. Next Meeting Date: **July 13, 2006 at 12:00 p.m.**
- d. Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Darla Brandon