

Approved 5-6-92
Date

MINUTES OF THE House COMMITTEE ON Computers, Communications & Technology.

The meeting was called to order by George Dean at
Chairperson

12:00 ~~xxx~~ p.m. on February 19, 1992 in room 529-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative McKechnie - Absent
Representative Kline - Excused
Representative Mead - Excused
Representative Patrick - Excused

Committee staff present:

Julian Efird, Research
Donna Stadel, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Dr. Howard Schwartz - Supreme Court

Others attending: See attached list.

Chairman Dean opened the meeting introducing Dr. Howard Schwartz, judicial administrator for the Kansas courts systems, who addressed the committee regarding computer needs of the appellate courts, and also, the needs for the trial courts to have the ability to interact with all other criminal justice agencies (attachment 1).

Discussion followed regarding how the judicial office might be computerized; coordination and sharing of records within the judicial system; who would operate the system once installed; doing a study to determine needs; and funds for the study. Dr. Schwartz stated DISC had testified that such a study would cost \$50,000. The Senate Appropriations Committee has allocated \$35,000 to do such a study.

Chairman Dean stated he had requested Revisor Jim Wilson to draft a Concurrent Resolution. After much discussion among the committee and conferees present regarding cost and what the HCR should contain, it was decided the Resolution would be drafted urging the Kansas Supreme Court to conduct a thorough needs analysis for the Unified Judicial Branch for the purposes of a Judicial Branch Information System which is consistent and compatible with and which produces data directly useable by the information systems of other state agencies required to receive information from, or exchange information with, the Judicial Branch Information System.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned until Thursday, February 20, 1992.

House Computers, Communications and Technology Committee
February 19, 1992

Testimony of Howard Schwartz
Judicial Administrator
Office of Judicial Administration

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee:

I thank you for the opportunity to discuss with you the automation needs of the Kansas Judicial Branch. I would like to begin my presentation with a brief description of our current technology.

The Judicial Center Wang VS computer system was purchased in 1984 to provide word processing support for preparation of judicial opinions. The system was purchased with the ability to support approximately thirty users. Since the acquisition of this system it has been expanded to support inter-office electronic mail, communication with the state mainframe systems for payroll and personnel support, a database for tracking Supreme Court and Court of Appeals cases, and a host of other smaller, though significant, applications. In addition, the system now supports nearly 80 users.

The Wang VS system has served our needs well through the last eight years. Perhaps, too well, because the demands we are placing on the machine are beginning to exceed the capacity of the system. Our dependence on the system is forcing us to consider alternatives. We believe that there are three major problems with our existing system which require us to seriously study an overall system upgrade.

Our first problem is system capacity. Currently, we have approximately 80 terminals and personal computers connected to the Judicial Center Wang system. This leaves nearly forty research attorneys, receptionists, clerks, and other employees without access to the system. We have staff bringing personal computers from home to do their work because we cannot provide them with terminals or personal computers.

In addition to supporting users we also have problems with the capacity of the machine to handle the volume of work to be performed. We are faced with a situation where automation proposals have to be evaluated in terms of performance of the machine instead of increased productivity of staff, or service to the public. In short, the existing system is not capable of meeting the current and anticipated needs of the Judicial Branch.

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Attachment 1
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A second major problem with the existing system is the rate at which maintenance costs are increasing. Since Wang discontinued manufacture of our particular model in 1987, parts for maintenance and upgrades have become increasingly difficult to obtain. The first year maintenance costs for our system were less than \$12,000. In FY 1992 we have encumbered \$69,000 for maintenance costs. Over that last five years maintenance expenditures have climbed an average of 12% annually. At this pace the expected cost of system maintenance for the next five years will be more than \$400,000. Because of the age of our system, maintenance costs are at a level nearly five times higher than state-of-the-art technology."

Another significant problem with our existing system is our dependence on a single machine. We believe that some form of duplicity must be developed to prevent all Judicial Center work activity from coming to a halt when problems develop with the system. We became acutely aware of this problem last April when our system was down for repairs for an extended period of time. We were forced to delay release of a number of Supreme Court and Court of Appeals decisions during this time period.

What is needed is a comprehensive analysis of Judicial Branch automation requirements. Failure to look at the "big picture" could result in a poorly designed system which fails to meet our needs. Worse, it could result in development of a hodge-podge of small, incompatible, highly specialized systems which would be impossible to connect or adequately maintain.

Our plans include a comprehensive study of automation requirements, analysis of automation alternatives, preparation of a multi-year automation plan to meet our requirements, and commencement of hardware and software acquisition during FY 1993. We have requested assistance from the Division of Information Systems and Communications, and other state agencies to help us plan this acquisition in a cost effective and reasonably prudent manner.

In summary, we are asking for the opportunity to study the automation needs of the Judicial Branch and "do it right , the first time."