

Public Access to Court Records Task Force
October 27, 2004
Justice Building
Little Rock, Arkansas

Minutes

The Public Access to Court Records Task Force met on Wednesday, October 27, 2004 in Room 101 of the Justice Building in Little Rock with Steve Sipes presiding.

The meeting was called to order by Steve Sipes. Those in attendance were Steve Sipes, Pulaski County Court Administrator; Ben Story, Arkansas Judicial Council; Matthew Miller, Bureau of Legislative Research; Tim Holthoff, AOC; Didi Sallings, Arkansas Public Defender Commission; Tom Larimer, Arkansas Press Association; Jeff Moore, Arkansas Bar Association; Rick Peltz, UALR Law School; Ashley Fisher, Attorney General's Office; Jeannie Steen, Arkansas Circuit Clerk's Association; Jayne Ann Kita, Arkansas Coalition Against Domestic Violence; Kathy Gattin, Office of Information Technology; Karolyn Bond, AOC; John Stewart, AOC; Tom Tatum, Arkansas Prosecuting Attorney Association; Tim Tarvin, U of A School of Law; Mark Johnson, AOC; Allison Bratton, District Judges' Council; Pam King, AOC.

A motion was made by Didi Sallings, seconded by John Stewart and approved to accept the minutes of September 22, 2004 as presented.

The Task Force was provided with part I of the draft model policy prepared by Tim Holthoff and Steve Sipes for review and discussion.

The Task Force was able to review and discuss Sections I through III of the draft policy.

Didi Sallings and Ben Story raised concern about having exhibits made part of the file accessible to the public whether admitted or not.

There was discussion about chain of custody issues with respect to admitted evidence and prejudice issues with respect to evidence which was suppressed at trial or subsequent to appeal.

Tim Tarvin questioned the legal and logistical problems related to making some exhibits accessible online, particularly in real time.

It was the consensus that exhibits would not be subject to public access, but that an interested party could petition the trial court for access and access would be decided by the court on a case by case basis.

Tim Holthoff stated that he would exclude exhibits from court and case records definitions and make a separate definition for exhibits.

Two additional meeting dates were set for Tuesday, November 9th at 1:00 p.m. and Thursday, December 9th at 1:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.