

MEETING MINUTES
MINUTE ENTRY REFORM WORK GROUP
1501 West Washington
Phoenix, AZ
June 7, 2002
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Attendees:

Kent Batty	Pima County
Louise Beitel	Pima County
Carolyn Castillo	Navajo County
Marian Catt	Maricopa County
Hon. Jeff Coker	Coconino County
Linda Huston	Pima County
Hon. Jan Kearny	Pima County
Denise Lundin	Cochise County
Hon. Clark Munger	Pima County
Melody Tinsley	Maricopa County

Staff: Jennifer Greene, Ted Wilson, Court Services Division, AOC

1. Progress of Maricopa Minute Entry Elimination/Reform Efforts

Marian Catt and Melody Tinsley provided an update on minute entry reforms in Maricopa Superior Court. Judge Burke is conducting a pilot project in the civil department that will, among other changes, reduce “trial” minute entries to one document with an entry for each day of trial. Each entry would be limited in scope. They now leave out juror names, details of rulings, and descriptions of exhibits. In the past, one trial minute entry could run to three or four pages. The new entry will be more like a half page or less. It would be processed at the end of the trial. They also anticipate that judicial assistants will begin performing more of the administrative entries in the docket by the end of this calendar year. For all case types, law firms are now getting copies of minute entries by e-mail. The clerk in Judge Donahoe’s court is piloting the use of the JAVS digital recording system to create a minute entry that can be cut and pasted from the JAVS (Jefferson Audio Visual System) “notes” function into a separate minute entry record.

Marian will bring someone from her office to the next meeting to explain how they set up a law firm to accept electronically transmitted minute entries. She explained that their new practice of posting minute entries to the Clerk of the Court Web site has met with favorable reviews. Not only do lawyers use it to get early notification of information contained in minute entries, but judges are using it too, since the minute entry is generally posted to the Web faster than it is filed into the paper file. They are not posting minute entries from mental health or sealed cases.

Pima is also beginning to experiment with using its JAVS system for drafting minute entries. The JAVS audio system costs around \$3500, the For The Record (FTR) digital recording system runs \$7000, and the full JAVS video and e-presentation system costs approximately \$70,000.

In Maricopa, court administrators are now using the Clerk's FTR equipment as a substitute for court reporters in ten domestic relations courts. Parties must request a live court reporter if they don't want the FTR digital record.

2. Reports of Subcommittees

A. Curriculum/Training – Denise Lundin described the presentation she made with Judge Coker at the upcoming New Judge Orientation in April. The Work Group's recommended practices on when to use a minute entry and when to create a separate order were met with general acceptance. They will also be presenting the Work Group's recommendations at the Presiding Judge's quarterly meeting on June 11. Kent Batty and Judge Munger were added to this subcommittee.

B. Rules – Jennifer Greene reviewed the revised draft of a Rule 28 petition that amends several rules of procedure to implement the changes proposed by the Work Group. Judge Munger suggested that the proposed rule defining Minute Entries be reworded to reflect the circumstances under which a minute entry or order or notice would be most appropriately generated. Judge Kearny was added to this subcommittee.

Several members expressed an interest in reviewing the many juvenile court rules of procedure that reference "minute entry or order." They promised to get back to Jennifer with their thoughts on whether these rules should be amended or left as is, given that in the juvenile setting judges are not supposed to take issues under advisement, so generally their orders and rulings are announced in open court.

C. Technology – Jennifer identified the counties that have not yet responded to the technology survey (Apache, Greenlee, Navajo and Yuma). Carolyn Castillo promised to send responses in the near future for Navajo. The subcommittee will review the responses and provide a written summary for the next meeting.

D. Document Development – Linda Huston and Louise Beitel were added to this subcommittee.

3. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the work group will be held on September 13th from 9 AM to 1 PM at the superior court in Tucson. Kent Batty agreed to host the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 2 PM.