

TO: CACC/COT

FR: Mesa Municipal Court
Matt Tafoya Presiding Judge
Paul Thomas, Court Administrator

DATE: September 22, 2014 ---CACC
November 4, 2014 ---COT

RE: Exception Request

Executive Summary

In summary and in response to:

“Principles Underlying Requests for Exceptions to Statewide Standards:”

- City/County investment has already been made (apart from the court) that reduces the cost to the court.

The City of Mesa has a large fully-staffed Information Technology Department. This department has a long history of fully resourcing the court's automation daily needs, regularly scheduled equipment and software upgrades, and assembling all the necessary skilled staff for the court's automation initiatives. The Mesa IT Department has specifically assigned staff to the court full time. This support comes at NO COST to the court.

- Overall cost (total cost of ownership) is reduced from that of implementing the statewide standard. This savings must be balanced against the potential impacts to the broader Branch initiatives. Specific areas to be considered are: financial leverage, integration, support and training.

The total cost of ownership experiences a very significant cost reduction. Use of the statewide standard would require a level of AOC on-going maintenance and consequently a funding commitment to the AOC. More critically, automation features unique to the Mesa Municipal Court's operational requirements would require additional development funding through contracted or vendor based resources. This is typically very expensive and could make some initiatives cost prohibitive. This would also be a direct expense to the Mesa Municipal Court. Use of the Tempe (Themis) CMS provides an automation platform completely supported by the Mesa IT Department at no cost. Most important, especially in

*light of the Mesa Municipal Court's aggressive pursuit of automation, new initiatives, **training** and development would be entirely supported by the Mesa IT Department at NO COST to the Court.*

- Overall risk is reduced from that of implementing the statewide standard.

The overall risk of implementation is extremely reduced from that of the statewide standard for three reasons:

- 1. The system has been in use in Tempe since 2009 and is a proven system.*
- 2. Mesa Court and IT Department have familiarity with the Themis code. Mesa IT staff assisted with the final testing of Themis over a 9 month period in 2009. Themis processes are designed similar to the Mesa Court's current system; conversion and training significantly easier.*
- 3. Implementation of AJACS has significant risk in the fact that it has not been fully tested using a complex database. The support of AJACS at this time has significant stability risks.*

- The local IT function is/will be providing support.

The Mesa IT Department has and continues to provide a very high level of support for the Mesa Municipal Court.

- The technology demonstrates long-term viability. This must include the consideration of the vendor's viability and future costs to evolve the technology solution.

Prior to this "Exception Request" the Mesa IT Department conducted a technical evaluation of the Themis code. This evaluation determined that the code was viable, well documented, and contained the flexibility for modifications or enhancements. Mesa IT has indicated that intentions by the Mesa Court and IT Department to move to a web-based solution can be easily accomplished with the Themis system. Use of Themis, and the local support of the Mesa IT Department eliminates all the risks and costs associated with a vendor based solution. Mesa IT assumes responsibility for all technology elements of the Themis application – ongoing development, support and adherence to the Memorandum of Understanding with Tempe (as it pertains to sharing of application improvements).

- Substantially greater productivity is enabled through adoption of a local standard.

Use of Themis as a local standard will enable not substantial, but extraordinary productivity. The reason for this, as evidenced by the Mesa Municipal Court's Records of success, lies in the ability completely control and, resource development at the local level.

This success includes development of:

- *Bench automation –fully automated judicial bench options,*
- *Electronic Document Management System –which converted 96,000 paper case files into electronic files, all court case files, case processing, dispositioning, motion activity etc. is all electronic,*
- *Use of integrated Q-matic systems,*
- *Use of auto-dialer systems for placing calls*
- *Use of Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR)*
- *Use of Web-services*

These automated processes have significantly increased court productivity, reduced staff need, and expanded public access. Many court functions are accomplished through the court's web-services. The court experiences over 300,000 web and IVR "hits" per/year and receives over \$6,000,000.00 in web/IVR based collections.

The success of these technology achievements are the result of over 22 years of supporting projects with the full complement of technical resources provided by the Mesa IT Department, in conjunction with Court staff who understand the potential use of technology for court processes. Local control of the court's case management system gives the Mesa Court to continuously launch new automation initiatives. This is a critical factor in the Court's future success.