



COUNCIL JUDICIAL COMMITTEE MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, AUGUST 15, 2013

The City of Austin Council Judicial Committee convened on Thursday, August 15, 2013 in the Boards and Commissions Room, First Floor Room 1100, City Hall, 301 West Second Street, Austin, Texas. Present were Mayor Leffingwell, Council Member Martinez, and Council Member Spelman.

1. Call meeting to order:

The meeting was called to order by the Mayor at 2:37 p.m.

2. Citizen communication:

Mr. Bradley Hargis of the Austin Criminal Defense Lawyer's Association addressed judicial concerns with the recent survey sent out that did not include Criminal Defense Bar members and asked that they be included in future surveys. He also recommended that posting for judicial appointments require criminal law experience; the current posting does not have this requirement.

Susana Almanza brought forth recommendations from Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life to create a Community Youth Court. This Community Youth Court would be designed with features of problem-solving courts, focus on positive case outcomes, reducing recidivism and truancy, and advocating for system change and reform by actively engaging the community. She also recommended increasing the funding for case managers from \$4 to \$5.

Teresa Perez-Wisley the outgoing chair of Hispanic Quality of Life taskforce recommended that the City Council follow through on the LULAC District County Seven's requests.

3. Minute consideration:

A motion was made by Council Member Spelman, seconded by Council Member Martinez, to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2013 meeting without objection. The motion carried with all members voting AYE.

4. Introduction of Deputy Court Clerk Yolanda McKnight.

5. Discussion regarding the Judicial Support Task Force (JSTF) of the City of Austin/Travis County/Austin Independent School District Joint Subcommittee: Judge Leonard Saenz and Judy Cortez recommended implementing a one-court one-judge model juvenile court. They would like this judge to be in the community, culturally competent, bilingual and have judicial leadership over all the stakeholders (families, schools, and caseworkers), take a holistic approach to being less punitive and more supportive of our children and families.

Council Member Martinez suggested drafting an ordinance.

Mayor Leffingwell asked the law department to mediate some discussion and draw up some backup or alternative for the September 12th meeting.

6. Discussion regarding status of the new municipal courthouse:
The Finance Department is working on a statement of work for a RFP.
7. Discussion regarding the use of electronic recording of court proceedings in lieu of court reporters:
We have one courtroom with the equipment that we have been testing for two years and would like to proceed in extending it to three other courtrooms. We will continue to use a court reporter one day a month at City Hall for the Downtown Austin Community Court. Action on this item was postponed to engage in more discussion with Judges and stakeholders.

Executive Session

8. The mayor announced that we would go into executive session pursuant to 551.074 to evaluate the performance of the Presiding Judge, Associate Judges and Substitute Judges of the City of Austin Municipal Court. Then they moved to executive session room at 3:38 p.m.
9. The Mayor and Council returned from Executive session at 3:49 p.m. The Mayor called the meeting back to order and asked if there were any further discussion or possible action regarding appointing or reappointing Associate Judges, Substitute Judges, and the Presiding Judge to the City of Austin Municipal Court for terms beginning January 1, 2014. A motion was made by Council Member Spelman, seconded by Council Member Martinez, to postpone action till the September 12th meeting. The motion carried with all members voting AYE.
10. Adjourn:
There being no further agenda items, the meeting adjourned without objection at 3:55 p.m.

Prepared by:



Rebecca Stark
Clerk of the Municipal Court

APPROVED:

Approved by Mayor Leffingwell and Council Member Martinez at the Council Judicial Committee meeting held on September 12, 2013
Rebecca Stark