

**Arkansas District Judges Council
Business Meeting
Thursday, April 26, 2007
Little Rock, Arkansas – Doubletree Hotel**

The spring meeting of the Arkansas District Judges Council was called to order by Judge Rusty Porter of Helena-West Helena, President.

On a motion by Judge Jack Roberts of Conway, seconded by Judge Dan Stidham of Paragould, the minutes of the September 2006 business meeting were unanimously approved.

Judge Mike Robinson of Benton, Secretary-Treasurer of the Council, reported the Council's treasury had a balance of \$ 37,246.05 as of April 25, 2007. (Attached)

A motion to adopt the Treasurer's Report was introduced by Judge Butch Hale of Sherwood and seconded by Judge Stidham. The motion was unanimously approved.

Judge Porter called for reports from the following:

Pilot courts – Judge Robinson reported that the pilot court judges would be meeting on Friday, April 27 at the hotel for breakfast. Staff from the Administrative Office of the Courts will be on hand to discuss Act 663 and plans for training for judges and for clerks.

Retirement – Roger Smith, lobbyist, explained the dissolution of the Arkansas District Judges Retirement System and encouraged judges to call APERS with individual questions they had.

Court Security – J.D. Gingerich, director of the Administrative Office of the Courts, reported that the Court Security Task Force successfully received some funding to begin to assist courts with developing security plans. Judges will receive more information.

Court Automation Project – Mr. Gingerich reported that during the past five years several million dollars had been spent to develop software for courts. Presently four district courts (Carlisle, Conway, Malvern and Mt. Ida) are using the software. Judges received packets with information on applying to receive the software. Mr. Gingerich said that three or four more district courts will be able to receive the software within the next few months.

Judicial Council liaisons – Circuit Judge Kim Smith of Fayetteville, President of the Arkansas Judicial Council, thanked the Council for inviting him and Circuit Judge Sam Pope of Hamburg to attend the District Judges Council meeting. The Judicial Council has also begun inviting two representatives of the District Judges Council to attend their meetings. Earlier in the month, Judge Wren Autrey of Texarkana and Judge Robert Abney of Des Arc represented the District Judges Council at the Judicial Council meeting.

Arkansas Bar Association liaison – Judge Finley reported he has represented the Council at meetings of the ABA’s Board of Governors.

On a motion by the Board, seconded by Judge George VanHook of El Dorado, the Council voted unanimously to amend the bylaws to include the duties of the district court coordinator and to give the coordinator responsibility for the treasury of the Council with financial oversight by the Secretary-Treasurer.

The report of the nominating committee was presented by Judge Jim Hamilton of North Little Rock. On the committee’s motion, seconded by Judge Roberts, the membership unanimously adopted the slate of officers.

President	Judge John Finley, Ashdown
Vice President	Judge Mike Robinson, Benton
Secretary-Treasurer	Judge Mike Irwin, Heber Springs
First District Representative	Judge Dan Stidham, Paragould
Second District Representative	Judge Butch Hale, Sherwood
Third District Representative	Judge Doug Schrantz, Rogers
Fourth District Representative	Judge Kim Bridgforth, Pine Bluff

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kay S. Palmer
District Court Coordinator

Approved by:

Mike Robinson
Secretary-Treasurer
Arkansas District Judges Council

Date:_____