

# Judicial Selection Working Group Committee Meeting

February 18, 2016 Minutes

The meeting was convened at 11:40 a.m.

The committee approved the minutes of the September 17, 2015 meeting. The motion was made by Judge Blick and seconded by Judge Keeney. Pass unanimously.

Judge Knierim began the meeting by mentioning the legislative proposal by the State Election Enforcement Commission that would study if probate judge elections should be included in the state's public campaign finance law.

Judge Knierim also briefed the committee on the Probate Courts' budget situation.

Today's discussions:

## **1. Full-time Positions**

The committee discussed ways in which Special Assignment Probate Judges could voluntarily serve full-time with pay commiserate with a workers compensation commissioner. They could assist with administrative functions, serve as administrative judges in the regional children's' courts and cover for judges when on vacation or ill. Full-time judges could also cover long term vacancies due to retirement or death.

A constitutional amendment would be required to allow retired judges over 70 years old to serve in a capacity like Superior Court referees.

## **2. Retention Elections**

Vincent Russo presented a summary of retention elections. Many states use retention elections for judicial elections. They attempt to remove the overtly political function of campaigning for judges, including fundraising, while still giving the populace a voice in who serves as judge.

The committee did not schedule another meeting. They agreed to reconvene if some legislative action caused concern.

The meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m.