

**COURT EN BANC MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, April 22, 2020, at 3:00 p.m.**  
**Zoom Meeting**

- Judges Present:** Judges Kevin Crane, Brouck Jacobs, Jeff Harris, Jodie Asel, Kimberly Shaw, Carol England, Sue Crane, Tracy Gonzalez, Leslie Schneider, Stephanie Morrell, Commissioners Sara Miller and Casey Clevenger, and Columbia Municipal Judge Cavanaugh Noce.
- Others Present:** Boone County Circuit Clerk Christy Blakemore and Court Manager Sherry Seiling, Callaway County Circuit Clerk Megan Morse, Adult Court Services Supervisor Brandon Walker, 13<sup>th</sup> District Defender Sarah Aplin and Assistant District Defender Jeremy Pilkington, Court Marshal Ben Pruett, Court Reporter Julia Paulus, Technology Services Supervisor Chris Fishman-Weaver, Fulton Sun Reporter Olivia Garrett, Court Administrator Mary Epping and Deputy Court Administrator Cindy Garrett.

**1. Call to Order/Welcome**

The meeting was called to order at 3:09 p.m. by Judge Kevin Crane. Judge Crane welcomed guests.

**2. 13th Circuit Court Operations and COVID Issues**

The following items were discussed and agreed upon:

Circuit Judges Kevin Crane, Jeff Harris and Brouck Jacobs agreed to assume some of the Landlord/Tenant cases in Boone County currently set for May 11, 2020 with Judge Tracy Gonzalez. They agreed executions of evictions were suspended until after June 1. Once cases are identified to be reassigned, the clerk should reach out to each judge to inquire when they want the cases set.

Judges Sue Crane and Carol England are testing using Zoom at a Kiosk in Callaway County due to a space problem within the courtrooms. This would entail a laptop being set up within the courthouse lobby with a live videoconference feed with the judges. The individual would walk up to the laptop, report their name, and the judge will handle their case. They said the Court Marshals will help manage the Kiosk. Circuit Clerk Megan Morse said the Kiosk will be connected to the county wifi.

Circuit Clerk Christy Blakemore requested judges provide her staff with better direction on how they want to handle cases with defendants without counsel from now through May 15, 2020. Judge Kevin Crane requested that his email to the clerks be forwarded to the judges on how he chose to handle his cases.

Boone County associate circuit judges reported they plan to hear pro se criminal cases. It was agreed the defendant's request to be on Zoom will be filed with the court, along with an email address. The judges agreed they would see the email address and therefore send a Zoom invite.

All agreed jury trials are to resume after May 18, 2020, at the discretion of each judge. For jury trials currently scheduled prior to May 18 they should be returned to the trial setting docket, including speedy trial requests as the pandemic is considered good cause for continuing these cases.

Circuit judges reported they will be remote on their law days of May 4 and May 11, 2020. Circuit judges are willing to discuss the possibility of being remote in Callaway County for law days for a period of time to allow associate judges more courtroom space to catch up cases they have had to continue during the pandemic.

It was agreed the Covid-19 Administrative Order will be updated to extend through May 15, 2020. It was requested that a garnishment to bank accounts be suspended through June 1, 2020, excluding child support and restitution to victims.

Some judges reported that after May 15, 2020, they will continue to appear remotely. Court Administrator Mary Epping encouraged judges to continue using the technology. She reported the judiciary is looking at using Webex for confidential cases and ultimately we might need to start migrating to Webex versus Zoom.

There was discussion regarding safeguards to be put in place once in person court appearances are allowed. Mary said the current expectation is to have people self-police and not to mark the floors with 6 foot indicators. Mary said the court can provide masks if people are coughing. She said signs will remain on the front doors advising people not to enter if they are running a fever. Judge Kevin Crane suggested we contact the local health departments and request they provide guidance. Judge Jeff Harris suggested some hearings continue to be conducted remotely to minimize human presence in the courtroom. Circuit judges agreed they can also look to have law days on days other than Monday. There was discussion about ex parte full order hearings having staggered start times. The first ex parte dockets which will require in person hearing will be held on May 4, 2020, in Callaway County and on May 6, 2020, in Boone County.

All judges said they are comfortable using the waiting room in Zoom. It was noted you have to be the host to control the waiting room.

Judge Stephanie Morrell said starting Monday, April 27, 2020, Boone County associate judges will assume their normal dockets. She said the afternoon arraignment dockets will start at 1:00 p.m., including the Friday arraignment docket facilitated by Judge Jacobs. It was agreed the clerk does not need to reset the cases set at 1:30 to 1:00 as all defense attorneys and the jail have been sent notice of the time change and the Zoom invitation will say 1:00 p.m.

Judge Jeff Harris said for out of custody defendants who are sentenced to prison, he will tell them to surrender by a date certain.

Judge Sue Crane moved to adjourn. Second: Judge Stephanie Morrell. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 4:34 p.m.

Prepared and Submitted by: Cindy Garrett  
Cindy Garrett  
Deputy Court Administrator

Submitted by: Mary Eppling  
Mary Eppling  
Court Administrator

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