

**MINUTES**  
**FLORIDA CLERKS OF COURT OPERATIONS CORPORATION**  
**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2005**  
**HYATT, INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**  
**ORLANDO, FLORIDA**

The January 19, 2005 meeting of the Executive Council of the Clerks of Court Operations Corporation (CCOC) was called to order at 1:30 p.m. by Chairman Maryanne Morse who welcomed members and guests. Members and staff of the Executive Council of the Corporation present were the Honorable Maryanne Morse, Honorable Jeffrey K. Barton, Honorable Jim Fuller, Honorable Howard Forman, Honorable Harvey Ruvin, Honorable Tim Smith, Honorable Richard Weiss, John Dew, Joseph Boyd, and Judy Zorn. Honorable Annie Mae Murphy participated by telephone. Ms. Morse announced that a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Ms. Morse asked for a motion to approve the Meeting Agenda. Mr. Barton so moved and Mr. Ruvin seconded the motion. The Agenda was unanimously approved.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 16, 2004**

Ms. Morse asked if there were any revisions to the draft minutes from the November 16, 2004 meeting. There being none, a motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Forman and seconded by Mr. Barton. The minutes were approved as circulated.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Mr. Barton reported that since our last meeting on November 16, 2004, we have received and deposited a check from the CFO in the amount of \$175,000. We have written forty checks totaling \$100,450.26. In addition, we have checks pending distribution in the amount of \$145,561.87 leaving \$79,062.04 available for Corporation use. Mr. Weiss moved that the Treasurer's Report be filed for audit. Seconded by Mr. Ruvin, the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Dew stated that the format for the next Treasurer's Report will include a comparison of budget allocations and amounts spent producing a Year-To-Date analysis of our finances. In addition, we will separate those payments pursuant to the FACC Education Contract.

**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Performance Measures:**

Ms. Murphy announced that a draft of the report to be sent to the CFO is attached. According to the survey, it will be almost impossible for all the Clerks to submit a performance measures analysis by April 2005 because they do not have systems currently

in place to capture the information. We do think however that within a few months most Clerks will have the capability to capture performance measures data. Mr. Forman stated that some of the non-compliance issues are universal. Larger counties have more technology and therefore may already be able to electronically capture the data. He asked what reaction we expect from the CFO, DFS, and the Legislature if we delay Clerks reporting for 3 months. Mr. Dew said he has spoken with Mr. Marshall, the CFO Contract Manager. Mr. Marshall stated he will take our recommendation back to his leadership so they can see the results of the survey. They will also want to see what the Council decides regarding how to proceed. Mr. Dew said that if we can delay for at least three more months, then most clerks will be able to submit this information. He does believe that DFS will work with us on this issue since it is a reasonable recommendation. We all want to receive correct information. Mr. Dew has not spoken with the Legislature on this issue.

Mr. Smith asked if we realistically feel the clerks will be able to submit performance measure information at the end of the proposed 3 month extension. Mr. Dew replied that we believe that, within the next 5 ½ months, the majority of the clerks will be able to comply with the majority of these issues. Ms. Morse pointed out that the biggest issue is providing data on assessments and collections using accounts receivables method combined with the aging of cases.

Ms. Murphy requested approval from the Council to submit the attached report to the CFO. Ms. Morse recommended that we delete the words “in consultation with the CFO” from the section of the report involving development of report format since this is the Conference’s responsibility and we know that CCOC staff will be working with CFO staff anyway. Mr. Barton moved that we delete the words “in consultation with the CFO” from #4 of the Report and approve the report. Mr. Smith seconded his motion which passed unanimously. Mr. Dew said he would make the recommended change in the report and provide the approved product to the CFO by the end of the month as required in our contract.

### **Legislative Committee**

Howard Forman provided a list of his key issues of concern to CCOC members. Those listed include changing the date for the Clerk’s budget submittal to the CCOC from August 1 to August 15, placing the \$75 appeals fees back into law, clarifying language regarding unclaimed bond monies being part of fines and forfeitures, increasing fees for certain drivers licenses issues including the dismissal fee, and increasing the traffic criminal fee, and rebasing which will be discussed with Clerks’ financial workgroup in late February.

Mr. Ruvin asked if rebasing would include the issues of employment contracts and anticipated insurance contracts. Mr. Forman stated it does not currently include those issues. Ms. Morse stated that rebasing is outlined by the statute: one year is used as your baseline with future years being based on revenue increases over that initial year’s base revenue. Mr. Ruvin asked if there are any plans to ask for an amendment to include expenditures as mentioned above. Mr. Dew reported that he is working with Mr. Weiss’s

staff and Glenn Robertson to identify problems with rebasing that might require Legislative change. This could mean having legislation that would supplement the revenue projection model and possibly include basing the cap in part on population growth or other alternatives. Different alternatives will be discussed with the Budget workgroup that will meet in Clearwater on February 25<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Dew stated that while Mr. Ruvin's issues can be addressed, we have nothing before the Legislature at this time. The deadline for presenting issues for the Glitch Bill is January 20. Mr. Ruvin expressed his concern that we aren't prepared to present these problems in a bill to the Legislature. Ms. Morse stated we are aware of the problems and are trying to work to solve them. Mr. Dew stated we have asked all along for clerks to submit their problems so we can address them and he is grateful for the information he has received. We will discuss with the workgroup in February how many clerks will be affected by rebasing, what the problems are, and how rebasing will affect them.

Mr. Barton said he would also like this workgroup to discuss the tremendous problem clerks are having budgeting for staff for new magistrates. Mr. Dew said he understands that the Legislature approved 35 new magistrates last year and he has contacted OSCA for information as to which counties these magistrates are being placed in. We hope we will be able to work with the Legislature to assure that in the future when new judges, hearing officers, magistrates, and special masters are authorized, the Clerk's expenditure cap could be increased to cover those associated costs. Ms. Morse stated that while no additional funds were allocated for new judges in this last Legislative session, it is her understanding that there will be a number of judges funded. With Clerks' budgets being capped, there are no available dollars to hire staff for new general masters, magistrates, and hearing officers. The impact will continue to be felt as these judges and special masters come on board. She feels it is imperative to ensure that the Legislature understands that we need to be able to add staff whenever we add judges. She suggested we develop a judicial formula for automatic addition of personnel to Clerk's office to staff additional judicial appointees. Ideally, she would like to make this retroactive to July 1, 2004. Ms. Morse suggested the formula should be a 2.5 person / judge ratio. Mr. Forman agreed with Ms. Morse that we need to develop some type of formula. He also stated that he would like to have his and all Clerks' staffs work with Mr. Dew concerning these issues.

Mr. Weiss stated that he would like to discuss the use of recording fees to help Clerks fund their court related expenses. Ms. Morse stated that this issue is not an Article V issue and not relevant to CCOC. Mr. Weiss also asked about reopen fees, suggesting that these fees have not come in as projected. Further, if they continue to not produce the revenue as expected, then maybe we should recommend that such fees be abolished and filing fees be increased instead. Mr. Forman stated that while many litigators have spoken against reopen fees and while garnishment has eliminated some of the problems, he would hate to give up the reopen fees without assurance that filing fees could be increased to make up for that loss. Mr. Dew pointed out that it is his understanding the FACC will be discussing this at their conference later in January. Mr. Forman suggested we wait until after that conference meeting to determine whether we should address the issue.

Ms. Morse asked if there has been any discussion with legislative staff regarding changing the calendar year. In parts of the statute, reference is made to the state fiscal year. Other parts of the statute refer to the county fiscal year. She recognizes the difficulty Clerks have in operating on a July 1 – June 30 fiscal year when they almost all operate on October 1 – September 30 fiscal year and the rest is done on a normal calendar year. Mr. Dew said there has been no discussion with legislative staff on this particular issue but will investigate the dates and determine where such changes would be beneficial.

Ms. Morse recapped the legislative issues: changing the date submission of Clerk budgets from August 1 to August 15, placing the appeals fees back into law, clarifying language to include unclaimed bond monies as part of fines and forfeitures, increasing fees for certain drivers licenses, potentially revising rebasing contingent on the workshop in Pinellas the end of February; providing an increase in the reschedule fee for traffic; changing the fiscal year to match the county fiscal year; and developing a formula for clerk staff based on new judicial appointments. Mr. Forman moved and Mr. Barton seconded his motion that we accept this list of issues. Mr. Ellspermann, Marion County Clerk and FACC Legislative Chair, stated that he spoke with Senator Rod Smith who directed him to speak with Mr. Baggett, FACC General Counsel, to work on language to accommodate the new judges issue and unfunded mandates. He suggested we talk with Mr. Baggett on this issue. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Budget Issues:**

Decreased Expenditure Cap – Mr. Dew reported that in reviewing the methodology used by Nassau Clerk staff to develop their in-kind services provided by the county, he found clerk staff mistakenly added the projected increase in health insurance for the next fiscal year. Including a projected increase for the next fiscal year was not allowed by the CCOC in the methodology for determining expenditure caps for any Clerks. Mr. Dew said therefore the certified budget cap for Nassau County should be decreased by \$23,104 to rectify the mistake. Mr. Barton moved to accept the recommendation to decrease the Nassau Clerk's budget by \$23,104 and set their expenditure cap to \$2,069,515. Ms. Murphy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Budget Amendment Requests (BARs) - Mr. Dew first provided a history of the BAR's that have been approved to date. The Council has approved BARs for 7 Clerk offices for the 03/04 fourth quarter in the amount of \$522,269.04. Two Clerks had BARs approved for the 04/05 year in the amount of \$635,282. All the approved BARs were a result of less revenues being realized than projected.

03/04 BARs - Prior to presenting the first BAR request which was from the Flagler Clerk of Court, Mr. Dew mentioned that along with the BAR form submitted from Mr. Pulliam, Flagler County's financial officer, he also submitted a letter noting his concerns with the BAR process. Ms. Morse relayed his issues to the Council members. She stated that it is noted that one of the problems is that some surplus counties automatically sent funds to the state at the end of September instead of waiting for Period 13 to close out.

Then when they attempted to close out their books, the books wouldn't balance. In this instance these counties had to get money back from the Trust Fund to balance and close out their books. In this regard, she cautioned that when Clerks are closing books at the end of each fiscal year, they not send funds to the state until the books are absolutely closed. Ms Morse concurs with Mr. Pulliam in that the amount Clerks send to the state each month is based on the estimated budget projections. Shortfalls of projected revenues cannot be controlled by the Clerks. Both he and Ms. Morse agree that the amount to be sent to the state should be based on actual net revenues. Finally Ms. Morse agreed with Mr. Pulliam that Clerks should deal on a modified accrual system as for our books; but as Clerks, we deal in cash. It is confusing to use multiple methods in reported amounts and may distort results.

Instead of approving one BAR at a time, the Council decided to have Mr. Dew provide information for all the BARs from Clerks for the 03/04 fourth quarter to be voted on together. Mr. Dew provided information on the following Clerks who are seeking a budget amendment due to less revenues being realized than projected. These are Flagler for \$22,150; Gadsden for \$9,058; Orange for \$346,396; Santa Rosa for \$31,505; St. Lucie for \$171,460; and Volusia for \$289,014. Again, Mr. Dew noted that in all of these cases the Clerks were seeking an amendment because less revenues were realized than projected and each Clerk expended less than their approved budget. After discussion each Clerk's BAR was approved as presented. Ms. Morse asked if anyone has questions regarding the BAR process. Mr. Barton asked if there were other potential BAR's for 03/04 fourth quarter out there. Mr. Dew stated there may be, but he hasn't been contacted by any other clerks as of this date. Mr. Barton suggested we can't continue to extend this forever. Ms. Morse suggested a cut-off of March 31, 2005 because some of the smaller counties are doing the county financial function with limited staff. Their information is due in the office by April 1, so a March 31 cut-off should be acceptable. Mr. Dew will make certain all counties are made aware of the cut-off date.

Mr. Barton moved to accept the 03-04 BAR's for Flagler, Gadsden, Orange, Santa Rosa, St. Lucie, and Volusia Counties. Mr. Ruvin seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

04/05 BARs- The only BAR being presented was from Miami-Dade for \$4,890,326. Mr. Dew stated that he was told by Dade Clerk's staff that the revenues are down in Dade because the potential \$7 million from fines related to tickets in unincorporated areas of Dade has been put into an escrow account and also because they have instituted a hiring freeze because their budget cap is too low. Mr. Ruvin stated if he isn't staffed according to his original budget submission, his original revenue projections will have to be downgraded. If the hiring freeze continues and he is not permitted to raise his cap by \$2.5 million, and if he can't get the labor contracts repealed; he will have to cut staff. If he gets the relief he needs, he'll be happy to re-amend his budget and put that money back in the revenue side.

Ms. Morse said she is concerned that this request is based on only two month's worth of actual revenues. Mr. Ruvin stated it's not only based on just two months worth of actual revenues, but also on his projections for the whole year with the expense

limitations they have in Dade County. Ms. Morse suggested many clerks' revenues are down for October and November 2004. All Clerks are in the same boat at this point in time. Mr. Ruvin stated that no one should expect Dade County to bring in the revenues projected. Mr. Ruvin stated he is willing to take this BAR off the table at this time, but he will need some relief.

Mr. Dew stated he appreciates being informed by Dade County staff on their revenue issues. He said this is the first BAR we have received which is not asking for monies from the Trust Fund but instead is notifying the Council that it will be difficult to submit the expected funds each month to the Trust Fund. In Dade County's case they were projected to send in to the Trust Fund over \$576,000 a month. This is not possible considering their revenue is much less than projected. For the months of October and November, Dade County was approximately 10% below expected revenue. The question is do we need to do a BAR when a County is unable to submit budgeted surplus funds to the Trust Fund. Doing such a BAR helps the CCOC better understand what the revenue problems may be for those counties who are required to provide dollars to the Trust Fund but do not appear able to send as much as expected. The Council agreed that it is beneficial to have a BAR in these situations.

Ms. Murphy said she would rather not proceed with this issue at this point considering we have only a few months of data. She said that Taylor County's revenues are down for October – November as are many other counties. Mr. Ruvin stated he would withdraw the Dade County BAR pending the outcome of the Council's discussion on changing the expenditure cap methodology and also receiving more information on revenues.

Ms. Morse asked Mr. Boyd, CCOC General Counsel, for an update on the Dade County issue concerning distribution of fines from the unincorporated areas. Mr. Boyd reported that, as of yesterday, the Assistant Attorney General said it's still being looked at to determine if they will weigh in on the issue. Mr. Boyd feels the policy-makers are now trying to decide whether to get the attorneys involved. Mr. Ruvin stated that, until the question can be settled, he has put the Dade Issue funds into an escrow account rather than transferring it to the County. This is causing friction between his office and Dade County. Even though Mr. Ginsburg, Dade County Attorney, is preparing a law suit against him, Mr. Ruvin feels that turning over the funds to the county wouldn't be fair to the Clerks' Trust Fund. It would be in Dade County Clerk's best interest for the Attorney General to rule against Miami-Dade County in this instance. He feels he is in a political "no man's land" with this issue because he has the unincorporated area as a separate budget and those people will look at this as money that's being taken from them. But he feels that if we all work together, we can make this work and there will be enough funds to make it work

## **Personnel Committee**

Mr. Smith stated that we have hired Laura El Kadiri, Budget / Communications Specialist. We are trying to resolve internally the issues of providing health insurance and retirement for those who work in the office.

## **SURVEY RESULTS ON CLERK'S EXPENDITURES FOR MAY AND JUNE 2004**

Mr. Dew stated he was asked to collect data from the Clerks on the May-June 2004 expenditures. This data has been collected. He has received and collated the information along with the reported expenditures for the months of July 2003 through April 2004 and July 2004 through September 2004. This information was sent to each member of the Executive Council. Mr. Dew has been contacted by several members stating that their numbers are not correct. He said his goal is to get correct numbers to be able to compare projected Clerk expenditures for fiscal year 03/04 to actual Clerk expenditures for 03/04.

Ms. Morse thinks from our perspective as the Corporation, our responsibility is to all sixty-seven clerks of the state of Florida, to be sure that these figures are accurate and if they are not, to figure out why they are not and make the necessary adjustments. She suggests we set a date and notify all Clerks that they have until that date to review and resubmit their numbers. Then this Board shall reconvene, review the numbers, and determine what adjustments we need to make. Mr. Weiss asked if we are talking about changing the expenditure caps for Clerks this fiscal year. Ms. Morse replied we are looking at that issue. She stated that the law in 2003 provided that the caps be based on an increase over the actual expenditures for 03/04, but the 2004 Legislature changed that, stating that caps would be based on an increase over estimates for 03/04. This law change was made because we all knew that the Council could not have actual expenditures for the full year of 03/04 prior to certifying budgets by October 1, 2004. We have subsequently collected actual expenditure figures comparing them to the projections.. In reviewing the information for expenditures from May and June 2004 we noticed that a number of Clerks inadvertently left off in-kind services. She suggested we need to get better information and make sure the in-kind services are included. Mr. Weiss asked if this meant that we might be asking some counties to lower their cap. Ms. Morse stated that her thought is that we would analyze the numbers and reconvene to present the data; and while we can't sit here today and state exactly what could happen, it is not her intention to harm any Clerk's budget through this process. Mr. Weiss and Mr. Barton agreed that they do not want any change in budget methodology to harm any Clerk's budget.

Mr. Ruvin stated that since the last Council meeting, he has met with DFS staff to discuss the possibility of using actual expenditures for 03/04 instead of estimated expenditures to develop a budget cap. He explained that using the current methodology of estimated expenditures resulted in his office being under-capped by \$2.5 million. Mr.

Ruvin asked for a response from DFS, but was told by DFS that they could respond only to the full CCOC.

Mr. Ruvin said he understands why expenditure estimates were used for 03/04 instead of actual expenditures. However, he believes it was the intent of the Legislature to eventually use the actual expenditures once they became available since actual numbers provide a more realistic picture. He also agrees that all Clerks who are receiving more based on estimates than they would be receiving by using actual expenditures should not have their budgets lowered. But he also believes it would be unconscionable to not 'make whole' those clerks whose estimates were under the actual expenditures.

Mr. Ruvin provided a memo to each Council member which he said he wrote based on the assumption that the numbers given him by Mr. Dew were correct. In light of more current information, he acknowledges that the numbers need to be reviewed. What he would like today however is at least the passage of a motion stating in principle, we recommend to DFS, once the data is finalized, that any clerks who were under capped should be made whole for the 04-05 budget." Mr. Ruvin further stated that he would be happy to include in motion that, those Clerks who were over-capped be allowed to continue to operate with their certified budget. Finally, he asked that since there is approximately \$4 million in Trust Fund now and there's approximately \$7 million total in over capped clerks – and we don't really know if that number is exact now, that we take that \$4 million and allocate it 4/7 to each clerk that needed to be made whole and then the rest of it be done over time.

Mr. Ruvin made a motion that we 1 – direct staff to validate the numbers in the survey, 2 – that the clerks that were over capped be allowed to continue to operate within their certified budget, 3 – that the clerks who were under capped, to the extent that they were under capped, be made whole, and 4 –that they be made whole as the money is available." Mr. Forman asked if he was making the motion in principle. Mr. Weiss seconded the motion. Ms. Morse asked for discussion.

Mr. Fuller moved to amend Mr. Ruvin's motion requesting we delay the vote on Mr. Ruvin's motion for 30 days so we can analyze the numbers. His concern was that in Duval County, the city cut \$1 million from his previous budget, so he had to reduce expenditures. Under this new methodology, his budget might be cut even more. Mr. Ruvin restated that his motion states that those counties who were over-capped would not be harmed. Mr. Barton seconded Mr. Fuller's motion to amend. Mr. Ruvin stated that his initial intent today was to move that the Executive Council direct DFS to make Dade County whole to the exact amount he says he is under capped. He has backed off that because of a potential problem with the numbers. He is now only asking that in principle those who were over-capped not be forced to give back the money and that those who were under-capped be made whole as the money becomes available. Mr. Ruvin said that if his cap is not increased then he may have to release as many as 250 people, and he asked how a 30 day delay would change voting "in principle" to making whole those counties that were under capped. Ms. Morse's concern is that at this point everyone has these figures and they are not accurate. She feels we will have a difficult time sitting

down to negotiate these issues with incorrect figures. Until we know if the methodology is going to help or hurt and we can collectively agree on a negotiating point or points, we may be hurting ourselves. She feels we need to analyze the figures and then take it to the next step. The numbers weren't all in until January 5 which didn't give enough time for analysis.

Ms. Morse stated that Mr. Fuller's amendment is directed at allowing staff time to be able to analyze and, when necessary, correct the numbers. The Executive Council can then meet either by telephone conference or in person, and move forward from there. Ms. Morse asked Mr. Fuller for a clarification on his motion. Mr. Fuller re-stated that, while he agrees in principle with Mr. Ruvin, he requests the Executive Council delay the vote for thirty days so we can have accurate figures before voting on the motion. Mr. Ruvin stated that it is important for him to know today that the Executive Council supports him in principle or he will need to begin to invoke a number of other measures on the presumptions he may not get the vote in thirty days. There being no further discussion, Ms. Morse called for a vote by member on the amendment. The result was a 4-4 tie; the amendment was defeated.

Ms. Morse called for discussion on the original motion. Mr. Smith stated we can take a simple position recognizing there are difficult times ahead for some counties and that we support some process to resolve that issue for those counties without getting into specifics about how we do it. Mr. Ruvin restated his motion as "Once our staff has validated a set of numbers that we feel confident is accurate, we are in favor of the concept of making whole those clerks who were under capped." Mr. Barton seconded this motion which passed unanimously.

Ms. Morse said the Council's objective is to be sure we are fair and square with all 67 clerks of the state of Florida. She isn't sure DFS or CFO staff is willing to negotiate with us on this issue but we always need to do the right thing. Our only hope is to be able go to them armed with absolutely correct figures, to say this is where we are, this is what is happening, and we can't survive as it is, notwithstanding the issue of adding judges, magistrates, etc.

## **BUDGET PROCESS 2005-2006**

Mr. Robertson presented a draft of the budget process for 05-06. He stated that they will be meeting with the clerk's staff workgroup February 24 on Performance Measures and February 25 on the Budget Process for 05/06. They will be discussing the Revenue-Based Expenditure Cap Concept. He thanked Mr. Weiss and his staff for helping create a case study of what this really means with some actual data to present at that meeting. We will also be discussing rebasing; what it is and how we interpret it; performance measures; budget instructions and any changes required between the 04-05 instructions and the 05-06 instructions.

The flow chart provided in the packet shows the other steps leading to budget certification process and beyond. Once this is done, the process continues with follow up and refinement.

Mr. Barton asked if all clerks are invited to the February workgroup meeting. Mr. Dew stated that the two groups who will be there are the groups that have been working on the two issues – budget process and performance measures – in the past. The problem with opening the workgroup to all clerk staff is that it could hamper being able to accomplish the objectives of the workshop because so much time will be spent bring up the new workgroup members up to speed on the issues. He did request that if any clerk has staff who he/she believes needs to attend, please contact him. Ms. Morse said that if this is an Association sponsored workgroup that they should notify every clerk of various workshops, dates, times, places. If a clerk chooses to attend or send someone, they may do so. She will make that recommendation to FACC.

## **TRUST FUND UPDATE**

Mr. Dew reported that as of January 14, 2005 there is \$7.2 million in Trust Fund. This may include some dollars incorrectly placed there from Clerk's "settle-up" money sent in early to DOR. Today the Council approved Budget Amendment Requests totaling \$869,583, so the Trust Fund balance is now \$6.4 million. Keeping the Trust Fund solvent requires the 36 counties that are revenue-surplus to submit funds to the Trust Fund. Every month the Trust Fund sends approximately \$1.6 million to revenue-deficit counties. Expected monthly revenues of approximately \$2.9 million to the Trust Fund have not materialized. Eleven surplus counties submitted no dollars in October (approximately \$1.6 million) and twelve submitted no dollars in November (approximately \$1 million).

Mr. Dew will be comparing each office's revenues to what was projected. Revenues may be down in those offices such that they were unable to send a check. He will then contact the financial offices for those clerks to notify them that the Trust Fund hasn't received any dollars asking about problems and whether those problems are predicted to continue or do they anticipate being able at some point to submit funds to the Trust Fund. The good news is that we are okay now and should remain so for several months. If other clerks are not able to submit funds, this could be problematic.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Weiss reported on an article in Florida Bar, January edition entitled "State workers are underpaid". Senator Victor Crist and several other Senators said, "We need better pay for justice agency workers including employees of state attorneys, public defenders and the court system in order to reduce turnover and retain well-trained staff". Mr. Weiss is concerned about the implications of the imposed 103% budget cap on his office in trying to keep staff paid well. He cannot give salary increases and he suggests other Clerks are having the same problem. Clerks' staff may leave to work in other offices for more pay.

Our next meeting will be April 19 in Tampa. Since there is a conflict for some of the Council members to meet on June 27, 2005, Ms. Morse made the recommendation that we move this to meeting to Sunday, June 12 in conjunction with the FACC's Annual Conference. The other meeting dates are September 13 in Sarasota and November 15 in Orlando. We can also call interim meetings as necessary with 2 weeks notice.

Mr. Dew reminded members to submit the forms as provided in your packet for reimbursement of expenses incurred with respect to traveling to these meetings. Please send them to the CCOC office in Tallahassee as soon as possible after each meeting to receive reimbursement. If you have any questions regarding completing of the form or submission of the back up documentation, you may contact the office for help.

Meeting adjourned at 3:40 PM.