**Case Count Podcast**

**With Judge David Emerson and Christopher Hansard, OAC**

**6/3/2020**

**[***Christopher and Judge Emerson: Tain and I are going to record an “intro” section after we finish speaking with you so we make the best use of your time. We will begin our recording session with both of you beginning with the next paragraph***]**

**[***As you will see, we are not trying to be overly scripted and we are not remotely attempting to suggest what you should say – instead, we are throwing in a couple of points that we hope are included in whatever you have to say. We will follow up with you in completely unscripted ways. The goal is a conversation – but we prepare these outlines so we all have a sense of where we are headed in a general sense.***]**

**[*Also, even though the podcast is audio only, we will be on a Zoom call throughout, so we will be able to see each other, give visual cues, etc. Plus, this is not live. If we make a mistake, we stop and fix it. It’s very easy*]**

**Introduction/Welcome** (Wade/Tain)

We are honored to have a couple of guests on the podcast today – Judge David Emerson of the Superior Court of Douglas County and Mr. Christopher Hansard who works with the Administrative Office of the Courts (“AOC”)

*That’s correct. Once again we have been able to convince two incredibly busy men to join us. Judge Emerson and Mr. Hansard we’re honored to welcome you to The Good Judge-ment podcast today. I hope both of you are doing well.*

**Judge Emerson:**

**Christopher:**

Gentlemen, we have asked y’all to come on the podcast and to talk with us today and we are extremely appreciative of your time. Tain, tell our listeners what we are talking about today.

*Today’s topic is …Case Counts [ad-lib something funny]*

Judge Emerson, we usually start our interview podcast episodes with a little background information about the folks we are speaking with. If you would, tell our listeners a little about where you serve as a Superior Court Judge and the path you took to get there.

**Judge Emerson:**

*Christopher, same for you. Tell us a little about yourself and how you found yourself working with the AOC. On second thought, tell the folks what the AOC even stands for and what the AOC does.*

**Christopher:**

So, Judge Emerson, if you would, please tell the listeners a little bit about what case counts are all about and why they end up being so important to Georgia’s judiciary.

**Judge Emerson:** [Please include introduction of JWAC (and what that even stands for) and what the resulting numbers are used for]

*Christopher, tell us what role the AOC plays in this process and how your committee comes to obtain the data from the different counties.*

**Christopher:** [Please include some information about the different classes of court that provide data to JWAC]

**[** *From this point and going forward, I am not going to “script” questions and answers. I am only going to list bullet points that we would like to discuss. Please just be aware of “stepping on” each other – but this episode can be edited so if you get lost mid-air or need to rephrase something, just say so and we can “reload.”***]**

- Who is on the JWAC committee? Is it appointed? If so, by whom?

- Does the committee gather together to do its work or is it more of a data evaluation process that the members do from home/work and then collaborate later?

- How much of your time does your participation with the committee take? Are there ever times when the process takes longer than other times? If so, why?

- (If not already addressed) Tell the listeners how you receive the data (electronically, from whom, etc.)

- How do you come up with the number of hours a particular “event” takes to complete?

- How often do we reevaluate the events and the time committed to those events? When was the last time the different classes of court performed one of those “time motion studies?”

- In this COVID-19 era of social distancing, we have talked on the podcast about how much longer things are going to take because we cannot have “a bunch” of people in the same room. (i.e. calendar calls, jury trials) Will this new post-pandemic reality influence anything produced by the committee?

- Tell us common problems that seem to recur involving reporting by the clerks of court

- Same with judges – are there recurring problems that you see from the judges’ perspective?

- Are there issues or problems that are specific to any particular class of court or that might be specific to a large county as opposed to a smaller county?

- If there are disagreements with what is being reported by any particular county, how are those issues resolved?

- Please underscore what these numbers are used for and how they can impact the different classes of court. (Usually to support creation of new judgeships but recent statute change that would allow legislature to actually eliminate judgeships if a circuit has too many judges – not sure how used by other classes of court)

- Does the AOC ever get involved with the actually case counting or do you simply rely upon whatever data you receive from the different counties?

- What happens when a county does not report at all? Does that ever happen?

- Is there a process that would allow a judge to request that numbers be reviewed or recounted? How does someone “dispute” the raw data that is reported?

- Some Superior Court judges have “complained” (“noted”?) recently that certain activities are not given enough time value in the final analysis. For example, judges with prisons in their circuit and they are required to handle numerous habeas corpus actions filed by inmates. Is that something the committee can simply adjust (up/down) or does that have to be evaluated in some other manner?

*[This list is not exhaustive so feel free to take the conversation somewhere else, if you want/need]*

**Wrap-Up**

*Thanks again to both Judge David Emerson and Mr. Christopher Hansard for being our special guests today.*

And thank you, our loyal listeners, tuning in to the “Good Judge-ment Podcast”. I’m Wade Padgett.

*And I’m Tain Kell, and this is the Good Judge-ment Podcast.*

**[END]**