



MEMORANDUM
From: Judge Paul Raleeh
Justice Court, Precinct 1

March 18, 2013

Re: Upgrades to Justice Courts

Commissioners,

This item was on your agenda several months ago and I asked that it be removed after learning Commissioner's Williams and Shaheen had questioned the expenditure. I was representing the Justice Court's as the "Administrative Judge" at the time this was first submitted.

After notifying my respected colleagues that I removed the item, much debate occurred on removing the item without first consulting the other courts.

Based on those discussions I am asking that this item be put back on the agenda. I respectfully seek Commissioner's Court approval in our efforts to improve the technology currently used in our Justice Court Courtrooms.

Every courtroom in Collin County has the latest and greatest technology except the Justice Courts. Our problems are immediate - parties are now saving documents, photos and other exhibits on flash drives. They expect [and have come accustomed to finding] technology in the Collin County Courtrooms that can allow not only flash drives to be downloaded and displayed, but witnesses to testify by phone, Skype or a multitude of other media sources. Yet our Justice Court courtrooms have no technology to support any of that media - we are still operating on VCR's and DVD's. Some Courtrooms don't even have a convenient dry erase board.

Throughout the years, the Justice Courts have evolved with Legislative changes. With the increase to the courts jurisdictional limits [and another one currently introduced in Austin] as well as our Counties continued growth - the Justice Courts now receive more and more cases where the type of electronic media is not only expected, it is relied upon. One such example is car accident cases. The latest technology allows a party to recreate accidents scenes in many formats including 3D animation. Just the introduction of written exhibits displayed through "Elmo" on several flat screens has become the norm in most courtrooms, but not in all of our Justice Courts.

Attached to this request is the comprehensive study and drawings of each of the Justice Court's audio and visual needs prepared by a cooperative effort of the Justice Court Judges and our I.T. Department.

We are asking that No Tax Dollars be spent to support this project, and request the expenditure come from the, "Justice Court Technology Fund". We have not submitted the project to bid yet as we are seeking direction from the Commissioner's Court on the funding. We respectfully ask that the Court approve expenditure from the "Justice Court Technology Fund" not to exceed \$200,000.00 so that each Justice Court can achieve the technology needed for today's court presentations.