

Nancy Mayer-Whittington Oral History
Interview Session VII
October 4, 2011

Ms. Woodbury:

Good morning Nancy. Today is Tuesday, October 4, 2011. This is the continued interview of Nancy Mayer-Whittington. When we broke last time we had just started talking about your first official year as Clerk of the Court which coincided with Judge Robinson's last year as Chief Judge. Nancy would you just pick up there.

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Of course. I was really fortunate to have had the time from at least 1985 to 1991 with Judge Robinson as the Chief Judge and I as Chief Deputy, but I did find that when I became Clerk of Court it became an even closer relationship and I got to see, firsthand, his way of running the court. Also, as you mentioned, my first year as Clerk was Judge Robinson's last year as Chief Judge. I think this impacted him as far as being a little bit more philosophical and a little bit more open to reflection about his tenure as Chief Judge. He had a very strong, as I've said before, personality and a very, very strong leadership role in the court and he operated from a position of strength for the most part as Chief Judge.

When he worked with Jim, I think that they knew their roles and in Jim's case he was a strong personality as well. So they spent their time just briefing each other on what was going on and not as much discussing where the court was going, because I think they felt that the court had its own cycle that it operated under. I recall that in one of my first conversations with Chief Judge Robinson after I became Clerk of the Court I said to him "What are you looking for from me? What is your vision of where the Court is going?" And he just looked at me like, "Oh no are you going to be one of those people who talk about visions and

all these other things ...?" He was more of a practical day-to-day person. But the next time I met with him, and I was meeting with him on a weekly basis, he said to me, "You know I was thinking about your question about my vision for the Court." At that time he was chair of the Executive Committee of the Judicial Conference effectively the leader of the whole Conference which was huge and he said they talked a lot about the role of individual courts in the long-range planning process and maybe that was one thing we should be talking about at the same time.

I said I would like to know where he saw the resources coming from and going to in the judiciary. At that point I had gotten a better look at the budget shortfall that was going to impact the judiciary in the near future. Congress was trying to reduce the size of the budget deficit so the entire government was going through some tightening of resources. Unfortunately, the Judicial Branch was an easy target for Congress to reduce resources partly because the judiciary did not have a real strong lobbying effort to put pressure on Congress. There was nobody that was really good about representing to Congress the needs of the judiciary other than the judiciary. So at that point Chief Judge Robinson was telling me that the Judiciary was working with the Federal Bar Association and other local Bar Associations to help them understand nationwide the concerns of the courts and get that information to Congress. In addition to not understanding the concerns of the courts, Congress also did not appreciate that the courts could do very little to regulate the matters that are filed in their respective courts. Unlike executive branch agencies that can cut or delay action on the programs

under their jurisdiction, the cases filed in the courts had statutory timetables under which action must be taken. The courts can't say: "You can't file this here and/or we can only take a certain number of cases this year and we are over our limit." Other agencies were able to structure their budgets around the programs that they felt they could support and the ones where they could cutback. They could expand in areas depending on the budget and upon their resources; the judiciary had very little ability to do that.

It was one of my best conversations with Chief Judge Robinson. I asked him if we could spend some time talking about national issues during our meetings and not just deal with the day-to-day concerns. He was actually quite happy to do that because I think at some point he felt that he was contributing even more to our conversations than just telling me where he thinks the judges were having some issues and that sort of thing. I think I really benefited from the fact that he was looking at the end of his tenure and what more he could do to help the court and then making sure he got it done. That was very helpful to me and ultimately it really created a dialogue between Chief Judge Robinson and me and it helped clarify the information I had been reading about on the actions of the Judicial Conference. In turn, I conversed with the Clerks of other courts so that when Judge Robinson would talk about an issue I could tell him how it would impact not only our court but how it would impact Nebraska and how it would impact the border courts who were having tough immigration related issues at the time.

Ms. Woodbury:

Nancy were you, in addition to reading, getting on the phone with the

other Clerks too?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Yes. And frankly at that time we had our first national email system where you could contact other Clerks electronically which was huge because you didn't have to worry about different time zones or whether they were available or not when you sent your email. You didn't have to waste your and their time playing telephone tag and you got the information you needed. Plus you could get the Clerk to expound on things and you would have a hard copy of their thoughts. You weren't taking notes on what people were saying and trying to see if you heard it right or wrote it down correctly. So that was huge too.

Ms. Woodbury:

And sometimes when people write something down they are more careful about making sure it's clear.

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Absolutely. I think they may read it to themselves and say if I were reading this I would think the emphasis is on this and that is not what I meant. And many times you followed up the email with a conversation about it. That wasn't the only way of getting information, but it was something that I think made me more of a professional in Judge Robinson's eyes. Whereas I think he thought I was probably smart and that I was educated and I knew the court, but I'm not sure if he thought I knew about the big picture. As I said earlier about the interview for the Clerk's position, the big picture of the court wasn't what the interview was about. I felt that he needed to know I had another side and that I could contribute. I think that was really good for both of us, those conversations. That was the biggest benefit of having his last year and my first year coincide.

Ms. Woodbury:

Nancy, you said that you had a regular time every week where the two of

you would get together.

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Yes. We would get together on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. What was great about him was that when he couldn't make the meeting because he was going to be in court or something like that, we rescheduled. He didn't just say "I can't make it this week" and leave it at that. So I never had to worry that I would have an issue sitting for too long. In between meetings, I would send him emails, but he didn't really like emails particularly. He liked conversations. So as long as I had a weekly meeting with him I could just make a list of things to talk to him about. But if there was an emergency or something very time sensitive came up, I would pick up the phone and call him. Calling Chief Judge Robinson was not a problem since he told his secretary that I needed to be put through when I called and if I said it was an emergency and he was not available, his secretary needed to find him so he would know about the emergency.

Ms. Woodbury:

So you didn't have to fight with anybody's staff?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

No. I did not have to. They were very responsive. Gloria Robinson was his secretary at the time and she was very good about putting me through to the judge. In fact sometimes I'd just say "It's Nancy" and she would say "Just a minute." She wouldn't even wait for me to say anything else. Sometimes I wanted to say to her "How are you doing?" But she'd put me right through to him because that was what he told her to do which was nice. Early on, one of the things Chief Judge Robinson said to me was "Nancy, the more you can give me information about what's going on in the Court, the more prepared I will be when I go to the Judges' dining room for lunch. Because, if one of the judges says 'I

found out something happened and you know what that means,' I can say to them, 'No that isn't what happened', and I can explain the facts." He continued, "If I can stop inaccurate information from leaving that lunch table, that's a huge benefit because that's where all their misinformation gets started. That's where you get these misperceptions that can change into reality and then we are trying to undo something that was never real. So if you can keep me posted on things that will be a big help to me. Just pick up the phone and say 'By the way Judge so and so really had a hard time in court today because one of the defendants wasn't brought up and he blamed it on the Clerk's Office but actually the Marshals Office didn't process the paper work.' "With accurate information, he could be the voice of reason.

Ms. Woodbury: So he's prepared.

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Yes. He could deal with the problem if he had the information. He said the judges will respond to information and they did. There were judges who did like gossip, that's human nature, but for the most part if he could say: "That's not what happened today. The Marshals did this and this" then most of the judges would respond positively.

Ms. Woodbury: Nancy, what were the issues in terms of the structure of the court and the management of the court that you dealt with during your first years as Clerk of the Court?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: On the management structure of the Clerk's Office, we were trying to decide whether to have one Chief Deputy or to have two Chief Deputies. Some of the large, metropolitan courts were adding a second chief deputy to their

management team. When I was Chief Deputy, we had organized the office into Operations, Administration and Technology and that had worked well. We had gotten all the fringe offices that were hanging out there on their own tucked into one of these three divisions. Although Technology could fit into Operations or Administration, it was a relatively new field and we thought it needed to be independent. So we were organized around these three main areas. When I became Clerk, I was thinking that as Chief Deputy both the operations and the administrative side had reported to me and now as Clerk did I want another layer between me and them and what did I want to do? So I decided not to do anything at first and to try managing without a Chief Deputy. So we announced this to the office. I wasn't going to make any new selections, but at the same time I also told the staff that if anybody is interested in applying in the future for a chief deputy position then they had to start preparing for the job. It's not just going to be based on who has been here the longest. The selection will be based on who has the required experience and has spent time attending training, taking additional courses and getting more experience. Preparation for the position and not longevity will count. At the same time the budget that Judge Robinson and I had been discussing was starting to play a role in the Clerk's Office through the staffing we would be allotted based on a work measurement formula.

Ms. Woodbury:

What is that?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

The work measurement formula tries to measure the amount of work involved in doing the main functions of the Clerk's Office and then determine how many staff members you need to perform those functions. For example, if

you have X number of civil cases, then you get X number of people to support the processing of those cases. You have X amount of checks that you process, you get X number of people to support you. You have X amount of jurors that you process in the course of the year, you get X amount of staff members to do the work. The Judicial Conference had revised and implemented a nationwide formula for the whole court system in the early 90s. One of the problems with the formula was that it was relatively new and most people didn't understand how it worked. It was all based on statistics and under the initial implementation of the formula you would have a hundred cases and get X amount of credit for those cases. But the formula didn't take into consideration the complexity of a civil case. In criminal cases, the formula was case driven and not defendant driven, which was difficult for us.

Ms. Woodbury:

Which means cases with multiple defendants...

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Are counted the same as a case with a single defendant. A case that's going to entail a lot of pre-trial publicity, security and logistical concerns requiring a lot of additional work on the part of the Clerk's Office would be weighted the same as a case that was pretty much going to come in with the defendant taking a plea. The revised work measurement formula was a brand new way of looking at our workload and it had a lot of problems, but we had to implement the formula because it was approved by the Judicial Conference. It turned out that as a result of the new work measurement formula we were going to lose five positions in the first year that I was taking over as Clerk.

Ms. Woodbury:

Did they tell you what positions or did they leave that to you?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

They left that to us. The formula would show we were entitled to eighty positions and you could put them anywhere you wanted, but you couldn't get anymore positions. In addition to the problems I just mentioned, the formula didn't take into consideration any local rules or customs. For example, some courts do a lot to work with the local Bar to put together educational sessions, conduct tours and do other presentations. There was no real way to accommodate any differences. There were some differences for small, large and medium courts, but not enough to accommodate courts in metropolitan areas. We had some additional issues because of being in the Washington, D.C. area in that we had a lot more press interested in things going on in the Court than you did in Arkansas. Congress was telling the Judicial Conference that they had to cut their budget and the only way that the Judiciary had historically cut the budget in the past was to reduce funding for non-judicial staff. By statute, judges' salaries cannot be "diminished" and traditionally their staffs and their furnishings and supplies were never reduced. So the support staff was the target for reductions. This was a big deal because in the past, rather than actually reduce staff, a hiring freeze was implemented and non-salary budget items were reduced. I had been at the court for fifteen years and we had never had to go through any real downsizing. Now with the new formula as "proof" courts were overstaffed we were being told we need to give notice to five employees that they would be let go; something that was unheard of in the court culture. To add insult to injury, some of our staff thought I had arbitrarily decided to let people go because the timing of the budget cuts happened to coincide with me taking over as Clerk.

There was just a lot of uncertainty and we were in an institution that had rewarded seniority, both from the judges' side and the support staff side. So we were talking now all of a sudden about maybe making a major change in that institutional thinking. Now jobs weren't guaranteed, and it really didn't matter if you were doing a good job if we couldn't to keep you anymore, you couldn't stay. The Judiciary as a whole had a reputation for not getting rid of poor performers. But our Clerk's Office had somewhat of a history of trying to address poor performance by implementing work improvement plans. If that was not successful, we did let poor performers go. We felt like we were being punished for the Judiciary wide problem of retaining poor performers as that was part of the reason for the need to reduce the budget. While the issues of the budget were impacting us there was some other internal issues that came to a head at the same time. If you recall I mentioned that when I talked about the time just before I was selected as Chief Deputy, Jim had hired a consultant to help identify issues in the Clerk's Office. One of the issues raised by the staff was that the two Executive Assistant positions were not working out. So in response to issues raised by the consultant, Jim made the decision to recreate the Chief Deputy position and then ultimately I was chosen for the position. But the other issues that were raised at sessions with the consultant were never really dealt with. Jim thought that the problems would take care of themselves by taking Marge out of a top management position.

Ms. Woodbury:

When you say the issues that were raised; are you talking about the issues that were raised as part of the consultant's review in talking to court employees?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Yes. Because in addition to people believing there were inequities in the way I managed and the way Marge managed, they also brought up some global issues such as the need for better communications from management to employees, better training, both on the job and more general training, more opportunities for people to be considered for management positions. I think Jim thought he was going to address all of them by making me the Chief Deputy and that would take care of it. So what happened was he made a selection and a lawsuit followed which occupied a lot of time and attention and other things kind of drifted back under the surface and weren't necessarily addressed.

Ms. Woodbury:

Nancy, just remind me, what was the chronology at the point where Jim changed the structure to create just a single Chief Deputy and then you were chosen for that position and then there was a lawsuit by Marge; what period of time was that?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Well we had the consultant in around 1984 and then in 1985 Jim recreated the Chief Deputy position and then I was ultimately selected for that position, and then in 1986 Marge filed the lawsuit. Actually, she first filed a complaint under the Equal Employment Opportunity Plan based on age discrimination. I think that took a year before a final decision was released. The process takes about a year to come to a final conclusion. There is X amount of time to file something, X amount of time to respond to it, and then X amount of time for the EEO Officer to review and make a decision. And Marge took all the time that was available to her to put her case forward for the initial review. The EEO officer found no basis for the discrimination claim. Then Marge appealed the decision to the Chief

Judge. The Chief Judge took time to review everything and he found no basis for the discrimination claim and he dismissed the discrimination complaint with no further ability to appeal. Marge decided to hire a lawyer and pursue her complaint as a formal civil lawsuit at the district court level. And then that took time to move along. We had to have a Court of Appeals judge come in to help out because all of our judges recused themselves since Marge had been working at the court for a long time. Judge Sentelle was a new judge on our appellate court and he had been elevated from a district judge position in North Carolina so it was decided that he had the most experience with Clerk's Offices and he had no experience with any of the parties in the suit. Then that complaint had its own time frame to be processed. So now we are into 1987 – 1988.

Ms. Woodbury:

So really from the mid-80s to the late 80s, the issues you're talking about were first raised in maybe 84, 85?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Right. They just kind of bubbled under the surface while everybody sat back and watched the drama of Marge's lawsuit. No one knew for sure how it was going to end up. I believe that the final judgment came down maybe in 1989 dismissing the complaint. After that, there was a time during which Marge was thinking about asking for certiorari from the Supreme Court. This meant another waiting period. My recollection is that in about 1990 that lawsuit and all the drama associated with it was finally over. It didn't have anymore life to it, couldn't resurrect itself anymore so it was done. By then Jim already had made his decision to retire in 1991, so we're left with just a year or so of not having this drama.

Ms. Woodbury: Diverting people's attention?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Right.

Ms. Woodbury: So by the time you became Clerk of the Court, what you characterized as those more global issues are still there waiting to be addressed. The people are waiting for those to be addressed?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Right. Then I took over as Clerk and I'm met with a budget shortfall. I have a Chief Judge who is now ready to work on some vision and plans and willing to incorporate Judicial Conference information that he's privy to into our weekly meetings. He is ready to look at the future and we also are really still going forward full strength with technology and dealing with the ramifications of that. Plus we had changed to more of a team-based approach to support our judges.

Ms. Woodbury: How did that work?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: How did that work? It didn't work well to begin with. This was definitely a situation where timing was everything. Jim had an idea about team-based management. He had done some research on it and he was hoping to figure out a way to not have a one-on-one relationship between the Courtroom Deputy and Judge. He wanted to broaden the relationship to include a docket clerk. This would help to remove the current stove pipe method of supporting the court. He wanted something more fluid that went back and forth, blended across the line. So that was something he had been working on, but with Marge's lawsuit he put that off to the side. If you recall, Judge Lamberth was appointed to the court in 1985 and again that's when we were starting to have some of our budget issues

move to a team-based system. Also, we did not get any qualified applicants to be team leaders. People did not understand the new system, they didn't want to change the way they were doing their jobs and they were not interested in learning more about the possibilities that could be provided by being organized in teams. The Courtroom Deputies put together a petition to Judge Robinson, asking him to abolish the initiative. And one of the Courtroom Deputies sent the petition to *The Washington Post*. So we had reporters calling to ask about this terrible thing that we were doing to the employees who were long suffering, good employees. We had one of the most dramatic moments in the court when Judge Robinson called the entire Clerk's Office up to his courtroom.

Ms. Woodbury:

And what did the team approach mean?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

What it meant was we were going to make teams of judges and teams of people to support them. It did not mean deputies were going to lose their relationship with their judge. They were still going to be that judge's clerk. But there would be two case processors, who would be supporting the judicial officers and their cases. Prior to that, our docketing section in Operations had been organized by digits. One person was responsible for all civil cases that ended in a 1 or 2. A second person was responsible for all civil cases that ended in 3 or 4 and so on. Our theory was that if people had more responsibility for a case and recognized that a case belonged to a judge as opposed to a digit they might be more invested in the quality and timeliness of their work. We also hoped by organizing around judges instead of cases that it would give the docket clerks more buy-in and more satisfaction and they would see themselves at the

part of the whole court and not just as part of the Clerk's Office.

Ms. Woodbury: Nancy, when Judge Robinson convened this meeting, did you say he called the whole Clerk's Office?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Yes.

Ms. Woodbury: Did that mean really everybody went into his chambers?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Yes, they went into his courtroom. He basically took the bench and said that he was aware of the plans that Jim had for the Clerk's Office. That he supported those plans 100%. That the efforts so far that some people had been making to speak to him about their concerns were out of line, that there was a proper place for them to address their concerns through the management structure and that that was the only way he was going to get involved. That he was the last person, not the first person who should be called and that any effort that anybody continued to make to involve the press or anyone else in this internal discussion in the Clerk's Office was going to be dealt with severely and if you do not like working here, don't let the door hit you on the way out. And then he just dismissed everyone. I mean, it was so classic Judge Robinson. Jim was like "Yes! Thank you, I thank you for the support, thank you for this." I remember walking out and going "What just happened?" Then in the next Metro section of *The Washington Post*, two days later, there was something that said that the employees of the Clerk's Office at the U.S. District Court had made their feelings known about a new management structure and they're not happy. That their efforts to try to bring these issues to the surface had been...

Ms. Woodbury: Rebuffed?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Rebuffed, yes in no uncertain terms by the Chief Judge, who made quite clear his views on interpersonal squabbles that are going on in the office... that sort of thing. It almost said clearly his way or the highway... and that's how it got characterized. And quite frankly, I thought that it was pretty unusual for *The Post* to publish anything of an internal nature about the Clerk's Office when there were so many other newsworthy stories at the Court. It was an internal tiff.

Ms. Woodbury:

An internal tiff?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Yes, it was. So everybody tipped toed out of the courtroom and wondered what just happened? Well, that didn't end anything it just meant that more was going on below the surface and people continued to talk. You would walk around the corner and people would be talking in little groups that sort of thing. Then as I said, I go out on maternity leave and then I come back and there were no quality applicants for the team leader positions. So Jim said "I don't know what we're going to do now because we can't insert teams into Operations without the support of any of the staff there." And so we went back to the drawing board and said well let's talk more in smaller groups to people who are going to be impacted by this and listen to what they have to say and answer their questions.

Ms. Woodbury:

And make sure they understand what we had in mind?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Right. So we started these.... what I considered informal discussions ... I called them Open Forums... where I would say "Okay, I'm going to be in the lunchroom or I'm going to be in the conference room from this time to this time and I'm going to talk about the new structure and I'll answer any questions you have." So we started these Open Forums and I think I sat by myself for a couple

of sessions and then finally some staff members came to the Forums. We had a lot of really good employees. We had a subset of employees who had been there a long time who didn't want things to change and who were pretty influential. If you didn't agree with them, they could be pretty tough to be around. At the first Forum where five or six staff members attended they told me: "I know I'm going to get shunned for coming but I'm kind of interested in knowing what's going on because I don't understand. I hear this from management and I hear something else from other employees." So we started talking and tried to outline the reasons behind the team concept and people responded positively to that. I said "It's our only way to do some career development. Right now if you don't want to be a manager in the full sense of the word or a supervisor, you could only go to a Grade 11. But if we introduce teams and team leaders you could use the knowledge and experience you have already acquired to get a higher grade without having to commit to supervising a whole new set of staff, or a large number of people. This system would create a career ladder and more opportunities to have input into the direction of the organization." When they saw it from that perspective, they were more open. Again I go back to the fact that this new concept of team-based organization wasn't well delivered and I was a part of that.

Ms. Woodbury:

When it was first announced?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

When it was first introduced and that led to the lack of support for the concept. And the lack of support wasn't just coming from our malcontented employees. We had some really good employees who didn't support it either so...

you know... if that was the gauge then we didn't do a very good job of outlining it when we introduced it. As we made more information available to the staff and answered their questions, our staff reacted in a more positive manner. So we then started getting some people to say... "Oh I might be interested in that, I might be interested in doing this." And we went back to the drawing board and said okay, we have some internal courses that we could provide for staff, or we could make books about team leaders and team management available for anyone who was interested. And then we would also have some courses that the FJC sponsored

Ms. Woodbury: Federal Judicial Center?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Federal Judicial Center, which is the training branch of the judiciary. And then we had some commercial courses like Fred Pryor courses and others things like that that talked about the elements of supervision. So we started really getting people involved and thinking about teams and supervision and providing some training so that they could see whether that was what they wanted to do. And ultimately we did get a couple of people who expressed interest in the new system. Instead of converting the whole court, we picked a group of five judges and their courtroom deputies and a docket clerk to be the first team and that worked because...

Ms. Woodbury: It was like a pilot program?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: A pilot program. We put together our first team. I went to a few judges and asked if they were willing to pilot this concept. A few judges declined but a few other judges agreed to be on the pilot team. I told them I wanted their honest feedback good or bad so we could make changes before we expanded the system

to all the judges. In total, we did get five judges who said they would be a part of our first team. And then Jim retired and I took over as Clerk fulltime and we're still implementing this structure. Plus, we are moving further into the world of electronic courtrooms and getting more into electronic docketing. The Clerk's Office is changing at a rapid pace with all the new technology that is being introduced. This is around 1993 and we had almost fully implemented the team process. But we have some people in the office who haven't let go of some of the issues that were raised almost six or seven years ago and I still see some issues under the surface.

Ms. Woodbury:

What issues were they still interested in?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

They were still interested in better communication; they were still interested in being more knowledgeable about what the plans were for the organization and where we were headed. And then they were interested in smaller things – such as that it took too long sometimes to get things done, that we would start a process and it never quite got finished before we started another process; issues such as these. The frustration with these issues surfaced at a routine Clerk's Office meeting. We always had a monthly Clerk's Office meeting. At this meeting in particular, I was asking in general how a new local rule was impacting the office when of out of the blue somebody just stood up and said... "Would you mind if we talk about some things that I think are more important than that"... and I said okay. And that's when this staff member said... "Well you know I still feel like sometimes I don't know what's going on and I feel like some teams know more than other teams. Some people get more information

than I do and they seem to be aware of what's going to happen and that sort of thing." And so, I said "Okay, do other people feel that way?" And there was a general nodding of heads. And I said, "Let me think about this and let me think what we should do because I think this is an important issue and I think we should figure this out." After the meeting, I met with my senior staff and I have to admit some of their concerns were.... "Oh this is just general complaining by the employees" but the majority were saying ... "I think we really need to do something about this." We talked about it for a while and there were a lot of good ideas about how we should go forward. Ultimately, I said "What if we form an employee management committee that only has a couple of people from management on it and a group of employees who are not managers will make up the rest of the committee?" We discussed this and decided that we would open up the process and let people apply to be on the committee. If we received more applicants than we needed we would let the applicants decide how large the committee should be and make the decisions as to who should be on the committee. We would then ask the committee to work as a group to put together a list of the issues that concerned them on behalf of the Clerk's Office. So we all agreed on this course of action. At the next Clerk's Office meeting I said: "You know we're going to form an Employee Management Committee and it's not going to be balanced between employees and management, its going to have more employees than management on it. If you are interested in being on the committee you can apply and we will try to make sure there is representation from all parts of the staff on the committee. Then we're going to ask you to

commit to not only raising the issues and talking about what issues you think need to be addressed, but also coming up with some possible solutions and ways to address the issues. So you can't just sit there and say... 'This is not working and I don't know how you're going to fix it.' If we're going to fix this as an organization, we have to come up with solutions to the issues raised and not just identify the problems." Everybody was very positive about the committee. Ultimately, I think probably about ten people applied to be on it and so we ended up with two supervisor/managers and eight employees on it. The Committee had meetings with the staff and anyone who was not a supervisor or manager was welcome to attend the meetings. I asked the Committee to give me interim reports about the content of the meetings and the direction it was going but not attribute comments to specific people so they could come and talk candidly...

Ms. Woodbury:

So there was confidentiality at the meetings?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Yes, and so it turned out to be a really, really good process and one of the reasons it turned out so well is because of two of the people we had on committee from the management team. One was Angela Caesar, who succeeded me as Clerk of the Court. But, at that time she was a unit leader and the other was Edward Cole, who was the Supervisor in Property and Procurement. They just did in my opinion, a really, really good job. They were smart and hard working and very interested in the organization and both happened to be African Americans, so that... they were visible leaders and good examples for anyone who still wasn't sure if there were as many opportunities for them as there were for other people.

Ms. Woodbury:

When we broke you were talking about the two management representatives on the Employee Management Committee.

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Yes, they were very good and we were fortunate that all of the employees who agreed to participate as part of the Committee were really good too. We didn't have to tell people they couldn't be on the Committee because we didn't get more volunteers than the number that we thought we should have on the Committee. Of the employees who volunteered, there were at least two who were very outspoken in their criticism in general of the office. Then, there were others who were on the fence and then there were some employees on the Committee who were thoughtful in their approach to situations and who knew there were problems, but were willing to find ways of addressing them. The Committee started its work by holding open sessions and inviting any employees who were interested to come and talk to them. They held several sessions so that all employees could have the opportunity to attend. After the first two meetings, I remember Angela and Edward came to talk to me. They said that things were going pretty well but they said "Honestly, if we hear one more time that 'twenty years ago, when I was here I had a bad experience'..." There were people who came to the beginning meetings that had complaints that were so old and involved procedures that didn't exist anymore or poor treatment by employees who didn't work here anymore.

Ms. Woodbury:

People were kind of using it as an outlet for their grievances?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Yes and it was frustrating to Angela and Edward and the Committee members who wanted to focus on the present day problems. But ultimately,

although this was an unintended consequence, it had the benefit of giving employees the opportunity to vent. They had never had an opportunity to stand up in a group of their peers and say... "When I first started in the Clerk's Office twenty five years ago, I had a really bad experience. It was so unfair; I stayed here really late one night and took care of a big problem and no one ever acknowledged it; no one ever told me what a good job I had done." Then Angela and Edward would say "How's it going now?" And the employee would say; "Well my new supervisor is okay." They had to validate their issues and say to them, "I'm so sorry. I hope that never happens to you again. I hope that we're building a structure now that's going to prevent that from happening, but I can understand how you must have felt going through that." In many cases those employees didn't attend more meetings because they had finally had the opportunity to vent.

Ms. Woodbury: Right, they said what they needed to say.

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Exactly. It didn't mean that they still didn't carry that chip around for awhile and in some cases forever but at least the issue had been aired.

Ms. Woodbury: Somebody heard them.

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Somebody heard them and somebody said to them "I'm sorry. I'm sorry on behalf of the organization that you had that experience." Then the Committee was able to move to the next level which was identifying current issues and also suggesting ways to address those issues. I remember one of the concerns that they raised, a very practical concern, was that it took too long to fill vacancies. Specifically, from the time a vacancy was announced to the time a person was

selected to fill the vacancy took almost a year. Employees wanted to know why it took so long and why we didn't communicate better about why it was taking so long. This involved a procedural issue and a communications issue. The procedural issue needed to be addressed by studying different vacancies and seeing where the back logs occurred. As to the communications issue, it turned out that it depended on who the supervisor was and their view as to how much information to share. So that needed to be addressed across the board, the same amount of information needed to go to everybody and it shouldn't have been dependent on who your supervisor was.

Ms. Woodbury: How did you deal with that?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: We found a central way to communicate information about vacancies – we did an update on the status of all vacant positions at our monthly Clerk's Office meetings and thus took it out of individual supervisor's discretion and made it an office wide information item. As to ways to address the fact that vacancies took too long to fill, their proposal was for us to develop a timetable that set forth a timeframe for announcing the vacancy, screening applications, interviewing applicants and making selections.

Ms. Woodbury: That's very organized.

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Yes, it was. Another issue they raised was that there were no African Americans employees in the IT office. Well, that was true. The reasons behind it were varied and in some cases discussing them would have violated an internal applicant's privacy. So when they went to discuss what we should do about it -- in that case they said hire an African American. They didn't really have any

ideas about how to go about doing this because it was really beyond the scope of the Committee, but they just wanted us to know we needed more diversity in our IT office.

The Committee presented 26 issues to the management staff with all the supervisors and managers at a meeting. From the Committee's first meeting with employees to the presentment of the 26 issues to the management/supervisory staff took about nine or ten months. Angela and Edward had been briefing me after each meeting. But the briefings were just to let me know they were making progress and to let me know if they needed any information or resources to continue the work of the Committee. We did not discuss issues that were being raised nor did we discuss what any employee had told the Committee. After the Committee did an oral presentation on the report to the management/supervisory staff and distributed copies of the report, they left so we could discuss it. I have to admit, my first reaction was that the Committee had done a great job. I said "We asked them to come together as a group and raise the issues they think we need to address and also give us suggestions for how to resolve the issues. They did this and were very thoughtful in the way they approached their work and I think we have a clear picture of what we need to work on." I told them I had some reservations about a few of the recommendations but in general I thought they did a really good job. I have to admit that some of the management team members looked at me like: "Are you crazy? They just basically said we're doing a terrible job and this is a terrible place to work and we don't know what we're talking about..." I realized I needed to hear them out try to keep them from

taking the report personally. So I listened to all of their concerns about the report which ranged from "The employees shouldn't be telling us what to do", "Do they seriously think we should thank them for this?" "In their view are we doing anything right?" to a more thoughtful reaction of "I think the report is very accurate." So, I said "I appreciate all of your candid reactions. I think that we need to look at this as the whole Clerk's Office that has embraced this process, raised the issues and suggested solutions. We need to step back and take the time to reflect on the report and then come back and discuss it with less emotion." Someone said "I have thirty-issues about them such as some employees are chronically late, others have bad attitudes... I said "We just need a little bit of time to digest this; but this is the deal: nobody goes back to an employee or any employees and gives their candid reaction; nobody separates themselves from this group at this point and says... 'Well I'm going to tell you what I'm going to do.' We are going to act as a group, as a unit. But we need time to let this sink in. I know there are hurt feelings right now but we can't ignore all their hard work or the opportunity to make some positive changes." I said "Quite frankly, I'm looking at this and saying twenty-six issues? I was hoping for maybe ten or twelve. But you know what, they had to courage to do this and they ..." [Tape stopped.]

Ms. Woodbury: When the tape stopped right then, you were talking about ...

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: The reaction of my staff.

Ms. Woodbury: The reaction of the management staff of the Clerk's Office to the twenty-six issues that had been raised by the committee, the Employee Management

Committee and how did you eventually respond or deal with their report?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Well, I asked the management staff to think about the report and that we would regroup in a few days and everybody could then give a more thoughtful reaction to what should be the next step. We got together probably a few days after that and it was good to have had that little...

Ms. Woodbury: ... cooling off period?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Yes, absolutely because I was very impressed with our management team. When we got back together all of them could see some basis for all 26 issues. They did not agree with all of the recommended solutions and in some cases thought some of the issues were a perception issue and not a factual issue. But all of them pretty much saw where the employees were coming from with the issues. So we agreed that at the next Clerk's Office meeting, we would have the Employee Management Committee present the report to the whole Clerk's Office and we would outline a process for addressing the issues. We decided we were going to take each issue and discuss it and look at the recommended solution and see whether we needed more information about the issue because we really didn't understand it or if it was so clear cut that you could just start to work on it immediately. Because there were a couple of things that were raised, for example the reference I made earlier to the lack of African American employees in the IT office, that needed more discussion. Were people concerned that African Americans had applied and not been selected? Were they concerned that African Americans weren't getting the training that would be necessary to go into IT? A lot of the issues were pretty straight forward. We could put up a timetable for

addressing those issues. We agreed that there were some issues on there that were probably always going to be issues in one sense or another. For example, communication. You can always improve on communication. You can work on it and think you have it solved but you have to be evaluating it on an ongoing basis. You always have to keep going back to it... and ask "How's it going now? Are there other ways that we can do this?" Because sometimes you implement a way to open up communications and then it doesn't work after a while. It needs to be tweaked and looked at in a different way. But at this point the issues had been presented to the management team but they hadn't been presented to the Clerk's Office as a whole. Now clearly, because the Committee was made up of representatives from the Clerk's Office, even though employee representatives had been asked not share specific issues that were raised at the meeting they were free to share impressions about the meetings in general. The request not to share specific information wasn't supposed to be a gag order or anything like that. In fact, the meetings were open so anybody could come in and if you just wanted to listen and to hear what people were saying you could do that. There was not this whole sense that the report would be this huge revelation...

Ms. Woodbury:

A mystery as to what they were going to say?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Right. It was more a matter of what management's reaction would be to the report and the recommendations – would we agree with the majority of recommendations or not. When something exists for nine, ten months and employees can come and go and be a part of it, you know, word gets out and in fact, part of the benefit of that type of situation was that it didn't hold as much

power as it would have if it had been a tightly held secret and people had no idea of what was going on. Most employees had attended at least one meeting and in many cases more than one meeting so they had a general idea of what was being discussed. I remember talking to one employee just casually over coffee one morning who said: "Yes I went to the first couple of meetings but gosh they were complaining so much I didn't go back to some of the later meetings."

Ms. Woodbury: Let me ask you, Edward and Angela were part of management, right?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Right.

Ms. Woodbury: And so were they also participating with you once the report had been presented by the committee in deciding how to respond?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Yes. But to their credit they didn't direct the process. They just shared their perspective on how the meetings had proceeded and how their thinking had evolved. For example, Angela said that the first time she heard some of the issues she wanted to challenge their validity. Instead she practiced patience and decided she would just bite her tongue and listen. She said once she got past that first reaction, she tried to focus her efforts on things the office could do to improve operations. At the Clerk's Office meeting, the Committee presented the report. They shared the list of the 26 issues with the recommendations to address the issues with everybody in the office. We decided that we would from that point forward have a report from the Employee Management Committee at every Clerk's Office meeting outlining our progress in addressing the issues. And that we would come up with timeframes and interim and milestone goals in order to address those issues. One of the issues was that our employees felt that they

didn't see enough of me because I was so busy with the judges and taking care of other things. They wished I was around more because they wanted to know if I really knew what was going on. Was I interested in making sure that things did go well? I had gone from being Chief Deputy, where I was much more visible, to being Clerk where I wasn't as visible. So I knew I had to find a way to be more visible and interact on a regular basis with the staff. They also said that they wanted to hear more from me. The year before, we had revamped our monthly Clerk's Office meeting in response to employees' requests that the individual supervisors give an update on their sections. As a result I did not have as much opportunity to speak at our monthly meetings and I didn't realize that for some people that might be the only time they had to hear my view on issues or ask me questions. Rather than go back to me doing the reports on each section, we decided that we would have all of the supervisors or whoever was doing reports put them in writing and circulate them in advance of the meeting. Thus rather than just do an update on their sections, the supervisor would be available to answer questions and participate in a discussion.

Ms. Woodbury:

Give people a little bit of time to think about it and form the questions.

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Right. And then I could do more of the global issues about what's going on and recognize employees who were doing a good job and things like that. I also shared conversations I had with judges -- clearly not confidential ones -- but anecdotes and complements I had received about the office. Our staff also wanted to know more about judges - their backgrounds, their personalities - so we instituted a "Meet the Judge" program. When a new judge was appointed, we

Employee Management Committee can speak about this" and then I would talk to them about where we were on certain things. And as we took care of issues, we would let the staff know that we checked it off the list - it's completed. That was probably at least a two year process.

Ms. Woodbury: Of going through all of their issues and possible solutions?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Right. We addressed them in a systematic way and we had an actual institutional answer as to how we're going to improve communications.

Ms. Woodbury: Nancy, was the original committee disbanded after it issued its report?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: No, we institutionalized the committee for probably the next... I think that committee operated over the next five years or so until we got to the point where employees didn't think we needed it anymore. There were other ways of addressing issues and we didn't have to have a specific Employee Management Committee to do that. And I remember thinking at that point, wow, that's cool.

Ms. Woodbury: That they were comfortable bringing these issues up in other ways?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Yes, and the way we figured out that the committee was obsolete was when I said at a Clerk's Office meeting, "Okay, it's time for these committee members to rotate off the Committee and we need new members for the Committee." The committee members served two year terms. Several people said that they didn't think we needed a Committee anymore and that was the reason no one was applying. So we talked about that at the Clerk's Office meeting and after some discussion one employee summed it up by saying, "We have other ways of getting this information out to you and we've finished the original list and the solutions we put in place are working." The general feeling

was the Committee was needed at the time it was constructed but it was no longer needed. If the need arose again, it could always be resurrected. So the Committee which had served a major purpose in addressing organizational issues was disbanded. But there were several areas that I wanted to make sure we kept on top of. One of these areas was communication. I decided I wanted to try an idea that I had been considering for some time. The idea was to start having "Open Forums." Open Forums would be open meetings in the Clerk's Office lunchroom twice a month where there wasn't an agenda but everyone who wanted to could attend, bring their lunch and ask me about anything they wanted to know or tell me anything they thought I should know. As long as it's not a personnel issue, I would talk about anything else related to the organization or the judiciary. As it turned out, the Open Forums worked out very well. Because, as it turned out, there were some employees who still had some things on their minds, who wanted to make sure I had heard about how they had been treated twenty years ago. So in the beginning, the Open Forums were a mix of old issues and new ones and a lot of roundtable discussions. But then, we got to the point where our employees wanted new information about the future and how it was going to impact them but they didn't know what to focus on. I would usually start off the Open Forums by saying "What would you like me to discuss today... what do you want to talk about?" Increasingly, they would respond "Nothing, we don't have any issues." They just wanted to know what I was thinking about as to future projects and such. I started to bring a little agenda with me of all the issues I had been involved with since the last Open Forum and other topics I thought might be

of interest. I enjoyed these Open Forums for so many reasons. I got to get information out to them in an informal atmosphere and receive timely feedback and have some one-on-one time with employees that I would not usually have had the opportunity to meet with and that was good. I continued the Open Forums through the rest of my time as Clerk because it was an effective way...

Ms. Woodbury:

To stay in touch?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Yes. Yes, for people to talk to me one-on-one and for me to hear firsthand and to do things very timely because every two weeks we would have one. Another outcome of the Employee Management Committee that I really enjoyed came in the area of education and training. I had wanted for some time to put together a group of employees to discuss Stephen Covey's book *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. I wanted the group to be a mixture of supervisors and line employees – staff that I didn't interact with on a regular basis. The original Committee had done such a great job that it was the perfect group to work with in exploring the seven habits in depth. The Committee members had demonstrated all of the really good habits of effective people so it was a natural fit. We had one session a month for 8 months and I learned more from them than they did from me. That was probably in early 2000 that we did this training.

Ms. Woodbury:

Nancy, I had a question just to follow up on the team organization that you talked about earlier today. You said when you started, or I guess once you became Clerk of the Court, you decided to setup a pilot program, and there were five judges who used the team organization for their courts and then you said

after two years it became generally accepted; is that right?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Yes and it really was... Jim had actually introduced the concept when I went out in 1989, and then we kind of had to step back and reintroduce it. It actually got implemented before I became Clerk.

Ms. Woodbury: The pilot program?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Yes, before I became Clerk.

Ms. Woodbury: And then what was the process by which it became generally accepted and utilized by other judges in the court? Did the five judges talk about their experience?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Yes, and I tried to get Judge Robinson to put something on the agenda or in his general comments about how successfully the pilot program was proceeding. You know, asking him to talk in advance of the meetings to one of the judges participating in the pilot and see if they would say something about some of the positive aspects of the program. Feedback from judges to judges makes a stronger impression than hearing it anywhere else. One of the things that we learned from the judges in the program was they felt like they did have more support because now when it was a docketing issue or case processing issue, it didn't disappear in this black hole of operations. The judges could pick up the phone and call down to one of the team members and ask them "What happened to this pleading? I don't see it on my docket and the attorney presented it to me in court today." That helped us learn that some of our attorneys file first with us and then go up to chambers or the courtroom and give a copy of the pleading directly to the judge. Our procedures mandated that all pleadings be put on the docket no

more than 24 hours after they were filed. Since the 24 hour time frame had not elapsed, the clerk was not at fault. In this case the judge then called the attorney and told him not to deliver a copy to his chambers in the future. In another case, the same thing happened and when the judge called down to check on the pleading, it had been more than 24 hours and the pleading had not been docketed. It wasn't docketed because the clerk was a little back logged. The judge reminded the docket clerk of the importance of timely docket entries and it really made an impression on the clerk. She realized that her backlog impacted the judge's ability to do his job and she made an extra effort to reduce her backlog and stay current. That communication with the judge did more to reduce the backlog than her team leader's pleas to her to stay current. But the best part of having judges' communicate directly with our support staff and not just through their courtroom deputy was that most of our communications with the judges were very positive and complimentary.

Ms. Woodbury:

And hearing it from the judge.

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Hearing it from the judge was amazing. Plus, we used to joke that the only time the judges came through the Clerk's Office was when they got off the judges' elevator on the wrong floor. If they accidentally pushed the first floor button, the elevator would open up right in the middle of the Clerk's Office Operations Section and their usual reaction was "Oh... this isn't where I'm suppose to be. I don't know these people." But now because they had more than just courtroom deputies supporting them, they knew us. So the judges would find themselves on the first floor and they would look around and say "Hey, Mary Jo,

how's it going?" In the past, many of our judges enjoyed coming down to visit their courtroom deputy. With the team based approach to supporting them, they came and visited the docket clerk too, often just to say hello. So, it ended up being a really good experience and a good way to get ultimately better support for the judges and more realization by the employees about the importance of the work they do.

Ms. Woodbury: That the judges were their clients? They felt a tie.

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Yes. And around the same time, which was a little bit after this when I first became Clerk, we started talking about a vision statement.

Ms. Woodbury: A vision statement?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: A vision statement for the Clerk's Office. We went through several drafts and we came up with something that we ended up putting on a little laminated card that everybody had a copy of because it was a result of input from everyone in the Clerk's Office. Our vision statement highlighted how we would continue to use technology to improve our goals of giving timely and accurate information to our customers. Our mission statement said our primary role was to assist in the administration of justice and uphold the highest standards of customer service. Drafting the two statements was an interesting process to go through because we wanted to develop statements that everyone felt they had a stake in implementing. We went through many drafts and discussions and the final product was something we were proud of and that we felt represented the office well. A recurring comment from some of our employees had to do with our use of the phrase "assist in the administration of justice." One clerk said, "I never thought

that the work I was doing was assisting in the administration of justice. I thought I was making a docket entry or filing a pleading. The thought that the accuracy and timeliness of my work was assisting in the administration of justice made me sit up and take notice. It kind of brought the whole thing together."

Ms. Woodbury: What the court was doing?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Right, what the court does. What the big picture was and not just in their little part.

Ms. Woodbury: How it matters to do a good job?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Yes. At this time in the early 90s was the time when we were really developing IT. And, for the first time a judge had a need to know someone other than their courtroom deputy and/or their operations team because they depended on IT so much. All of a sudden, judges were telling me, "Nancy, I visited your IT shop. They're very knowledgeable. In fact, they even helped me with my home computer." The Clerk's Office had never had that type of relationship with judges before. We always were just thought of as clerical staff. Now, we had people on our staff who knew more than the judges did about an area that was critical to their case management. That was really eye opening for the judges about being truly a team and having a partnership with the Clerk's Office. Judges were at various levels of interest and experience with technology. Our newer judges came on understanding benefits of technology and having the experience to operate a computer. Our older judges knew they didn't understand the technology and didn't need to, but they had someone down in our IT office who would walk them through...

Ms. Woodbury: Who could help?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: And show them or someone in their chambers how to do a spreadsheet if that is what they needed to do. That you couldn't just pick up the phone and bark out the orders. You had to pick up the phone and say "Hey, Nick, I'm having a little trouble with this and I really need this and perhaps you could come up and help me?" IT was leveling the playing field somewhat and this was from my perspective a big turning point in the relationship between the Clerk's Office and the judges.

Ms. Woodbury: Nancy, was there a procedure in place at any time where when a new judge was appointed to the bench, there was some way of introducing that judge to what the court staff did? How did they get to know the procedure of the court and get to know the people who worked there?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: In 1985 Judge Lamberth came on board and the procedure at that point was to send him a lot of information about how his caseload was determined, how new cases are assigned and the local rules and that sort of thing. Judge Lamberth was the last judge appointed until 1994 when we got five new judges. So we decided that we really needed to do a formal orientation program because supporting one judge and doing it informally and answering questions as they came up was one thing, but five new judges was a much bigger proposition. So we sat down and put together an orientation program for them and we had four of the judges come over in advance of their swearing in to go through a general orientation. (The fifth judge was confirmed several months later and we had a separate orientation for that judge.) The orientation for the four judges took a full

day in the judges' conference room and we introduced them to the different areas of operations in the Clerk's Office so that we could support them the best way we could. That was a first for us so we put together notebooks for all the judges with contact information and background information. We had at that time Judge Friedman, Judge Kessler, Judge Urbina and Judge Sullivan, all attending that orientation. Judge Robertson, who was sworn in on New Year's Eve, was part of the five that came on board that year. His confirmation was later than the other four so that is why we did a separate orientation for him. That was also a very successful experience for us because they saw from the beginning that we were organized and that we had information for them and that we could assist them. It wasn't feeling your way through it the way we had done it in the past. Instead we designed a professional program it and it was very well received. We got a lot good feedback about what was helpful, what they needed to know more about and what we could expand on. I just remember sitting in that meeting with them and feeling like... it's so nice to have these one-on-one exchanges with them and it was also nice to have the four of them together because one would ask a question and another one would go... "Oh, that's true, I hadn't thought about that." And again, it was just a good group of judges to bring on board.

Ms. Woodbury:

Did the Federal Judicial Center play any role in the orientation of new judges?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington:

Yes, they do a program we call the "Baby Judge School," where our judges are invited once they've been... I believe it's once they've been nominated... I think it's even before they're confirmed. They are invited to go to

a session. The FJC scheduled it so that there would be a group of other judges, about fifteen judges or so at the same session.

Ms. Woodbury: From other districts?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Yes. And they did it in conjunction with the Administrative Office because part of the presentation was the personnel side, such as the judges' retirement program, health benefits and things they should sign up for and things they needed know about. And it would also cover the Judicial Conference and the committee structure and how judges get on Judicial Conference Committees. They had the chairs of the different committees come to talk to them about that information too. They were much more global and they had done that for a while. That had been done before we started our own orientation program but they certainly didn't get into the day to day details...

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Of how the particular courts work?

Ms. Woodbury: Right.

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Your court?

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Right, exactly.

Ms. Woodbury: Okay, Nancy this seems to me like a good time to stop for today.

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Okay.

Ms. Woodbury: And I will follow up with you to schedule our next interview.

Ms. Mayer-Whittington: Okay.