

SUPREME COURT OF ARKANSAS

IN RE PHILLIPS COUNTY,
ARKANSAS, CIRCUIT COURT
DOCKET

Opinion Delivered February 11, 2013

PER CURIAM

The Phillips County Circuit Court, First Judicial District, has been experiencing problems with the control and management of its criminal docket. Consequently, the supreme court directed staff members of the Administrative Office of the Courts to audit that docket. In response to the audit findings, the circuit judges of the First Judicial District sought guidance from the supreme court and requested the opportunity to seek comments and recommendations from other circuit judges. After reviewing the audit findings and discussing with the First Judicial District circuit judges options for resolving the docket issues, we conclude—and the circuit judges agree—that the circuit court would benefit from the assistance of an independent consultant.

Accordingly, the supreme court assigns recently retired circuit judge, Kim Smith of Fayetteville, to the First Judicial District. We make this assignment pursuant to our superintending authority over the courts of this state. *See* Ark. Const. amend. 80, §§ 4, 13; Ark. Sup. Ct. Admin. Order Nos. 14, 16. This assignment is effective immediately and shall be in force until terminated by subsequent order of this court.

Judge Smith shall have the full authority of a circuit judge. In addition, Judge Smith

shall have the authority to order the circuit clerks of the First Judicial District to assign and reassign cases. We direct the circuit judges, circuit clerks, and all court personnel of the First Judicial District to cooperate with Judge Smith and to assist him. We order Judge Smith to report his observations and recommendations to the supreme court.

We are confident in the ability of the circuit judges to handle their caseloads, and we know that they will benefit from Judge Smith's experience and expertise. We thank Judge Smith for accepting this assignment.