

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
February 10, 2021

Attendees: Judges Anthony, Barrett, Becker, Berkenstock, Brandt, Daly, Darby, DeGennaro, Fox, Ganim, Gardner Riordan, Jalowiec, Magistrali, Maxham, McGrath, Randich, Schad, and Wright, and also Probate Court Administrator Judge Streit-Kefalas, Manager of Communications Melissa Riley, Chief Counsel Bonnie Bennet.

1. Call to Order:

Due to the continued public health emergency, the meeting was held in person and remotely via Cisco Webex video conferencing and was called to order at 9:46 AM.

2. Approval of the Minutes:

A motion was made by Judge Magistrali, seconded by Judge DeGennaro and unanimously carried to accept the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of January 13, 2021 as presented.

3. Correspondence:

Judge Brandt reported that he had received no correspondence. Judge Streit-Kefalas reported she also had not received any correspondence.

4. Committee Reports:

Continuing Education

Judge Becker reminded judges to sign up for webinars through Paychex. There is an upcoming webinar on Real Property on Thursday, February 18, 2021 from 1-2:30PM.

Ethics

No Report

Legislative

Judge Fox reported that the legislative session has commenced. Hearings are being held on Zoom. The Committee will continue to monitor bills of interest for the Assembly. The Labor Committee held a public hearing yesterday on House Bill 6382, An Act Strengthening the Probate Court System, a bill that proposes that Probate Court employees be deemed to state employees for purposes of collective bargaining.

Nominating

Judge McGrath reported that there is no change to the recent report of the Committee delivered at the January Probate Assembly.

Planning

No Report.

Procedures Review

Judge Berkenstock reported that the February 1, 2021 meeting was postponed to March 1, 2021

due to snowstorm.

Public Information

Judge Streit-Kefalas spoke on behalf of Judge Blick and reported that this Committee will be holding quarterly meetings and members will be informed of the dates soon.

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Conservator Guidelines

No Report.

Court Security

Judge Streit-Kefalas reported that Judge Calabrese held a meeting on February 8, 2021 and reported that only 10 courts had submitted updated security assessments. She encouraged all judges to follow up and request security assessments from their local municipalities.

Floating Clerks

No Report.

Hospitality

No Report.

5. Comments of the Probate Court Administrator:

Judge Streit-Kefalas reported that the Governor extended the public health emergency and other executive orders which are now set to expire on April 19, 2021. This Executive Order 10A encompasses an extension of the orders for the Probate Courts; i.e. waiver of in-person hearing and grace periods for scheduling deadlines.

The NCPJ spring conference will be held virtually on May 12, 2021. Judge Yamin has reported that the virtual conference will cover mental health issues due to the pandemic.

The CBA has scheduled its annual legal conference for June 15-17, 2021. It will be 3 days of virtual meetings and seminars. The CBA has requested that no routine hearings be scheduled to allow for participation by judges and attorneys at the event.

Phase 1b rollout of vaccinations has been expanded to individuals age 65 and older. Eligible individuals may self-register in VAMS. Judge Streit-Kefalas will send out a CDC VAMS guidebook to help registrants navigate the website. Judges and court staff have been designated as front-line essential workers but details regarding roll-out to this group has not yet been disclosed. The total of all eligible individuals proposed to be part of Phase 1b comprises half the population of the State.

Judge Streit-Kefalas reported that she testified on the DDS-ops bill on Monday of this week. The Appropriations Committee has not yet set the schedule of public hearings. The Governor will deliver his budget address at noon today and Judge Streit-Kefalas will disseminate the budget information as it becomes available. She shared that outreach by court staff and judges to their

legislators is more important than ever.

6. Comments of the President Judge:

Judge Brandt thanked all for their input and indicated that the judges will have more discussions going forward on various legislation. As members of the Executive Committee, the judges are leaders and need to be active in the Assembly and work with legislators.

7. Other Business to come before the Executive Committee:

None

8. Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made by Judge DeGennaro, seconded by Judge Barrett and unanimously approved. The meeting ended at 10:40 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Hon. Kathleen N. Maxham
Recording Secretary