

# CONNECTICUT PROBATE ASSEMBLY

Regular Meeting of the  
**Executive Committee**  
March 9, 2022

**Office of the Probate Court Administrator**  
186 Newington Rd.  
West Hartford, CT 06110

## MINUTES

Attendees: Judges Brandt, Daly, Gardner Riordan, Jalowiec, Maxham, McGrath, Randich, Wright and also Probate Court Administrator Judge Streit-Kefalas, Chief Counsel Heather Dostaler and Manager of Communications, Jim Polites.

**1. Call to Order:**

Judges Darby, Fox and Lewis participated by telephone. Committee was unable to reach a quorum so no votes were taken. Judge Brandt called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**2. Approval of the Minutes:**

The minutes of February 9, 2022 will be considered at the next Executive Committee meeting.

**3. Correspondence:**

Judge Brandt and Judge Streit-Kefalas reported no correspondence for the Assembly.

**4. Committee Reports:**

Continuing Education

Judge Brandt noted the next Judges Institute will be Wednesday, March 16, 2022 at Quinnipiac University School of Law on the topic of mediation. The next educational seminar and Assembly meeting is on June 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Farmington Club.

Ethics

No Report

Legislative

Judge Fox reported that the Probate Court operations bill has been raised and referred to the Judiciary Committee. He also reported that the Labor Committee held a public hearing on the collective bargaining bill for court staff. Judge Streit-Kefalas testified. This bill will likely pass from Labor and be referred to other committees.

Nominating

No Report

Planning  
No Report

Procedures Review

Judge Randich and Attorney Dostaler reported that the Committee met on March 7, 2022 and reviewed and finalized decrees in connection with the Parentage Act. Attorney Dostaler remarked that the decrees will not be available in CMS until October but judges and clerks should contact the law department for assistance in the interim.

Public Information

Judge Brandt reported that this Committee plans to provide presentation panels for judges and develop press releases for judges to customize for their personal use.

**AD HOC COMMITTEES**

Conservator Guidelines

No Report

Hospitality

No Report

Court Security

No Report

Floating Clerks

No Report.

**5. Comments of the Probate Court Administrator:**

Judge Streit-Kefalas commented on the following:

- A. The state auditors are currently at PCA conducting an audit of all public accounts for fiscal years 2020 and 2021. Auditors look at PCA, Court and personnel records. Please cooperate with the auditors if your court is a selected site. Cathie Topper is the PCA liaison.
- B. There have been no proposed adjustments to our budget by the Governor's office and it is anticipated the legislature will keep our general fund appropriation as originally approved.
- C. The chairs of the Labor Committee recognized the good work of the Probate Courts throughout the pandemic.
- D. We are in a new transition on the COVID-19 front. The masking requirements in all Judicial Branch offices and courthouses has been lifted. However, please encourage any staff to be comfortable wearing a if they prefer to do so.
- E. State retirement benefits change as of July 1 so expect state employee

- retirements. Allison Green who has thirty years with PCA is retiring soon.
- F. The Probate Court Budget Committee is meeting in person next week on March 16, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.
  - G. PCA is now piloting eFiling with professional conservators. DSS and DAS participation is in the development phase and will be piloted in the next few months.
  - H. PCA is in the exploratory phase of securing technology for hybrid hearings. Supply chain issues will be a challenge with its full deployment to the courts.

Judge Streit-Kefalas asked Jim Polites to say a few words since most judges had not yet met him in person. He commented that the Capitol is opening up floor by floor and all lobbyists are very happy. He recognized Judge Brandt and Judge Graves for their written and oral testimony for the Appropriations Committee. He mentioned that the next few weeks will be very busy at the Capitol.

The judges then discussed the lack of participation in probate hearings by state agency representatives.

**6. Comments of the President Judge:**

Judge Brandt thanked Judge Streit-Kefalas and Jim Polites, Judges Fox, Rowe and Graves for their assistance with legislative matters. Judge Brandt also commented on how busy all the courts seem to be. He encouraged all to keep plugging along and continue to open the courts to in-person hearings.

**7. Other Business to come before the Executive Committee:**

Judge Wright, as the immediate past president of the Assembly recognized Judge Brandt for his handling of the Assembly during the past two years of shut down. He acknowledged his accomplishments and commented that it was not an easy job.

**8. Adjournment:**

The meeting ended at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Hon. Kathleen N. Maxham  
Recording Secretary