



CONNECTICUT PROBATE ASSEMBLY

Regular Meeting of the **Executive Committee**

Wednesday, December 8, 2021

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

MINUTES

Attendees: Judges Anthony, Barrett, Becker, Berkenstock, Brandt, Darby, DeGennaro, Fox, Gardner Riordan, Lewis, Maxham, McGrath, Randich, Rowe, Shad, Wright and also Probate Court Administrator Judge Streit-Kefalas, Chief Counsel Heather Dostaler and Manager of Communications, Jim Polites.

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 9:49 a.m.

2. Approval of the Minutes:

A motion was made by Judge Becker, seconded by Judge Lewis and carried unanimously to accept the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of November 10, 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 for the Assembly.

4. Committee Reports:

Continuing Education

Judge Becker indicated there is one more opportunity for continuing education tomorrow. It is the kickoff of the symposium on conservatorships on December 9, 2021 presented from 11:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m. She reported that the Hot Topics seminar was very well attended. The next program will be in person in January. Campaign ethics and conservator decree writing are being considered. The Committee is planning a seminar on dementia for June and the Parentage Act for September 2022.

Ethics

No Report. This topic will be addressed at the seminar in January.

Legislative

Judges Fox and Rowe reported that the Committee met on December 6. The probate operations bill was discussed as well as other topics that may come up during the next legislative session. The next legislative session begins on February 9 and runs through May 4, 2022. All legislative issues and matters for the probate ops bill should be sent to the Committee Chairs for consideration. The next Committee meeting is February 2, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

Nominating

No Report

Planning

No Report

Procedures Review

Judge Berkenstock indicated that the next meeting is February 7, 2022.

Public Information

Judge Brandt reported for Judge Blick that the brochures are ready to be printed and the Committee will next focus on the presentation boards.

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Conservator Guidelines

Judge DeGennaro reported that the Committee has not met but he is having discussions about training for conservators who are family members. He intends to reactivate the Committee in the spring to review the Standards.

Judge Becker commented that the Conservator Standards of Practice are excellent and very helpful.

Judge Streit-Kefalas reported that she shared Connecticut's conservator procedures and Standards with U.S. Senator Blumenthal's office for a public hearing he held in September on these issues.

Hospitality

No Report

Court Security

No Report

Floating Clerks

No Report.

5. Comments of the Probate Court Administrator:

Judge Streit-Kefalas commented that this is her last meeting as a probate judge of Milford-Orange District. She also had the following updates:

- The January 2022 seminar will be in person so please factor travel time into your schedules.
- It is anticipated that upcoming Committee meetings will be in person as well.
- The Budget Committee is meeting tonight at 4:00 p.m.
- The Connecticut Bar Foundation (CBF) is sponsoring a series of conversations on conservatorships. The kickoff is tomorrow. Tom Gaffey is a speaker. PCA and the CT Legal Rights Project are collaborating with the CBF on this series. All are encouraged to participate.
- Judges are also reminded of the Lunch and Learn Series hosted by the Elder Justice Coalition of Connecticut with its next session on December 16 from 12:00 p.m.- 1:00 p.m.
- Please respond to the survey regarding items and articles you would like included in the Probate Press.
- Judge Michael Carrier has already taken office in Berlin Probate District and Judge-elect Ben Gettinger will be assuming his duties in the Milford-Orange Probate District in January.
- The COVID-19 positivity rate has been increasing. Please consider a vaccine mandate policy for your courts. A policy should be in place if a new employee is hired.
- The CBA is now requiring proof of vaccine or negative test within 72 hours to attend any seminars at its headquarters or at events it sponsors.

Judge Streit-Kefalas indicated that PCA is getting calls that courts are not holding in person hearings as required. She shared results from a survey of the general public on remote hearings performed by the National Center for State Courts. The survey indicates a decrease in confidence in court systems and a preference for in-person hearings on matters involving family issues such as custody of minors.. The survey results will be shared with all the judges.

6. Comments of the President Judge:

Judge Brandt was pleased to see that our next Assembly meeting will be in person in January. Being in person will enhance our ability to share ideas and encourage collegiality. He congratulated Judge Randich on his recent marriage and wished all a happy and healthy holiday season.

7. Other Business to come before the Executive Committee:

None

8. Adjournment:

A motion was made by Judge Streit-Kefalas, seconded by Judge Wright and unanimously approved to adjourn. The meeting ended at 10:29 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Hon. Kathleen N. Maxham
Recording Secretary