



CONNECTICUT PROBATE ASSEMBLY

Regular Meeting September 20, 2023

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President-Judge Evelyn Daly at 12:20 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Judge Joseph Marino led the Assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call of the Judges

41 Judges were present in Memorial Hall at Central Connecticut State University for the meeting. In addition, Probate Court Administrator Judge Streit-Kefalas, Attorneys Heather Dostaler, Evan Brunetti, and Eric Rothausser also attended.

3. Approval of the April 19, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Judge Charles Tiernan moved and Judge Barbara Gardner Riordan seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2023 meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Committee Reports

Continuing Education

Judge Jeannine Lewis reported the committee last met on August 16, 2023. The next seminar is a Judges Institute to be held at Central Connecticut State University on October 25, 2023. Topics to be covered include addressing matters with parties with limited English proficiency; legislative update; jurisdiction and tools for judges as managers. A joint bench/bar seminar is scheduled at the Aqua Turf on November 14, 2023. The agenda includes Dr. Harry Morgan speaking on capacity; elder abuse and exploitation; trust modification, and fiduciary and attorney fees. An attorney and judge will present each topic. The next Committee meeting is October 18, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. in the PCA Library.

Ethics

Judge Brandt reported that the committee met on September 14, 2023. The committee anticipates sending out an email to judges on ethics relating to campaigns. The next meeting is December 7, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. in the PCA Library.

Legislative

Judge Streit-Kefalas reported that PCA has already begun to meet with key legislators about the upcoming short session. Two important topics are the restoration of the filing fees on name change petitions and the need to fully fund our requested appropriation. She asked all to send along any suggestions for legislation.

Planning Committee

Judge Fred Anthony described the purpose of the committee and indicated that it was to meet the first week in October.

Public Information

No report.

Procedures Review

Judge Jennifer Berkenstock reported that the committee met on September 11, 2023 and continues to review forms. The meeting was very productive. The committee is drafting a new petition to remove a financial hold as a result of new legislation to take effect July 1, 2024 and other forms. Suggestions may be sent to Judge Berkenstock or Eric Rothausser. The next meeting is December 4, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. in PCA Library.

Court Security

No report

5. Remarks of the Probate Court Administrator

Judge Streit-Kefalas spoke about the morning's session on trafficking. She was previously the probate court liaison on the HART team. Stephanie Janes is the Office of Probate Court Administrator representative now. She stressed the importance of awareness of trafficking issues and encouraged all to talk with staff about the issues.

Judge Streit-Kefalas also emphasized the portion of the seminar on language and how Judges and staff should seek to use proper and sensitive words. It helps the courts gain respect with the public if correct language is utilized.

Judge Streit-Kefalas reported on the following:

- a. The next NCPJ conference with Judge Dianne Yamin (ret.) as President in Tampa, Florida from November 15th through November 18th.
- b. Roundtables for clerks and judges have been scheduled. She encouraged judges to attend.
- c. The Rules committee has reconvened. There is a list of concepts the committee will be considering. Please send along any concepts for review to her or Attorney Dostaler at PCA.

- d. She attended the CBA Elder Law meeting and the enacted remote notarization statute that takes effect on October 1, 2023 was discussed. She encouraged all judges to attend the meetings

6. Remarks of the President-Judge

Judge Daly addressed her concerns with the level of civility in the courts especially to staff. She is interested in suggestions about improving civility and safeguarding our staff and judges.

Judge Daly raised the issue of the difficulty courts are experiencing in finding suitable conservators to serve. She is seeking input and suggestions on this issue.

7. Any business to come before the Assembly

None

8. Adjourn

A motion made by Judge Michael Darby and seconded by Judge Lewis to adjourn. The motion carried and the Assembly adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Hon. Kathleen N. Maxham
Recording Secretary