

Regular Meeting of the
Connecticut Probate Assembly

Tuesday, October 26, 2021

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

This meeting will be conducted in-person and by Cisco WebEx Videoconference.
For connection information, please call 860-231-2442

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Judge Brandt at 12:17 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Assembly members all rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance led by Judges Leamon and Hamzy.

Roll call of the Judges

Thirty-three judges were present by Cisco Webex video conference for the meeting, including Probate Court Administrator Judge Streit-Kefalas. Also present: PCA Chief Counsel Heather Dostaler, Attorney Eric Rothauer, and Communications & Intergovernmental Relations Manager Jim Polites.

3. Approval of the September 14, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Judge Gardner Riordan moved and Judge Wright seconded a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report will be addressed at the next Assembly meeting.

5. Committee Reports

Continuing Education

Judge Becker reported that the Committee has been meeting monthly. The next webinar is co-sponsored with the CT Bar Association and will take place virtually on November 16, 2021. Almost a full day of continuing education credits will be available. The January seminar will be on Ethics. The Judges Institute in March will be held in person at Quinnipiac University Law School and focus on mediation and a case law update. Judge Becker thanked PCA for all its technical support in planning the webinars. Judges and staff should sign up in Paychex for upcoming

events and review Regulation 26 for information about outside seminar credit. Judge Brandt thanked Judge Becker for her efforts with the Committee.

Ethics

Judge Magistrali reported that the Committee met on Webex platform on October 20, 2021 and will be meeting again on November 3, 2021. They are discussing an amendment to the Code of Judicial Conduct to include language relative to the use of social media.

Legislative

Judge Streit-Kefalas reported a Committee meeting has been scheduled for November 18, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

Nominating

Judge McGrath indicated there was no Committee report. A new slate of officers will be proposed at the next Assembly meeting.

Planning Committee

Judge Anthony indicated he had no report.

Procedures Review Committee

Judge Berkenstock reported that the next Committee meeting is November 1, 2021.

Public Information

Judge Brandt reported that a Committee meeting will be scheduled.

Conservatorship Guidelines

Judge DeGennaro indicated he had no report

Court Security

No Report

Floating Clerks

No Report

Hospitality

Judge DeGennaro asked for ideas for gatherings.

National College of Probate Judges

Judge Yamin thanked the Assembly for its support of the NCPJ. The next conference is in Savannah, GA commencing November 9, 2021. She detailed the educational programs to be offered and encouraged all to attend. She is on the slate to be elected President-Elect at this conference. Next conference is in Colorado.

6. Remarks of the Probate Court Administrator

Judge Streit-Kefalas gave the following updates since the last Assembly meeting:

Congratulations for Judge Clifton Graves for his recognition by the CT Chapter of the NAACP as one of CT's 100 most influential black leaders. Chief Justice Richard Robinson, Sen. Gary Winfield and Rep. Toni Walker are other honorees of note who have been supportive of our probate court system.

Judge Streit-Kefalas welcomed Jim Polites who has assumed the role of Communications and Intergovernmental Relations Manager. He most recently worked at DRS, has extensive experience in communications as well as legislative work and was a key advisor to former Speaker of the House Jim Amann.

The e-Filing expansion is continuing on schedule. DCF and the Office of the Attorney General as well as West Region of DDS are now mandatory eFilers with the rest of DDS to follow by the end of November.

The 2021 Legislative Summary has been posted on the intranet. It is a great resource and contains links to the relevant acts.

The rule revisions proposed by the Advisory Committee on the Probate Court Rules of Procedure have been posted and noticed for a public hearing at the Supreme Court on November 17, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. The recommendations will then be referred to the Supreme Court for final approval.

As we head into winter Judge Streit-Kefalas reminded judges to review the policy manual to view the storm preparedness checklist and inclement weather protocol.

She thanked the Continuing Education Committee which has provided over 40 hours of continuing education over this past year and thanked the judges who presented at the webinar just prior to the Assembly meeting.

Judge Streit-Kefalas took a few minutes to reflect in her role for the past 22 years as the Judge of the Milford-Orange Probate District. She stated that being a probate judge has been one of the most rewarding engagements with which she has been involved. This is her final Assembly meeting as an elected probate judge since her resignation to the Governor that takes effective at midnight December 31, 2021. She thanked Judge Forgione for stepping in to assist her court for the past two years. She wished all a happy and healthy holiday season.

Remarks of President-Judge

Judge Brandt thanked all judges for attending and expressed his appreciation for Judge Streit-Kefalas and PCA and how they have addressed the ever-changing demands on the system. He welcomed Jim Polites to our team and congratulated Judge Graves for his CT Chapter of the NAACP recognition. He recognized Judge

Clebowicz and remarked that his retirement party was very well attended especially by residents of the District he helped over his many years as a judge. Judge Brandt recognized Judge Streit-Kefalas for all her years as our PCA Administrator and as a colleague in the Milford-Orange Probate District. She was instrumental in the success of the New Haven Regional Children's Court.

7. Any other business to come before the Assembly

None

8. Adjourn

Motion was made by Judge Gardner Riordan seconded by Judge Daly and unanimously carried to adjourn at 12:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Hon. Kathleen N. Maxham
Recording Secretary