



CONNECTICUT PROBATE ASSEMBLY

ANNUAL MEETING April 20, 2022

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Judge Brandt at 11:08 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Judge Brandt asked Judge Yamin to lead the Assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. The Assembly then observed a moment of silence to remember Judge Daniel O'Grady who died on March 27, 2022.

Roll call of the Judges

Twenty-five judges were present at the Supreme Court for the meeting. In addition, Probate Court Administrator Judge Streit-Kefalas, Attorneys Heather Dostaler, Evan Brunetti and Eric Rothauer, Director of Finance Lisa Hansen and Director of Communications Jim Polites attended.

3. Remarks of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court

Judge Brandt introduced Chief Justice Robinson who shared his remarks with the Assembly. He commented on the role of the probate system during the pandemic and how proud he was of the courts and the sacrifices that were made to keep the courts open. He indicated that the probate courts have a shared goal with all of our courts and we need to be creative and efficient. He remarked that our role in supporting self-represented parties has an impact on the whole system. He also stated that Probate Court Administrator Judge Beverly Streit-Kefalas is an ideal partner helping to make the courts user friendly and accessible. He thanked all present for all that we do.

4. Approval of the January 26, 2022 Meeting Minutes

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

5. Treasurer's Report and Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2023

Judge Randich presented the Treasurer's Report for the third quarter of the fiscal year ending 6/30/2022 showing a few expenses for the Judge's Institute and the Chief Clerks meeting. Judge DeGennaro moved and Judge Yamin seconded a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Judge Randich presented the proposed budget for the fiscal year ending 2023. He indicated that this budget is flat at \$35,000.

Judge Gardner Riordan moved and Judge Magistrali seconded to approve the proposed budget as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Committee Reports

Continuing Education

Judge Gardner Riordan delivered a report for Judge Becker which detailed the purpose of the committee. She thanked all the judges and court staff for generously donating time to all the seminars that were held via the Webex video platform.

Ethics

Judge Magistrali explained the purpose of the committee and named its members. He reviewed the recent changes to the Code of Probate Judicial Conduct as set forth in Comments to Rules 3.1 and 4.1. He thanked all member judges for their time.

Legislative

Judge Fox reported that the General Assembly is now in session for two more weeks. The Probate Ops bill was passed by the Senate and will move on to the House. The Budget has received favorable reviews by the Governor's office and Appropriations Committee. He encouraged judges to call their representatives and senators to encourage full passage.

Nominating

The committee report was passed until later in the meeting.

Planning Committee

Judge Brandt indicated there was nothing to report on behalf of Judge Anthony.

Procedures Review Committee

Judge Berkenstock thanked the members and explained the role of the committee. The committee continues to review and revise forms in response to changes in the law and other recommendations. The committee meets on the first Monday of each month and next meeting is May 2, 2022, in person at the PCA library.

Public Information

Judge McCaffrey delivered a report for Judge Blick explaining the purpose of the committee. She indicated that brochures for distribution to the public were updated and provided to all courts as well as legislators. Information displays are also available at PCA for use in presentations to the public. She thanked all her committee members.

Conservatorship Guidelines

Judge DeGennaro explained the purpose of the committee. The Committee will be reconvening to develop a training program for conservators. The first meeting is expected to be in June. New members are welcome.

Court Security

Judge Brandt delivered the report for Judge Calabrese explaining the purpose of the committee. He referred judges to Section 902 in the policy manual and encouraged all to schedule periodic security reviews with their local police.

Floating Clerks

Judge Berkenstock explained the purpose of this ad hoc committee. Anyone interested in this program should contact PCA for the current list of clerks.

Hospitality

Judge DeGennaro reported that he is planning a social component at the next Assembly meeting in June if we are in-person. He is planning a reception at the NCPJ conference in November to honor Judge Yamin who will be inducted as President. He is also looking to plan dates for other hospitality events.

NCPJ

Judge Yamin gave a short history of the National College of Probate Judges and explained its purpose to the Assembly. She thanked Judge Streit-Kefalas for her support of NCPJ and indicated Connecticut judges are almost at 100% membership. Judge Yamin is the President Elect and membership co-chair now and will become President at the November conference. The spring conference is in Colorado Springs, CO on May 18-21. Also save the date for the fall conference in Destin, FL from November 15-18 where she will be installed as President. She encouraged all to register and attend.

7. Elections

Judge Brandt nominated the following judges for the 2022-2023 term:

OFFICERS:

Term: 2022 - 2023

- President-Judge HONORABLE EVELYN M. DALY
- First Vice President-Judge HONORABLE MICHAEL M. DARBY
- Second Vice President-Judge HONORABLE LEAH P. SCHAD
- Executive Secretary HONORABLE PETER C. BARRETT
- Recording Secretary HONORABLE KATHLEEN N. MAXHAM
- Treasurer HONORABLE ROBERT A. RANDICH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Term: 2022-2025

- New London HONORABLE JEFFREY A. MCNAMARA
- New Haven HONORABLE PHILIP A. WRIGHT, JR.
- At Large HONORABLE SCOTT R. CHADWICK

BUDGET COMMITTEE:

Term: 2022-2024 HONORABLE PHILIP A. WRIGHT, JR.

The Assembly voted unanimously to elect those judges nominated. Thereafter Judge Brandt administered the oath of office to the officers who were present.

8. Presentation of Service Award to Clerks

Judge Jalowiec presented a 25-year service award to his chief clerk Margherita Bergstrand. Judge Forgione presented a 25-year service award to Tara Courtmanche, Esq, chief clerk of the New Haven Regional Children's Court. Attorney Courtmanche delivered remarks as well.

9. Recognition of Retired Judges

Judge Brandt recognized three judges who have retired during the past year; Judge Andre Dorval from Region 19, Judge Nicholas Kepple from Southeastern CT Regional, and Judge Walter Clebowicz from Berlin. Each judge received a commemorative clock and delivered remarks to the Assembly.

10. Presentation of the Glenn E. Knierim Pro Bono Award

Judge Brandt gave the history of this Award and asked Judge Randich to present it to the award recipient, Peter Boorman, Esq. Judge Randich shared stories of Attorney Boorman's service and commitment to clients for whom he was appointed by the Probate Courts and Attorney Boorman delivered his thanks and remarks.

11. Presentation of the Daniel F. Caruso Public Service Award

Judge Streit-Kefalas detailed the history of this award and the background of the recipient and presented it to Attorney Doug Dalena. Attorney Dalena delivered his thanks and remarks.

12. Remarks of the Probate Court Administrator

Judge Streit-Kefalas remarked that she was pleased that we were in person in this facility for the annual meeting. She thanked Chief Justice Robinson for his remarks and concurred that he is a good partner. She reported that Judge Carroll was unable to attend the meeting but sent his best regards. And she offered appreciation to Judge Bozzuto for also attending the meeting.

She thanked Judge Brandt for all he has accomplished as President-Judge and congratulated all the newly-elected officers, committee chairs and members, noting that the committees are so important to the system. She congratulated Judge Daly as the new President-Judge. She congratulated the over 300 dedicated court staff -2 who were recognized today and thanked them for their dedication to keeping our court system working and especially enhancing access to the courts. She remarked that we are truly a people's court.

On her update on "all things probate" she indicated that the annual report is being distributed and reminded all that PCA is always available for guidance and assistance. She especially thanked Evelyn Gonzalez on organizing her first and very successful annual meeting.

13. Remarks of the Outgoing President-Judge

Judge Brandt introduced his family who were in attendance. He recalled that two years ago as he was sworn in, he was standing alone in his court on Webex. He remarked that our courts remained open for our constituents. He reflected on his tenure as president-judge and his 20 years as a probate judge. He thanked his

clerks, PCA, Evelyn Gonzalez and Judge Streit-Kefalas for her support during the pandemic. He then introduced newly elected President-Judge Daly.

14. Remarks of the Incoming President-Judge

Judge Daly thanked Judge Brandt for his service as President-Judge the past two years and presented him with a commemorative clock. She offered her thanks to everyone for attending today's meeting and introduced her family and staff. She remarked that she is proud to be part of the probate system for over 15 years. She appreciates the role the courts play to comfort, support, and create solutions for people at the most difficult times in their lives. She will continue to encourage courts to work together as a probate system. She thanked Judge Brandt for his leadership through the pandemic. She congratulated all who had received recognition and wished health and happiness to all.

15. Any business to come before the Assembly

None

16. Adjourn

A motion was made by Judge Magistrali, seconded by Judge Hamzy, and unanimously carried to adjourn at 12:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Hon. Kathleen N. Maxham
Recording Secretary