

Probate Court Budget Committee

Emergency Special Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Friday, March 20, 2020

2:00pm

Office of the Probate Court Administrator

186 Newington Road, West Hartford, CT

The emergency special meeting convened at 2:01 p.m., Friday, March 20, 2020 pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. § 1-225(d).

Nature of Emergency: Escalation of COVID-19 pandemic

Purpose of Meeting: To review and approve supplemental emergency benefits for court staff in the event of court closures

In attendance: Judge Beverly Streit-Kefalas, Probate Court Administrator and Chair, Judge Joseph Marino (by telephone), and Judge Fred Anthony (by telephone).

Convened at 2:01 p.m.

Public Comment and Correspondence

None

Remarks by the Chair

Judge Streit-Kefalas called an emergency special meeting of the budget committee as a result of the Governor's Unified Command Briefing, March 20, 2020 at 11 a.m. The emergency is a response to the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on court operations.

Adoption of next phase of the Probate Court COVID-19 Pandemic Continuity of Operations Plan

Judge Streit-Kefalas reported that with the escalation of the COVID-19 Pandemic, it is anticipated that courts may have to close their physical facilities to encourage compliance with efforts to increase social distancing. She proposed the implementation and execution of the next phase of the Probate Court Continuity of Operations Plan such that if a judge must close the Probate Court, then staff will be paid their regularly scheduled hours, effective Monday March 23, 2020 through Friday, April 3, 2020, with review to extend or modify as may be appropriate.

Judge Marino made a motion to approve implementation and execution of the next phase of the Probate Court COVID-19 Pandemic Continuity of Operations Plan. Judge Anthony seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Judge Streit-Kefalas reported participating in the Governor's daily Unified Command Call and that the emergency situation was continuing to rapidly change. It is anticipated that the Governor may issue an executive order directing an increase in social distancing and that as a consequence, some court facilities may close. The Committee expressed concern to ensure that court staff would be compensated even if they were unable to report to work due to court closures.

Judge Streit-Kefalas called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.