

Probate Court Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 7, 2016
5:00 p.m.

Library at the Office of the Probate Court Administrator
186 Newington Road, West Hartford, CT

The meeting was convened at 5:02 p.m.

In attendance: Judge Paul Knierim, Probate Court Administrator and Chair and Judge Joseph Marino (by phone). Judge Fred Anthony arrived after adjournment due to exceptional traffic delays traveling to the meeting.

Public Comment and Correspondence

Evan Brunetti, Chief Clerk of the Farmington-Burlington Probate Court and Vice President of CAPC

Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Office Budget Adjustments

Andrea King explained the proposed adjustments to the office budgets for the New London RCPC and Northeast RCPC for the current fiscal year. The New London RCPC seeks an increase of \$1,400 in the Utilities line to enable the court to pay for internet service directly. This amount was previously paid by PCA and accordingly will be offset by an equivalent reduction in PCA expenses. The Northeast RCPC shares expenses with the town and seeks an increase of \$1,000 to the Other Expenses line item to pay for its one-third share for trash removal and cleaning service. The increase is offset with an equivalent reduction in the Office Expense line, resulting in no net change in the court's office budget.

Judge Marino made a motion to approve both office budget adjustments. Judge Knierim seconded the motion. Judge Knierim called for a vote and the motion passed.

Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Office Budgets

The committee discussed the office budget assumptions for fiscal year 2017-18. Judge Knierim explained that the assumptions are unchanged from the current fiscal year.

Judge Marino made a motion to approve the office budget assumptions as presented. Judge Knierim seconded the motion. Judge Knierim called for a vote and the motion passed.

Flexible Spending Accounts

PCA has arranged to transition to a new vendor, Progressive Benefits Solutions, to administer the flexible spending account benefit (FSA) beginning on January 1, 2017. Progressive Benefits Solutions is the FSA vendor for state employees and will extend identical services and pricing to the Probate Court system.

The change of vendors necessitates a change to the FSA carryover provision. Under the current policy, funds in an employee's FSA at year-end can be applied to expenses incurred on or before March 15 of the following year. Progressive's contract with the state adopts a different carryover provision, which permits an employee use funds at any time during the succeeding calendar year, but subject to a maximum of \$500.

Judge Marino moved to change the FSA policy to permit an employee to carry over a maximum of \$500 for the entire year. Judge Knierim seconded. Judge Knierim called for a vote and the motion passed.

Qualified Transportation Account

The new contract with Progressive Benefits Solutions will enable the system to offer an additional benefit in the form of a qualified transportation account (QTA). A QTA enables an employee to pay certain public transportation and parking fees on a pre-tax basis. The benefit will be effective as soon as arrangements with Progressive are finalized, and open enrollment will follow.

Judge Marino moved to add QTA to the current benefits plan. Judge Knierim seconded. Judge Knierim called for a vote and the motion passed.

Other Business

Non-exempt status for retirees

Judge Knierim explained that a federal district court in Texas has stayed implementation of the proposed change to federal overtime rules. While further changes may be required depending on the outcome of that case, Judge Knierim recommended that we clarify our existing policies with respect to retired employees due to their part-time schedules. The recommended change is to treat retirees as non-exempt employees, regardless of the position occupied. The clarification will be embodied in revisions to Policies 102, 103 and 203.

Judge Knierim moved to approve the proposed policy revisions. Judge Marino seconded. Judge Knierim called for a vote and the motion passed.

Establish 2017 Meeting Schedule

The committee established the schedule of regular meetings for 2017 as follows:

March 15, 2017

June 14, 2017

December 6, 2017

All meetings will be held at 5:00 p.m. at Probate Court Administration.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:24 p.m.