

Probate Court Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes
April 9, 2014
5:00 p.m.

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

The meeting was convened at 5:04 p.m.

In attendance: Judge Paul Knierim, Probate Court Administrator and Chair and Judge Joseph Marino. Judge Fred Anthony participated by telephone.

Public Comment and Correspondence

The committee received the following correspondence:

Letter from Judge Timothy R. Keeney, North Central CT Probate Court

Selection of Compensation Consultant

Andrea King reported on the process used to evaluate the compensation study proposals received in response to the RFP. The following four consulting firms submitted proposals: National Center for State Courts, Segal Waters Consulting, Johanson Consulting and Owen-Pottier, Inc.

At the budget committee's request, a working group of PCA staff members and a clerk designated by CAPC participated in the evaluation process. Members of the group were Judge Knierim, Andrea King, Bonnie Bennet, Alyce Cariseo and Evan Brunetti. Evan, who represented CAPC, is the Chief Clerk of the Farmington-Burlington Probate Court and Vice President of CAPC.

The group rated each firm on uniform criteria related to experience, knowledge of the public sector, proposed labor market comparisons, ability to communicate with court staff and overall cost. The group identified the top two proposals based on the ratings. Phone interviews were conducted with the finalists and two references were called for each.

The working group achieved a strong consensus to recommend that the budget committee use Owen-Pottier, Inc. for the study. Members agreed that both finalists were fully capable of conducting the study, but agreed that Owen Pottier's extensive experience in conducting job evaluations and compensation studies for the Connecticut Judicial Branch and numerous other state agencies deserved great weight. The group

also felt that the firm's plan to interview representative employees in each position would ensure a more thorough understanding of the work of court staff.

Preliminary recommendations are due from the consultant on September 1, with a project deadline of November 1, 2014. The schedule will enable PCA to seek funding for any recommended adjustments during the 2015 legislative session, with the goal of implementing adjustments on July 1, 2015.

Judge Marino made a motion to accept the proposal from Owen-Pottier, Inc. and authorize Probate Court Administration to enter into a contract with the firm. Judge Anthony seconded the motion. Judge Knierim called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Analysis of Sick Bank

Andrea King reviewed a summary of the Judicial Branch sick bank program. Judge Knierim indicated that PCA recommends against adopting a similar program because it is unduly complex and because employees would be required to contribute sick time to the bank. Committee members agreed that the program is not a good fit for the Probate Courts.

Pat Saviano asked if a less formal procedure may be possible. PCA will investigate and report back.

Other Business

Judge Knierim offered an update on the health insurance bill. The bill has passed the Judiciary Committee and moves on to the Appropriations Committee. Legislative leadership has indicated an intent to incorporate the language of the bill into a budget implementer bill that addresses a variety of issues. Judge Knierim indicated that this is a favorable development that improves the likelihood of passage.

Schedule Next Meeting

The committee scheduled a tentative meeting on June 11, 2014 at 4:00 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:49 p.m.