



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF THE
PROBATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR

PAUL J. KNIERIM
Probate Court Administrator

THOMAS E. GAFFEY
Chief Counsel

HELEN B. BENNET
Attorney

DEBRA COHEN
Attorney

186 NEWINGTON ROAD
WEST HARTFORD, CT 06110

TEL (860) 231-2442
FAX (860) 231-1055

Probate Court Budget Committee

Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, August 29, 2012
5:00 PM

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

- I. Convene Meeting
- II. Public Comment and Correspondence
- III. Remarks by the Chair
- IV. Status of Performance Evaluation System
- V. Review of Data Collection for Internal Pay Equity Study
- VI. Consideration of Proposed Staffing Level Adjustments
- VII. Other Business
- VIII. Schedule Next Meeting
- IX. Adjournment



COPY

**State of Connecticut
Hartford Regional Children's Probate Court**

Steven M. Zelman
Administrative Judge
July 10, 2012

250 Constitution Plaza, 3rd Floor
Hartford, Connecticut 06103
Phone (860) 757-9190
Fax (860) 722-6017

The Honorable Paul J. Knierim
Probate Court Administrator
186 Newington Road
West Hartford, CT 06110

The Honorable Joseph D. Marino
Judge, Middletown Probate Court
984 Court Street
Middletown, CT 06457

The Honorable Fred J. Anthony
Judge, Shelton Probate Court
40 White Street, P. O. Box 127
Shelton CT 06484

Gentlepersons:

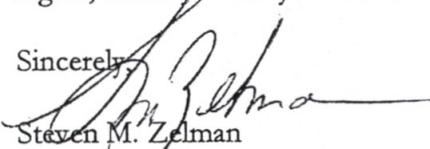
With regards to the 2011-2012 miscellaneous office budget for the newly formed Hartford Regional Children's Court, I am requesting Budget Committee approval to shift certain amounts within budget lines to cover one last outstanding invoice of the fiscal year.

The outstanding bill totaled \$6,954.00, and after allocating \$2,067.88 from the Furniture/Equipment category, the remaining due was covered by: \$3,000.00 from Repairs/Maintenance; \$431.60 from Supplies; \$425.00 from Educational/Meetings; \$150.00 from Dues; \$300.00 from Subscriptions; \$19.50 from Bank Fees; \$20.50 from Coffee/Tea; \$193.00 from Special Occasion; \$60.72 from Other and \$285.80 from Legal Notices. This leaves \$1714.20 budgeted that will revert back to Probate Administration.

Thank you for your kind consideration of this request. As this Court was in its start-up phase during the fiscal year, there were some higher expenses in certain budget lines. However, we still ended the year with a surplus and now that the Hartford Regional Children's Probate Court is fully functioning, the upcoming fiscal year will proceed on a more level basis with regards to expenses of the Court.

Again, thank you for your consideration and please call me with any questions..

Sincerely,


Steven M. Zelman
Administrative Judge

SMZ:cmz

RECEIVED
PROBATE COURT ADMIN
2012 JUL 11 AM 11:25

MARTIN F. LANDGREBE
JUDGE OF PROBATE

MEEGAN BUCKLEY
CHIEF CLERK OF COURT

DANA MASULLO
CLERK OF COURT



HOUSATONIC PROBATE COURT
DISTRICT OF NEW MILFORD, BRIDGEWATER,
BROOKFIELD, NEW FAIRFIELD, SHERMAN

RECEIVED
PROBATE COURT ADMIN
2012 AUG -2 AM 11:07

10 MAIN STREET
NEW MILFORD, CT 06776
TEL (860) 355-6029
FAX (860) 355-6024

July 31, 2012

COPY

Judge Paul J. Knierim
Probate Court Administrator
Office of the Probate Court Administrator
186 Newington Road
West Hartford, CT 06110

RE: Request change in hours

Dear Judge Knierim,

Thank you for the opportunity to request a change in hours in the Housatonic Probate District. I am requesting the opportunity to increase the hours of Chief Clerk Meegan Buckley from 35 hours to 40 hours permanently. With the loss of our Court Assistant Stacy Walsh, we have an additional 18 hours a week. Meegan works over her 35 hours a week and I would like her to be compensated for her hard work. I understand she can not be paid over 40 hours.

At the end of the summer we are looking to hire a part time employee to fill in with the loss of our Court Assistant. I am requesting that we be able to offer someone 20 hours a week. Also at the end of August our Assistant Clerk, Marguerite Masullo will be going back to college. That will leave us with additional hours that will be not be used until Christmas break. I would like to be able to use some of those hours towards that 20 hours position.

I would like to be able to continue having Marguerite working on her college breaks. I would like it to be possible to continue her employment as is when she is home from college. Her assistance is helpful towards completing all projects.

Thank you for your attention to my request.

Cordially,

Martin F. Landgrebe, Judge

**State of Connecticut
PROBATE COURT
Region 14 Probate District**

Hon. Jennifer L. Berkenstock
Judge

9 Austin Drive, Suite 211
Marlborough, CT 06447
Tel. (860) 295-6239
Fax (860) 295-6122

Linda A. Neal
Suzanne B. Emond
Janice E. Visinski
Clerks

Serving the citizens of East Haddam, East Hampton, Marlborough and Portland

August 21, 2012

Hon. Paul J. Knierim, Chair, Probate Court Budget Committee
State of Connecticut Office of the Probate Court Administrator
186 Newington Road
West Hartford, CT 06110

Re: Request for Staffing Level Adjustment for Region 14 Probate District

Dear Judge Knierim, Judge Marino and Judge Anthony:

On behalf of Region 14, I respectfully request the Budget Committee grant a staffing level adjustment to address some concerns unique to our small district and its remote location:

1. Safety Concerns—Isolated Location in a Private Building

Region 14 is located in an isolated section of a private commercial building in a rural area. Any activity at the court is unobservable by any passersby or other tenants of the building. For the safety of the clerks, I have maintained a policy that at least two clerks must be on duty at all times.

The security measures in place are not enough to eliminate the need for two clerks on duty. The pass-through window in the clerk's area is small and often the clerks are required to step outside the locked area to assist members of the public. The duress alarm may not be accessible to a clerk under all situations.

2. Difficulty Covering 40 Hour Week, Vacations, Seminars and Sick Time

Our current benchmark staffing level is 2.2 (88 hours per week). The three clerks' schedules are arranged so that two clerks are on duty at all times. It is extremely difficult to allow clerks to attend seminars, take vacation or sick days. Our recent Financial Operations Review dated August 1, 2012 recognizes this problem by stating, "Staff has not fully utilized vacation time because of workload and the need to properly staff the court during working hours."

3. Accounts Receivable Workload Inherited From Previous Courts Must Be Completed

Our court has inherited a significant amount of accounts receivable past due, which must all be reviewed by the chief clerk. Our chief clerk has little, if any, time to complete this task, because she and the other two clerks are already working at full capacity processing current matters. Our Financial Operations Review states "...the Court has not been able to write off some of the older balances deemed uncollectible due to their workload and staffing limitations."

I appreciate that Judge Knierim and the Committee have generously provided temporary staff up through June 30th of this year to help our court eliminate the backlog we inherited. It had the added benefit of providing extra staff on site three days per week, which helped with our safety concerns. Now that the temporary staff is gone, we must find solutions to these ongoing issues. I face the dilemma of needing to grant my staff their vacation time and still provide a safe work environment. I am committed to keeping the court open as required and also allowing staff to attend seminars and take sick days. The proposed change will help our court manage these challenges over the long term.

Proposal: Adjust staffing level from **2.2** to **2.6** (16 more hours per week) at Assistant Clerk level to address the safety, coverage and workload issues our unique situation presents.

Please contact me with any questions or suggestions. Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Hon. Jennifer L. Berkenstock, Judge

cc: Vincent Russo
Andrea King

STAFFING PLAN

Probate District:

New Haven

District No.:

38

Positions	Current Benchmark	Proposed Benchmark
Chief Clerk III	0.7	0.9
Chief Clerk II		
Chief Clerk I		
Deputy Clerk	0.9	0.9
Clerk	1.8	1.8
Assistant Clerk	3.1	3.1
Court Assistant	2.3	2.3
Court Staff Attorney	0.9	0.9
Temporary Staff		
Probate Court Officer		
Security Officer		
TOTAL	9.7	9.9

Notes Subsequent to 1/5/2011

Notes:

- May 16, 2012, reallocate from Court Assistant to Assistant Clerk.
- August 29, 2012, increase Chief Clerk to 36.25 hrs/week.

Full Time Equivalents (FTE) = 40 Hour Work Week (2,080 Annual Hours)

NOTES supporting original staffing plans:

Initial Guideline reflects 2008 staffing / 2009 FTE = 10.1

WWL = 12.1 (excluding children matters in RCPC, 9.2). Pop = 8.3

Court proposal accepted

STAFFING PLAN

Probate District:

Housatonic

District No.:

44

Positions	Current Benchmark	Proposed Benchmark
Chief Clerk III		
Chief Clerk II		
Chief Clerk I	0.9	1.0
Deputy Clerk		
Clerk	0.9	1.0
Assistant Clerk	1.6	1.4
Court Assistant		
Court Staff Attorney		
Temporary Staff		
Probate Court Officer		
Security Officer		
TOTAL	3.4	3.4

Notes Subsequent to 1/5/2011

Notes:

August 29, 2012 - Increase Chief Clerk I and Clerk to 40 hours/week; offsetting decrease at the Assistant Clerk level. No change in total benchmark staff.

Full Time Equivalents (FTE) = 40 Hour Work Week (2,080 Annual Hours)