

CONNECTICUT PROBATE ASSEMBLY

Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee

January 11, 2023

9:45 a.m.

Office of the Probate Court Administrator
186 Newington Rd.
West Hartford, CT 06110

Attendees: Judges Berkenstock, Brandt, Ceneviva, Daly, Darby, Gardner Riordan, Hoyle, Lewis, Maxham, McCaffrey and also Probate Court Administrator Judge Streit-Kefalas and Chief Counsel Heather Dostaler.

1. Call to Order:

Judge Daly called the meeting to order at 9:50 a.m. Judge Daly introduced newly elected Judge David Shepard who attended the meeting as her guest.

2. Approval of the Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes of December 14, 2022 was made by Judge Gardner Riordan, seconded by Judge Darby, and approved. Judges Brandt and Hoyle abstained.

3. Correspondence:

Judges Daly and Streit-Kefalas reported no correspondence for the Assembly.

4. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report was circulated to all members with the agenda. In the absence of Judge Randich, Judge Darby moved to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Judge Gardner Riordan and unanimously approved.

5. Committee Reports:

Judge Daly reported that all committees now have a Chairperson.

Nominating Committee

Judge Darby, the new Chair, reported that Judge Gardner Riordan had accepted the nomination to serve the remainder of the term as alternate on Council on Probate Judicial Conduct, in lieu of Judge Marino. Judge Lewis moved and Judge Brandt seconded a motion to accept the nomination. The motion carried unanimously.

Continuing Education

Judge Lewis, the new Chair, reported that the next Judges Institute is January 26, 2023 in Cromwell at the Courtyard by Marriott. The main topic will be a panel on difficult cases. Implicit bias and gender identity will be addressed and there will be a

presentation by the Department of Developmental Services. Additional seminars are scheduled for March 15, 2023, June 21, 2023, and September 20, 2023. The next Committee meeting is February 15, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. at PCA.

Ethics

Judge Brandt, the new Chair, indicated that a meeting will be scheduled. He encouraged new members. A suggestion was made to ask Judge Bartlett to join since she is the new member of the Council on Probate Judicial Conduct. No date has been set for a meeting.

Legislative

Judges Fox and Rowe will remain as Co-Chairs of this Committee. Judge Streit-Kefalas reported that the next committee meeting is February 3, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. in the Trumbull Probate Court. She reported that we are deep into the session with numerous bills in review. The state budget is the significant issue for the probate system this session.

Planning

Judge Anthony will remain as Chair. No meeting has been scheduled.

Procedures Review

Judge Berkenstock will remain as Chair and she reported that the next Committee meeting is March 6, 2023.

Public Information

Judge Wexler will be the new Chair and a meeting is scheduled for February 28, 2023 at 12:30 p.m. at PCA.

6. Comments of the Probate Court Administrator:

Judge Streit-Kefalas welcomed all new officers and Executive Committee members and reminded judges present to encourage new judges to join committees and get involved.

She indicated that the 2023 calendar with meeting dates and seminars was disseminated via email by Evelyn Gonzalez. She encouraged all to make notes of the dates so they do not encounter a conflict in the upcoming year.

She reported that with the legislative session in full swing, feedback about the courts is positive. The state's budget surplus will be helpful in securing full funding for the next budget. We will be seeking a general fund appropriation of \$14.5 million for the first year and \$16.5 for the next fiscal year. PCA is budgeting funding for 3% COLA increases and 3% merit pay adjustments for staff.

With the departure of Jim Polites as our legislative liaison, it is more important than ever that all judges reach out to legislators to educate them about our work. Talking points will be forthcoming.

7. Comments of the President Judge:

Judge Daly reported that she spoke with the new judges last week about the importance of joining our committees. She expressed concern that Jim Polites has left at the start of the session and encouraged all judges to reach out to legislators regarding court funding.

8. Other Business to come before the Executive Committee:

None

9. Adjournment:

A motion was made by Judge Darby, seconded by Judge Gardner Riordan and unanimously approved to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Hon. Kathleen N. Maxham,
Recording Secretary