

CONNECTICUT PROBATE ASSEMBLY

Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee

February 8, 2023

9:45 a.m.

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

Attendees: Judges Anthony, Barrett, Brandt, Calabrese, Ceneviva, Daly, Darby, Gardner Riordan, Hoyle, Lewis, Maxham, McCaffrey McGrath, Randich 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.

2. Approval of the Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes of January 11, 2023 was made by Judge Darby and seconded by Judge Gardner Riordan and approved.

3. Correspondence:

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

4. Committee Reports:

Continuing Education

Judge Lewis reported that the next continuing education seminar is on February 22, 2023 at 10 a.m. It is a webinar on CMS training for judges.

The March 15, 2023 Judges Institute will be held at Quinnipiac University School of Law and will cover case law update, national speaker Justice John Browning on the ethical pitfalls of social media, Rule 71 and Fastcase research.

The June 21, 2023 seminar will feature speakers from the Office of the Attorney General Public Charities Unit, Council on Probate Judicial Conduct, the Connecticut State Long Term Care Ombudsman Mairead Painter, among others.

September 20, 2023 is set for another seminar with topics on human trafficking awareness, immigration law, DCF, and child support enforcement issues.

The next Committee meeting is February 15, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. at PCA.

Ethics

Judge Brandt reported that the next Committee meeting is March 23, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. at PCA. The meetings will likely be every 3-4 months.

Legislative

Judge Streit-Kefalas reported that the Committee reviewed many bills pending before the legislature. She mentioned that Judges Daly and Marino testified about the ECT bill and their testimony was very informative to the committee about the probate process.

Upcoming is a hearing on the bill concerning deducting probate and conservator fees from income to qualify an individual for Medicaid. This bill is opposed by DSS and would require DSS to file an amended Title XIX plan with the federal government.

The Appropriations committee hearing on our general fund appropriations request is Friday, February 24, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. Judges are encouraged to testify. Judge Streit-Kefalas will present the Probate Court request at 5:30 p.m.

Judge Streit-Kefalas mentioned other bills she is following but are not yet posted on the relevant committee agendas, including:

- The Labor Committee bill affecting probate employees;
- The bill to address the health insurance premium contribution for Probate Court judges and employees.

Planning

Judge Anthony will be scheduling a meeting at the end of March.

Procedures Review

The next Committee meeting is March 6, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. at PCA.

Public Information

Judge Wexler has scheduled a meeting for February 10, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. at PCA.

Court Security

Judge Calabrese reported that the next committee meeting is May 8, 2023. The Committee will be presenting at the June seminar. Judge Calabrese encouraged all to have security assessment completed. He offered his assistance to any judge or clerk needing help in this area. He encouraged all to review the policy manual and/or read his submissions to the Probate Press that contain information and valuable suggestions.

5. Comments of the Probate Court Administrator:

- Judge Streit-Kefalas reported that the budget is the most important item on

the legislative agenda this session. PCA is seeking a general fund appropriation of \$14.7 million for the first fiscal year and \$16.5 for the second fiscal year. Talking points will be disseminated once the Governor's budget comes out later today. Reaching out to legislators is of critical importance for full funding.

- She is following many bills as mentioned earlier in the meeting.
- The chief clerks meeting is coming up and Judge Streit-Kefalas asked judges to encourage all chief clerks to attend.
- The position for legislative liaison and communications manager is still open.

6. Comments of the President Judge:

Judge Daly reported that a previous opinion from the Council on Probate Judicial Conduct was mentioned during one of her recent hearings. The judges discussed the impact of this decision including jurisdictional limitations of our courts.

Judge Daly also raised the issue of the difficulty of hiring suitable court staff since the salary range, without benefits is considered to be lower than state employees. The judges discussed different approaches they have taken with this issue and emphasized the significant value of the benefits in the system.

7. Other Business to come before the Executive Committee:

None

8. Adjournment:

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

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