



CONNECTICUT PROBATE ASSEMBLY

Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee February 14, 2024 9:45 a.m.

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

Attendees: Judges Brandt, Berkenstock, Calabrese, Daly, Darby, Hoyle, Jalowiec, Lewis, Maxham, Osterndorf and Probate Court Administrator Beverly Streit-Kefalas and Chief Counsel Heather L. Dostaler.

1. Call to Order:

Judge Daly called the meeting to order at 9:57 a.m.

2. Approval of the Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes of January 10, 2024, was made by Judge Brandt, seconded by Judge Lewis and was unanimously 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 seminar is the Judges Institute to be held at Quinnipiac University School of Law on March 14, 2024. Topics will include the annual case law update, AI and an introduction to supported decision making. The June meeting is a Probate Assembly to be held at CCSU. A planned topic is de-escalation techniques to be presented by the Judicial Branch. The Committee's next meeting is February 21, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. in the PCA Library. All suggestions for educational topics are welcome.

Ethics

Judge Brandt reported that the Committee has not met since the last Executive Committee meeting. He was pleased with the Committee's presentation at the last Judges Institute. The next Committee meeting is on March 6, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. in the PCA Library.

Legislative

The next Committee meeting is February 23, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the Trumbull Probate Court.

Nominating

No Report.

Planning

Judge Darby reported that the Committee is continuing to compile best practice guidance for judges regarding virtual hearings.

Procedures Review

Judge Berkenstock reported that the next meeting is on March 4, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. in the PCA Library.

Public Information

No Report.

Court Security

Judge Calabrese asked all judges to complete the survey emailed to all courts with their chief clerks and return it by February 29, 2024.

5. Proposed Regulations:

Judge Streit-Kefalas presented proposed revisions to Probate Court Regulations, highlighting several sections for the members present. Judge Darby made a motion to approve the proposed revisions as presented. Judge Hoyle seconded the motion which was unanimously approved. Pursuant to C.G.S section 45a-77, Judge Streit-Kefalas will submit the revisions to the Judiciary Committee for its approval.

6. Comments of the Probate Court Administrator:

Judge Streit-Kefalas reported on the following:

- a. She appeared on February 13, 2024, at the remote hearing for Appropriations Committee as did Judge Darby. The Governor's budget proposal cuts the Probate budget by \$5.5 million with a suspension of the sweep. Our request is to adjust the approved appropriation from last session to \$15.75 million. Thank you to Judge Darby for testifying during the public portion of the hearing and to Judge Gerald Fox for his written testimony.
- b. Chief Justice Robinson will be the welcoming speaker at the NCPJ conference in Mystic, CT in May of 2025. Attendance by all judges is desired.
- c. It has been reported that by April, the CDC may modify its COVID isolation guidance eliminating the isolation requirement in some cases.

- d. On February 13, 2024, the Judiciary Committee raised the concepts for the Probate Court Operations bill. The next step is formal drafting of the bill and a public hearing.
- e. Judge Calabrese announced his retirement as of August 31, 2024. He has requested the Governor to issue a writ of special election for the towns in his District for a November election day. He expressed his gratitude for the years he has been a probate judge. There are 5 other special elections anticipated for retiring judges.

The Judges had a lively discussion about continuity in the system.

7. Comments of the President Judge:

Judge Daly is hopeful that the legislature will restore the filing fee for name changes. She also inquired if the court volume of name change petitions had increased as a result of the fee elimination.

8. Other Business to come before the Executive Committee:

None.

9. Adjournment:

Judge Darby moved and Judge Brandt seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted
Hon. Kathleen N. Maxham, Recording Secretary