



CONNECTICUT PROBATE ASSEMBLY

Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee

July 12, 2023

9:45 a.m.

Office of the Probate Court Administrator

186 Newington Rd.
West Hartford, CT 06110

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

1. Call to Order:

Judge Daly called the meeting to order at 9:54 a.m.

2. Approval of the Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2023 meeting was made by Judge Darby, seconded by Judge Anthony and 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 seminar held on June 21, 2023 was a success and many approved of the new venue and extra breaks. The next seminar is at CCSU in Memorial Hall and will cover Human Trafficking, Immigration including SIJS, Child Support from AG's office, and a Did You Know? segment. The Committee is working on the joint CBA/Probate seminar for November. The Committee's next meeting will be on August 16, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. in the PCA Library.

Ethics

Judge Brandt reported that the Committee met on June 22, 2023. The Committee was generally satisfied with the speakers from the Council on Probate Judicial Conduct. There is still some concern about mistakes of law being interpreted as ethical violations. The Council will be hiring a new attorney and the Committee is hopeful the attorney is well versed in probate matters. The next Committee meeting is September 14, 2023 in the PCA Library.

Legislative

Judge Streit-Kefalas reported that the legislature determined there would be no special session to override the five bills Governor Lamont vetoed. The Committee

will begin to consider new legislative suggestions in early fall. Please send your ideas to her, Judges Rowe and Fox.

Nominating

No Report. New members will be sought for the Committee.

Planning

No Report. PCA and Judge Anthony will set a meeting date in the future.

Procedures Review

Judge Berkenstock reported that the Committee has not met since the last Executive Committee meeting. The next meeting is on September 11, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. in PCA library.

Public Information

Judge Streit-Kefalas reported that the next meeting is October 5, 2023 at 1:30 p.m. in the PCA Library.

Security

No Report.

5. Comments of the Probate Court Administrator:

Judge Streit-Kefalas reported on the following:

- a. Judge McGrath has been appointed as the Administrative Judge for the Northeast Regional Children's Court as of July 1, 2023. She shared a press release of the news with judges and staff. She spoke of Cindy Wolfe Boynton's efforts to gather positive news from different districts and issue press releases as good PR for the courts.
- b. Judge Streit-Kefalas shared a CT Law Tribune article pointing out the "glacial" pace the CT Judiciary moves in making decisions. While the article was not directed at probate courts, she reminded all judges to issue decisions quickly and not wait the entire 120 days allowed.
- c. Richard Healy, counsel to the Council on Probate Judicial Conduct will be retiring from the practice of law and as attorney for the Council. Judge Streit-Kefalas shared her suggested qualifications for a new attorney with the Council.
- d. Court visits are ongoing with focus on Conservator and Guardian reviews. Judge Streit-Kefalas reported that every court is behind and suggested that a designated clerk set aside a set amount of time such as an 1 hour a week to begin to tackle the backlog. The judges discussed issues encountered with the current alert system and suggestions on continuing education in this area.

6. Comments of the President Judge:

Judge Daly raised the issue of the inability to compensate a court appointed guardian ad litem in certain children's matters. A discussion ensued about the appointment of Children in Placement as a GAL. This group is soliciting appointments throughout the state. As CIP is under contract with PCA, the contract limits the courts to which they may serve as GAL. Judge Streit-Kefalas will be meeting with CIP to clarify their role and in which courts they are allowed to serve.

7. Other Business to come before the Executive Committee:

Judge Darby moved and Judge Jalowiec seconded a motion to cancel the Executive Committee meeting for August 9, 2023. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Adjournment:

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

Hon. Kathleen N. Maxham, Recording Secretary