



CONNECTICUT PROBATE ASSEMBLY

Regular Meeting of the **Executive Committee** December 13, 2023 9:45 a.m.

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

Attendees: Judges Anthony, Barrett, Brandt, Berkenstock, Calabrese, Ceneviva, Daly, Darby, Gardner Riordan, Hoyle, Jalowiec, Lewis, Maxham, Marino, McCaffrey, Osterndorf, Randich, and also Probate Court Administrator Judge Beverly Streit-Kefalas and Director of Finance Lisa Hansen.

1. Call to Order:

Judge Daly called the meeting to order at 9:55 a.m.

2. Approval of the Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes of November 8, 2023 was made by Judge Hoyle, seconded by Judge Gardner Riordan and approved. Judge Calabrese abstained.

3. Correspondence:

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

4. Committee Reports:

Continuing Education

Judge Lewis commented that she was pleased with the recent joint Bench/Bar seminar. It was very well attended by sitting and retired judges. The committee has sent out a "save the date" notice for the next full day seminar and Connecticut Probate Assembly meeting on January 24, 2024 at CCSU. A variety of topics will be covered. It is anticipated the March seminar will address AI. The committee's next meeting will be on December 20, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. in the PCA Library. All suggestions for future educational topics are welcome.

Ethics

Judge Brandt reported that the committee last met on December 7, 2023. Judges Hoyle and Brandt will be presenting on ethics at the Judges Institute in January 2024. The committee will now meet three times a year at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesdays in March, June and December 2024.

Legislative

Judge Streit-Kefalas reported that the committee met on December 1, 2023 at the

Trumbull Probate Court. The committee reviewed concepts for the Probate Court Operations bill and reviewed proposals from other groups that PCA will be watching. The next legislative session that begins in February 2024 typically focuses on financial matters. PCA is working with legislators to restore the fees on name changes and the full requested appropriation.

Nominating

Judge Marino distributed the proposed nominations for the upcoming year. These nominations will be presented at the January 2024 Connecticut Probate Assembly meeting for approval.

Notice of Nominations 2024-2025

OFFICERS:

Term: 04/2024-04/2025

- President-Judge
- First Vice President-Judge
- Second Vice President-Judge
- Executive Secretary
- Recording Secretary
- Treasurer

HONORABLE MICHAEL M. DARBY
HONORABLE PETER C. BARRETT
HONORABLE MATTHEW J. JALOWIEC
HONORABLE ARIANA F. CENEVIVA
HONORABLE KATHLEEN N. MAXHAM
HONORABLE ROBERT A. RANDICH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Term: 04/2024- 04/2027

- Tolland
- Litchfield
- Middlesex

HONORABLE BARBARA GARDNER RIORDAN
HONORABLE DOMENICK N. CALABRESE
HONORABLE JEANNINE LEWIS

BUDGET COMMITTEE:

Term: 04/2024-04/2026

HONORABLE MICHAEL R. BRANDT

Planning

Judge Anthony reported that the committee met on November 6, 2023. The committee discussed compiling bench guidelines for remote and in-person hearings to promote consistency and uniformity throughout the Probate Courts. The next meeting is on January 22, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. in the East Haven-North Haven Probate Court.

Procedures Review

Judge Berkenstock reported that the committee met on December 4, 2023. Many suggestions were discussed and reviewed. In particular the committee revised the Decree for Name Change of a Minor to add standard of proof and best interest language. The committee also created a decree to comport with the new legislation

on financial holds. The next meeting is March 4, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.in the PCA Library.

Public Information

No Report.

Court Security

Judge Calabrese reported that the committee met on December 4, 2023. He stated that only 28 courts have submitted a security assessment within the last 3 years. He stressed the importance of the assessment so data can be compiled and used for funding. Judge Calabrese requested additional judges from Regions 3, 5, 6, 7 to join the committee. Meetings will be quarterly. He suggested that judges who have had a security assessment but no written report compile a memo of the findings and submit it to the committee.

5. Comments of the Probate Court Administrator:

Judge Streit-Kefalas reported on the following:

- a. The CT Probate Assembly annual meeting at the Supreme Court will take place on April 10, 2024.
- b. She complimented the Probate Court Budget Committee for approving the COLA of 3% and compression adjustment of 3.5% for all eligible staff. Bringing staff compensation up to market rate has been a priority of her administration. She reminded all that the system needs to sustain the adjustments going forward.
- c. She reminded judges that COVID is still a health concern. We should all be mindful of the CDC recommended precautions. She will be sending an email reminder about isolation guidelines.
- d. She wished all a healthy and Happy Holiday season and Happy New Year.
- e. She discussed with the committee members present the importance of reinstating the fee for name changes. Weighted workload was explained as a statutory creation of an objective measure for judge's compensation.

6. Comments of the President Judge:

- a. Judge Daly spoke of the benefits of judge's social gatherings and her hope that we can reinstate them in the future.
- b. She also commented on her concern for reputation for the Probate Court system and mentioned a federal bill by U.S. Senators Murphy and Casey on combatting social isolation and loneliness in America. She thinks we should explore being a component of this bill.
- c. She mentioned the Hartford Regional Children's Court and her desire to see it become a more functional regional court.

7. Other Business to come before the Executive Committee:

None.

8. Adjournment:

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

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted
Hon. Kathleen N. Maxham, Recording Secretary