

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

## April 8, 2020

Attendees: Judges Wright, Becker, Randich, Forgione, Berkenstock, Blick, DeGennaro, Barrett, Ganim, Jalowiec, McNamara, Gardner-Riordan, Blick, Magistrali, Calabrese, Darby, Schad, Brandt, Probate Court Administrator Streit-Kefalas, Chief Counsel Bonnie Bennet, Director of Financial Services Lisa Hansen and Communications and Intergovernmental Relations Director Melissa Riley.

- 1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 9:48 a.m.
- 2. Approval of the Minutes:**  
A motion was made to accept the minutes of the March 11, 2020. Approved.
- 3. Correspondence:** None.
- 4. Treasurer's Report:** Judge Magistrali reported that there have been no expenditures since the March report. Report approved.
- 5. Committee Reports:**

### Continuing Education

Judge Becker reported that all meetings are on hold pending the reopening of the state for gatherings. She is aware that judges will need educational credits. Judge Forgione suggested the committee investigate remote educational presentations.

### Ethics

Judge Magistrali noted that regular review of the Code of Probate Judicial Conduct should occur and he suggested one area to address may be with regard to social media. He will follow up with committee members.

### Legislative

Judge Streit-Kefalas reported that the legislature is not in session but continues to work remotely. PCA continues to have contact with legislators in support of the budget request. Melissa Riley, legislative liaison, stated that the session ends the first week of May, but the legislature can vote to extend the session or schedule special sessions.

### Nominating

No report.

### Planning

No report.

### Procedures Review

No report.

Court Security

No report.

Public Information

No report.

Hospitality

No report.

Conservatorship Guidelines

No report.

Floating Clerks

No report.

**6. Comments of the Probate Court Administrator**

Judge Streit-Kefalas stated that these are challenging times with ever changing circumstances and that PCA will continue to provide as much support to the courts as possible. She expressed her gratitude that courts are remaining open and serving the public.

Lisa Hansen presented the proposed budget for Fiscal Year Ending 06/30/2021. She began with FY20 accomplishments, most notably the successful implementation of eFiling. Other accomplishments include implementation of Phase II of the 2015 Compensation Study in June 2019 as well as the merit and COLA adjustments in fiscal year ending 06/30/2020.

FY21 Initiatives include expanding eFiling for state agencies, development of eBench which would allow judges access to CMS from remote locations such as nursing homes and continued expansion of services for children's matters.

Expenditures for FY21 were presented including a proposed 6% increase for staff and PCA staff which represents both merit increases and COLAs. Proposed increases are subject to approval by the Probate Court Budget Committee.

The presentation included analysis of the Governor's proposed budget adjustments as well as the consequence of a statutory sweep of the Probate Court Administration Fund. The uncertainties regarding the next fiscal year were noted such as the Governor's budget adjustment, suspension of the automatic sweep and the financial impact of COVID-19. It is noted that the revenue for probate fees has already declined.

After discussion and questions by judges, motion and a second was made to approve the FY21 budget as presented. Approved.

Judge Streit-Kefalas reminded all that there will be a webinar next week offered in two sessions to cover quarantine and isolation appeal procedures.

**7. Comments of the President-Judge**

The annual meeting is presently scheduled for April 23 and by statute must be held. Judge Wright will work with Judge Streit-Kefalas to determine how to hold the meeting remotely.

Judge Wright expressed his gratitude to the executive committee and Sue Dornfried as this is his last executive committee meeting as President of the Assembly. He thanked Judge Streit-Kefalas for all the hard work and long hours she has been putting in as Administrator.

**8. Other Business to come before the Executive Committee – none**

**9. Adjournment:**

Meeting adjourned at 10:51 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Hon. Leah Schad  
Recording Secretary