



CONNECTICUT PROBATE ASSEMBLY

Regular Meeting January 24, 2024

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Judge Daly at 12:15 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Assembly recited the Pledge of Allegiance led by Table One.

Roll call of the Judges

43 Judges were present in Connecticut Room in Memorial Hall at Central Connecticut State University for the meeting. In addition, Probate Court Administrator Judge Streit-Kefalas, Attorneys Heather Dostaler, Evan Brunetti, and Eric Rothausser also attended.

3. Approval of the October 25, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Judge Shepard moved and Judge Hoyle seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the October 25, 2023 meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Report of Nominating Committee

Judge Marino placed in nomination the names of the following judges for the positions in the Assembly to be elected in accordance with the Bylaws at the April 10, 2024 Annual Meeting:

OFFICERS:

Term: 2024-2025

- President-Judge Honorable Michael M. Darby
- First Vice President-Judge Honorable Peter C. Barrett
- Second Vice President-Judge Honorable Matthew J. Jalowiec
- Executive Secretary Honorable Ariana F. Ceneviva
- Recording Secretary Honorable Kathleen N. Maxham
- Treasurer Honorable Robert A. Randich

Executive Committee:

Term: 04/2024- 04/2027

- Tolland Honorable Barbara E. Gardner Riordan
- Litchfield Honorable Domenick N. Calabrese
- Middlesex Honorable Jeannine M. Lewis

Budget Committee:

Term: 04/2024-04/2026 Honorable Michael R. Brandt

There were no nominations from the floor. Judge Wexler moved and Judge Gardner Riordan seconded a motion to close the nominations. The motion carried unanimously. The slate will be elected at the Annual Meeting on April 10, 2024.

5. Treasurer's Report

Judge Randich reviewed the Treasurer's Quarterly Report for the quarter ending December 31, 2023. He noted that the only expenditures to date were for seminar expenses. Judge Barrett made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Judge DeGennaro seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

6. Continuing Education

Judge Lewis thanked the Judges for presenting at seminars. The next seminar is slated for March 14, 2024 at Quinnipiac University School of Law. The annual case law update, artificial intelligence, and supported decision making will be topics covered. The Committee is planning future seminars. The next Committee meeting is February 21, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. in the PCA Library. Please send ideas for future educational programs.

Ethics

Judge Brandt reported that the next Committee meeting is March 6, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. in the PCA Library. Judges Brandt and Hoyle are presenting at today's seminar on the Code of Judicial Conduct.

Legislative

Judge Fox reported that the Committee met in December. PCA has met with the Judiciary Committee and presented the Probate Operations bill for review. The upcoming legislative session is a short session beginning on February 7, 2024. The next Committee meeting is February 23, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. in the Trumbull Town Hall.

Planning Committee

Judge Anthony reported that the Committee met on January 22, 2024 and work is ongoing to compile a bench guide of best practices regarding scheduling of hearings.

Public Information

Judge Wexler encouraged all to keep in touch with communities that the courts serve. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for March 1, 2024 at 1:30 p.m. in the PCA Library.

Procedures Review

Judge Berkenstock reported that the Committee last met on December 4, 2023. Many forms were reviewed. The name change for minor's decree was amended as well as creation of a new decree on financial holds. The next meeting is March 4, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. in the PCA Library.

Court Security

Judge Calabrese reported that the last meeting was December 4, 2023. The Committee has received a few additional security assessments, but more courts need to comply. The Committee will be sending a survey to all judges and chief clerks to get a sense of issues that need to be addressed. More representation from judges and chief clerks is needed on the Committee. The judges had a discussion about the prohibition of weapons in the courts. Judge Streit-Kefalas

encouraged interested judges to join the Security Committee to further discuss the issues. The next Committee meeting is February 5, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. in the PCA Library.

7. Remarks of the Probate Court Administrator

Judge Streit-Kefalas made comments in the following areas:

- a. Happy New Year to all.
- b. Thanks to all presenters at seminars.
- c. The Annual Meeting is at the Supreme Court on April 10, 2024.
- d. Evelyn Gonzalez has sent around a list of meetings for the year 2024. Please mark the dates in your court calendars to avoid conflicts.
- e. Judge Hamzy announced a change of name for Region 19 District to Bristol-Plymouth Probate District, effective February 1, 2024.
- f. The Probate Ops bill has been presented to the Judiciary Committee Co-Chairs. The session begins in 2 weeks. She will be sending out talking points for judges to use when speaking with their representatives. Restoring the name change filing fee is a priority. Judge Lewis was recognized for hosting an open house at her court for local and state legislators and educating them on the needs of the probate courts.
- g. Congratulations to Judge Daly on receiving the prestigious Ladder Award from the CBA Women's and Young Women's section for her promotion of women in the legal field. The award's ceremony is set for March 7, 2024 at the Aqua Turf Club. All are encouraged to attend.
- h. The IT department has completed the installation of Microsoft 365 on all court computers. Thanks to the IT Department for their consistent hard work. Thanks also to the Law Department for all they do especially with seminar organization.
- i. The Finance Department has rolled out the staff cost-of-living adjustment and the one-time compression adjustment. She thanked the Budget Committee for recognizing staff.
- j. Judges are reminded that the Continuing Education Compliance Report is due at the end of this month and the Statement of Financial Interest is due on April 15, 2024.

Judge Streit-Kefalas asked all Judges to remember Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. noting there is still so much work to be done with civil and human rights. She reminded all to be aware and sensitive to others. She gave a shout out to a famous Connecticut resident, the late Honorable Constance Baker Motley from New Haven who was the first black woman to become a federal judge. She is being honored with her image on a postage stamp.

8. Remarks of the President-Judge

Judge Daly wished everyone a Happy New Year and encouraged all to visit the Tapping Reeve Law School in Litchfield. It was the first law school in the country.

9. Other business to come before the Assembly

None

10. Adjournment

A motion was made by Judge Darby and seconded by Judge DaSilva to adjourn.
The motion carried and the Assembly adjourned at 12:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Hon. Kathleen N. Maxham
Recording Secretary