



CONNECTICUT PROBATE ASSEMBLY

Regular Meeting June 21, 2023

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Judge Daly at 12:19 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Judge Tiernan lead the Assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call of the Judges

50 Judges were present 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 April 19, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Judge Lewis moved and Judge DeGennaro seconded a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Committee Reports

Continuing Education

Judge Jeannine Lewis reported that the committee is working on topics for future seminars. There will be a joint program with the Connecticut Bar Association at the Aqua Turf Club in November. She requested judges to share suggested topics with the committee as well as feedback on the CCSU as a venue.

Ethics

Judge Brandt reported that the next meeting will be held on June 22, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. in the PCA Library.

Legislative

Judges Rowe and Fox reported on a successful legislative session. Judge Fox reviewed the approved budget, passage of the probate ops bill, elimination of fees on name change petitions and health insurance parity bills. He thanked the staff at PCA for their work on the budget as well as Judge Rebimbas for her efforts on behalf of the probate system.

Planning Committee

Judge Anthony indicated he had no report.

Public Information

No Report.

Court Security

Judge Calabrese reported that the Committee met on May 8, 2023 and is moving forward with reminder calls to courts to submit security assessments. He arranged for the speaker at today's seminar. The next meeting is August 21, 2023 in the PCA library.

NCPJ

Judge Yamin described the purpose of the national organization to the Assembly. She detailed her goals as President of NCPJ and announced the dates for upcoming conferences.

5. Remarks of the Probate Court Administrator

Judge Streit-Kefalas thanked Evelyn Gonzalez and Evan Brunetti for all the hard work in organizing the Assembly meeting and educational seminar. She remarked that June is Pride month and encouraged all present to reflect on diversity, equity and inclusion as well as the meaning of Juneteenth Day. She reminded all to strive to ensure equal access to courts and access to justice especially those who are challenged by language barriers. She thanked Judge Lewis for sharing information about her lunch meetings with her staff that includes videos on self-care.

Judge Streit-Kefalas thanked everyone for a productive legislative session especially the outreach from staff and judges to legislators. She thanked Cindy Wolfe Boynton who joined our staff mid-session as Communications Director and hit the ground running. She thanked Judge DeGennaro for promoting and initiating the health insurance parity bill.

She remarked that Probate Court revenue is strong and although economic projections still include a recession in the near future, she is hopeful revenue will stay strong. As a result of the budget passage, there is funding for merit compensation adjustments which the Probate Court Budget Committee approved at its regular June meeting. The fact sheets for staff will be available next week. Increases will be reflected in the July 13, 2023 payroll.

Judge Streit-Kefalas reminded all present that there is a national microscope on adult guardianships. She reported that as a system the conservator reviews are very low. She encouraged judges to use the reminder system to facilitate reviews.

She thanked everyone and wished all an enjoyable summer.

6. Remarks of the President-Judge

Judge Daly remarked that she is thrilled that even though the approved budget has been reduced and we anticipate a loss in revenue due to no fees on name change petitions, we are still able to fund raises. She is pleased that the health insurance parity bill passed as well. She reminded all that the marriage bill raising the legal age to marry to 18 passed and takes effect on July 1, 2023.

7. Any business to come before the Assembly

Judge Daly presented commemorative retirement clocks to Judges Yamin and Wright as retiring judges.

8. Adjourn

A motion was made by Judge Calabrese and seconded by Judge Rebimbas to adjourn. The motion carried and the Assembly adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Hon. Kathleen N. Maxham
Recording Secretary