



CONNECTICUT PROBATE ASSEMBLY

MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING APRIL 22, 2026

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Judge Darby at 11:02 a.m.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

Judge Jalowiec led the Assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **Roll call of the Judges**

35 judges were present at the meeting.

4. **Remarks of Chief Justice of the CT Supreme Court**

The Honorable Raheem L. Mullins, Chief Justice of Connecticut Supreme Court, provided welcome remarks to the Assembly. He highlighted the great work by our Probate System, our embrace of technology within the system and our focus on helping individuals during some of the most vulnerable times in their lives.

5. **Approval of the January 28, 2026 Meeting Minutes**

A motion was made by Judge Lewis and seconded by Judge DaSilva to approve the minutes of the Assembly meeting held on January 28, 2026. The motion carried unanimously.

6. **Treasurer's Report and Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026**

Judge Randich presented the Treasurer's Report for the Third Quarter of Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026 and the Proposed Annual Budget for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2027. A motion was made by Judge Carchia and seconded by Judge Hoyle and unanimously carried to approve the Treasurer's Report for the Third Quarter ending 03/31/2026 as presented. Additionally, a motion was made by Judge Hoyle and seconded by Judge Carchia and unanimously carried to approve the Proposed Annual Budget for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2027, as presented.

7. **Committee Reports**

Continuing Education

Judge Lewis thanked all her committee members. She indicated that the Committee meets every other month in the PCA Library and the next meeting is June 17, 2026 at 9:30 a.m. at PCA. Additionally, the next seminar is June 24, 2026.

Ethics

Judge Brandt, Chair of the Ethics Committee, thanked all committee members. He reported that the next Committee meeting is on September 17, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. in the PCA Library.

Legislative

In the absence of Co-Chairs Judges Fox and Rowe, Judge Streit provided an update to the Assembly. She reported that the legislature is still in session and our Probate Court operations bill is still pending.

Planning Committee

Judge Hoyle, Chair, reported that the committee is finalizing a judicial bench guide on the best practices for the use of virtual hearings. The next meeting is May 18, 2026 at 9:45 a.m. at PCA.

Procedures Review Committee

Judge Berkenstock, Chair, noted this committee more commonly known as the "Forms Committee." The committee diligently works at making court forms more user friendly, accurate and adding instructions. The next meeting is June 1, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. at PCA.

Court Security

Judge Hoyle, Chair, shared that the committee works with the courts to facilitate assessments and security measures. The next meeting is May 11, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. at PCA.

NCPJ

Judge McCaffrey reported that the next conference is in Williamsburg, VA from May 6 to May 9 and the fall conference will be in Hilton Head, SC on November 11 to November 14.

8. Elections

Judge Anthony presented the slate of officers that were approved by the Assembly at the January 28, 2026 meeting. A motion for the secretary to cast one ballot in favor of the slate was made by Judge Barrett and seconded by Judge Shepard. Following a vote on the motion, the motion carried and the slate was approved. Judge Darby administered the oath of office to the four elected officers for the term of 4/2026-4/2027.

9. Recognition of Retired Judges

The following retired Judges were recognized at the Assembly meeting and presented with clocks to honor their retirement: Judge Joseph Marino and Judge Evelyn Daly. Judge McGrath and Judge DeGennaro were not present at the Assembly meeting but had also recently retired.

10. Presentations of Service Awards to Clerks

The following clerks were presented awards for 25 years of service in the Probate Court system:

- Judge Jeannine Lewis presented to Helene Yates of the Saybrook Probate Court;
- Judge James Steck presented to Chief Clerk Gale Pellegrin of the Torrington Area Probate Court; and
- Judge Americo Carchia presented to Chief Clerk Patrizia Clark of the New Haven Probate Court.

Not in attendance but recognized by Judge Darby were Chief Clerk Tammy Bartelli of the New London Probate Court and Clerk Maria Messi of the Bridgeport Probate Court.

11. Announcement of the Glenn E. Knierim Pro Bono Award

Judge Darby announced that the recipient of this year's Glenn E. Knierim Pro Bono Award is Attorney Paul Gozzi who was unable to attend the meeting. Judge Lewis accepted the award on his behalf and shared a few words about his dedication and commitment to representing individuals in the Probate Courts.

12. Presentation of the Daniel F. Caruso Public Service Award

Judge Beverly Streit presented the Daniel F. Caruso Public Service Award to the members of the CT Probate Court Rules of Procedure Advisory Committee. The award was presented to:

- Judge Peter Barrett; Attorney Douglas Brown; Attorney Evan Brunetti; Attorney Rebekah Burgio; Professor Jeffrey Cooper; Attorney Heather Dostaler; Attorney James Dougherty; Attorney Zachary King; Attorney Andrew Knott; Honorable Judge Kathleen Maxham; Attorney Janie McDermott; Attorney Melissa Nixon; Stephen Pedneault; Judge Robert Randich; Attorney Carmine Perri; Attorney Eric Rothhauser; Judge Sophia Shaikh; Judge David Shepard; Attorney Greta Solomon; Judge Steven Zelman.
- **Unable to Attend:** Attorney Mary M. Ackerly; Ned Bixler; Attorney Alice Fitzpatrick; Attorney Janie L. McDermott.

13. Remarks of the Probate Court Administrator

Judge Beverly Streit thanked Chief Justice Raheem Mullins for his remarks this morning. Judge Streit commented that our 60 courts continue to focus on meeting its obligation to provide access to justice to all individuals. She congratulated the new Officers of the Probate Assembly. She thought it was noteworthy that today was Administrative Professionals Day and wanted to extend her appreciation to the staff of all the Probate Courts for their dedication and commitment. She also thanked her entire team at the Office of the Probate

Court Administrator. She noted that it was a bittersweet time to recognize the retired Probate Judges at the Annual Meeting today and wanted to extend her congratulations to the Clerks celebrating 25 years in the Probate Court system. Additionally, Judge Streit acknowledged and thanked Judge Darby for his time as President of the Assembly. She enjoyed working and collaborating with him and looks forward doing the same with incoming President, Judge Jalowiec.

14. Remarks of the Outgoing President-Judge

Judge Darby expressed his appreciation for serving as President for the last two years. He thanked Judge Streit and PCA for their help throughout the years. Additionally, he thanked his current and former Chief Clerks for their help through the years.

15. Remarks of the Incoming President-Judge

Judge Jalowiec presented Judge Darby with an award for his service as President of the Assembly for the last two years. He thanked his wife Colleen for her continued support. Judge Jalowiec also thanked Judge Fred Anthony as a mentor who convinced him to run for Probate Judge many years ago. He focused on how probate is about the people and that the probate system matters as we are guardians of a system built on trust.

16. Other business to come before the Assembly

None

17. Adjournment

The Assembly adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Hon. Ariana F. Ceneviva
Secretary