

MINUTES OF MEETING
PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES COMMISSION
OCTOBER 6, 2020

The meeting of the Public Defender Services Commission was convened at 4:33 p.m. via Zoom.

Members Present

Thomas J. Rechen, Esq., **Chair**
G. Kenneth Bernhard, Esq. (*Conference Call*)
Honorable William R. Dyson (*Conference Call*)
Aimee Golbert, LCSW
Attorney Ramona Mercado-Espinoza
Honorable Hillary B. Strackbein
Honorable Elpedio N. Vitale

Others Present

Christine P. Rapillo, Chief Public Defender
John R. Day, Deputy Chief Public Defender
Diane M. Fitzpatrick, Director of Human Resources
Susan Brown, Public Defender
Milford Judicial District/Geographical Area 22
Douglas Ovian, Senior Assistant Public Defender
Hartford Community Court
Nichele Hudson, AmeriCorps/Vista Volunteer

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED APPROVAL OF MINUTES
unanimously to approve the minutes of the August 4, 2020 meeting.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED EXECUTIVE SESSION
unanimously to go into Executive Session at 4:38 p.m. The reason

for convening in Executive Session was in accordance with Section 1-200(6)(A) of the Connecticut General Statutes.

The Commission came out of Executive Session at 5:07 p.m.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney Kevin Semataska to the position of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Milford Judicial District/ Geographical Area 22.

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
KEVIN SEMATASKA

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to ratify the appointment of Aijah Monet Downer to the position of Social Worker I, Geographical Area 23 (New Haven).

RATIFICATION OF
AIJAH MONET DOWNER

The Chief Public Defender discussed the CARES Act funding and the creation of a unit to handle Public Defender Application Events being hosted at courthouses throughout the state.

Senior Assistant Public Defender, Douglas Ovian, Hartford Community Court, and Nichele Hudson, AmeriCorps/Vista Volunteer, presented on the Public Defender Application Events.

PRESENTATION ON
PUBLIC DEFENDER
APPLICATION EVENTS

The Chief Public Defender discussed the **Proposal to Create a Complex Litigation Unit at the Office of Chief Public Defender** to handle complex cases.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the **Proposal to Create a Complex Litigation Unit at the Office of Chief Public Defender** to handle complex cases and to hire a Complex Litigation Director.

APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL TO
CREATE A COMPLEX
LITIGATION UNIT AND HIRE A
COMPLEX LITIGATION
DIRECTOR AT THE OFFICE OF
CHIEF PUBLIC DEFENDER

Diane M. Fitzpatrick, Director of Human Resources, discussed the reclassification of the position of Information Analyst II.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the reclassification of the position of Information Analyst II.

APPROVAL OF
RECLASSIFICATION

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to reappoint the following attorneys to a new four-year term: Assistant Public Defender, Peter Matthews, Jr., Middletown Judicial District/Geographical Area 9, expiring on 9/6/2024; Senior Assistant Public Defender, Michael J. Richards, Geographical Area 4 (Waterbury), expiring on 9/8/2024; Senior Assistant Public Defender, Mark Johnson, Torrington Judicial District, expiring on 9/12/2024; Senior Assistant Public Defender, Christopher C. Sheehan, Geographical Area 4 (Waterbury), expiring on 9/18/2024; Assistant Public Defender, Karen Hardy-Massaró, Waterbury Juvenile Matters, expiring on 9/21/2024; Assistant Public Defender, Sandra Crowell, New Britain Judicial District, expiring on 9/22/2024 and Supervisory Assistant Public Defender, Michael C. Walker, Hartford Juvenile Matters, expiring on 9/29/2024.

ATTORNEY
REAPPOINTMENTS

The Chief Public Defender informed the Commission that Supervisory Assistant Public Defender, Thomas J. Paoletta, Geographical Area 2 (Bridgeport), has done an exceptional job during his probationary period having dealt with a shooting at the courthouse and the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commission noted his performance and thanked him for his service.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to grant permanent status to Supervisory Assistant Public Defender, Thomas J. Paoletta, Geographical Area 2 (Bridgeport), upon the successful completion of his promotional probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to grant permanent status to Public Defender Secretary I, Kelsie Perry, Danbury Judicial District/Geographical Area 3, upon the successful completion of her probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to grant permanent status to Supervisory Assistant Public Defender, Jonathan Gable, Geographical Area 5 (Derby), upon the successful completion of his promotional probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to grant permanent status to Public Defender, Damian Tucker, Hartford Judicial District, upon the successful completion of his promotional probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to grant permanent status to Investigator I, Shannon Slater, Geographical Area 4 (Waterbury), upon the successful completion of her probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to grant permanent status to Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Isaias Pedraza, Geographical Area 2 (Bridgeport), upon the successful completion of his probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to grant permanent status to Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Caroline Watson, Geographical Area 2 (Bridgeport), upon the successful completion of her probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to grant permanent status to Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Benedict R. Daigle, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford, upon the successful completion of his probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to grant permanent status to Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Joshua Perldeiner, Geographical Area 15 (New Britain), upon the successful completion of his probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to grant permanent status to Assistant Public Defender, Aimee Mahon, Geographical Area 10 (New London), upon the successful completion of her probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to grant permanent status to Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Amanda Smallhorn, Connecticut Innocence Project/Post Conviction Unit, Office of Chief Public Defender, Rocky Hill, upon the successful completion of her probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the outside employment request of Public Defender, TaShun Bowden-Lewis, Waterbury Judicial District.

APPROVAL OF OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT REQUEST

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the outside employment request of Senior Assistant Public Defender, John Cizik, Waterbury Judicial District.

APPROVAL OF OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT REQUEST

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the outside employment request of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Benedict R. Daigle, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford.

APPROVAL OF OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT REQUEST

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the outside employment request of Social Worker III, Bryan Habif, Hartford Community Court.

APPROVAL OF OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT REQUEST

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the outside employment request of Senior Assistant Public Defender, Adele Patterson, Legal Services Unit, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford.

APPROVAL OF OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT REQUEST

The Chief Public Defender discussed the **2021 Indigence Guidelines for Public Defender Services.**

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the **2021 Indigence Guidelines for Public Defender Services**.

APPROVAL OF
**2021 INDIGENCE GUIDELINES
FOR PUBLIC DEFENDER
SERVICES**

The Chief Public Defender discussed the proposed **Updated Public Defender Administrative Manual, Section 4**.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to table the proposed **Updated Public Defender Administrative Manual, Section 4** until the next meeting.

TABLING OF PROPOSED
**UPDATED PUBLIC DEFENDER
ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL,
SECTION 4**

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to go back into Executive Session at 5:57 p.m. The reason for convening in Executive Session was in accordance with Section 1-210(b)(10) of the Connecticut General Statutes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Commission came out of Executive Session at 6:15 p.m.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the following Authorizations to Incur Expenses: 10-2020-01, 10-2020-02, 10-2020-03, and 10-2020-04.

APPROVAL OF EXPENSES

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John R. Day
Deputy Chief Public Defender