



CITIZENS ADVISORY
COUNCIL FOR HOUSING MATTERS



Reply to: 901 Wethersfield Ave.
Hartford, CT 06114
860-296-4242 x3

NOTICE OF MEETING

2:00 p.m.
Wednesday, September 12, 2001

Connecticut Bar Association
30 Bank St., New Britain
(860-223-4400 for directions)

Meeting Minutes of June 20, 2001

In attendance: Richard DeParle, Jeff Hammer, Ivan Hirsch, David Pels, Joe Wincze, Raphael Podolsky, Sandra Desrosiers, Suzanne Colasanto, W. Herbert Reckmeyer, Richard Tenenbaum, Roberta Oria Palmer.

1. Preliminary Matters:

- a. The meeting was called to order at 2:10 p.m.
- b. The meeting agenda was approved
- c. The minutes of the March 14, 2001, meeting were approved.

2. Housing Court Operations Report

a. Housing Prosecutor

Judy Rothschild was not present but reported by telephone that there are no significant developments.

- i. **Prosecution Manual** – Rafie wrote a letter requesting that the Advisory Council to be allowed to provide input. No response has been received to date. Rafie will pursue the matter.
- ii. **Police Academy training curriculum** – No new developments.
- iii. **Other developments** – No new developments.

b. Housing Clerks

- i. **Bridgeport courthouse relocation** – Ivan Hirsch of the Bridgeport-Norwalk Committee reports best estimates for the move are this fall, September or October. Construction has begun. Council's concerns with service windows have been addressed; the blue prints indicate two side-by-side windows that will accommodate two lines. General conclusion by the committee is that things are progressing well. The Judicial Branch will make public announcements of the new court relocation at the appropriate time.

- ii. **Consolidation of Norwich/New London cases** – The proposal to consolidate the Norwich housing cases in New London has been dropped by the Judicial Branch.
- iii. **Other Staffing issues** – S. Colasanto reported that Norwalk does not have a Data Terminal Operator. There has not been a sufficient pool of in-house applicants. Judicial has not opened the posting to outside applicants. Waterbury now has a shared Temporary Assistant Clerk
- iv. **New Britain computerization**– New Britain Housing Court is now using the Hartford summary process computer program. Two weeks operational and all is going well. Database can search by name, address, and docket numbers. Internet access is being investigated.
- v. **Pamphlet update – status of Spanish-language pamphlets** -- S. Colasanto reports that Rights and Responsibilities of Tenants guides have been updated in English, and the translated versions are complete but not ready for distribution. The landlord guides are available on the Judicial web site but there are no updated printed versions to distribute. The Advisory Council will try to get more specific details on anticipated progress. Most forms are on computer and can be filled out on the computer but all still must be hand-filed at the court house.
- vi. **Hartford Housing Court**
 Judge Julia Crawford has been assigned to the Hartford Housing Court until the end of August 2001. Judge Sullivan is unable to continue full-time duties due to illness but does come to hear cases, as he is able. Rafie has sent Judge Crawford an informational package about the Council and has requested an introductory meeting.
 There was discussion about the length of time that it takes to get a trial in the Hartford Housing Court if a case does not settle (about four weeks). That time period used to be about one week but has grown over the past eighteen months or so. Most other housing courts (which also have lighter caseloads) do same-day trials.
- vii. **Other developments** – Housing courts now accept Visa and MasterCard as forms of payment.

c. **Housing Specialists**

Tom McCue now has a computer to facilitate DSS Eviction Prevention Program.

- 3. **Legislative Update:** Rafie distributed packets detailing three public acts that affect CGS §47a. Each will take effect October 1, 2001.
- 4. **Judicial assignments for 2001-2002**
 The regional subcommittees are working on their recommendations.
- 5. **Other Business**
 - a. **Norwalk parking lot:** Underutilized parking lot in Norwalk was raised. "White" parking lot could accommodate 20 cars, but is believed to be restricted to jurors and is not frequently used. Rafie will contact Chip Haslun and, based on that

conversation, a letter will be drafted to Judge Karazin on behalf of the Advisory Council.

- b. **Notice to quit form:** Ivan Hirsch raised a concern that the notice to quit possession form currently used is inaccurate in that it includes the language "terminate lease" which is not consistent with the statute and, in some cases, incorrectly states that the lease is being terminated upon service of the notice to quit. Ivan will write a letter to S. Colasanto.
- c. **Interpreters:** Richard Tenenbaum reported that he was informed that Judicial has an account with an entity called Language Line that offers immediate multi-language interpreting services over the telephone. The cost is \$2.20 - \$2.50 per minute. No one at the meeting was aware of this service or its accessibility. Richard will forward whatever relevant information he has to Sandy Desrosiers and she will contact Chief Interpreter for Judicial, Willie Alverado, to find out more about this account and report back to the Council at the next meeting.

6. **Regional Caucuses:** No action.

7. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 4:00p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for September 12, 2001.

Respectfully submitted by:

Sandra Desrosiers
Secretary