

MINUTES OF MEETING
PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES COMMISSION
JANUARY 5, 2021

The meeting of the Public Defender Services Commission was convened at 4:34 p.m. via Zoom.

Members Present

Thomas J. Rechen, Esq., **Chair**

G. Kenneth Bernhard, Esq.

Honorable William R. Dyson (*Conference Call*)

Aimee Golbert, LCSW

Attorney Ramona Mercado-Espinoza (*Conference Call*)

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

Jennifer Bourn, Supervisory Assistant Public Defender

Legal Services Unit, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford

D. Keith Foren, Supervisory Assistant Public Defender

Waterford/Willimantic Juvenile Matters

Joseph E. Lopez, Senior Assistant Public Defender

Connecticut Innocence Project/Post-Conviction Unit

Office of Chief Public Defender, Rocky Hill

Robert J. Meredith, Director

Connecticut Innocence Project/Post-Conviction Unit

Office of Chief Public Defender, Rocky Hill

Attorney Deborah G. Stevenson

Deborah G. Stevenson Law, LLC

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the minutes of the December 1, 2020 meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to go into Executive Session at 4:39 p.m. The reason for convening in Executive Session was in accordance with Section 1-200(6)(A) and Section 1-210(b)(10) of the Connecticut General Statutes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Commission came out of Executive Session at 6:38 p.m.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the following Authorization to Incur Expenses: 1-2021-01.

APPROVAL OF EXPENSES

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to table the following Authorization to Incur Expenses: 1-2021-02.

TABLING OF EXPENSES

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney Jennifer Bourn to the position of Director of Legal Services, Office of Chief Public Defender, Waterbury.

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
JENNIFER BOURN

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney Joseph E. Lopez to the position of Director of Complex Litigation, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford.

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
JOSEPH E. LOPEZ

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney Melanie C. Frank to the Connecticut

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
MELANIE C. FRANK

Innocence Project/Post-Conviction Unit, Office of Chief Public Defender, Rocky Hill.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED to appoint Attorney Nicholas D. Hopkins to the position of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Waterford/Willimantic Juvenile Matters. Honorable Elpedio N. Vitale did not participate in the vote.

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
NICHOLAS D. HOPKINS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to ratify the appointment of Virginia Knudsen to the position of Investigator I, Geographical Area 10 (New London).

RATIFICATION OF
VIRGINIA KNUDSEN

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to table the appointment of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Racial Equity and Diversity, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford.

TABLING OF APPOINTMENT

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, Brian Pear, Geographical Area 14 (Hartford), expiring on 1/7/2025; Assistant Public Defender, Kelly Billings, Fairfield Judicial District, expiring on 1/10/2025; Senior Assistant Public Defender, Kevin C. Williams, Milford Judicial District/Geographical Area 22, expiring on 1/12/2025; and Assistant Public Defender, James Pastore, Fairfield Judicial District, expiring on 1/23/2025.

ATTORNEY
REAPPOINTMENTS

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

PERMANENT STATUS

Defender, William Kraekel, Geographical Area 4 (Waterbury), upon the successful completion of his probationary period.

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 Social Worker I, Hanna Levesque, Geographical Area 14 (Hartford), 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, Obinna Anugweje, Geographical Area 15 (New Britain), upon the successful completion of his probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the outside employment request of Social Worker III, Kim McKeon, Psychiatric Defense Unit, Connecticut Valley Hospital, Office of Chief Public Defender, Middletown.

APPROVAL OF OUTSIDE
EMPLOYMENT REQUEST

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the outside employment request of Assistant Public Defender, Sanford Bruce, III, Geographical Area 23 (New Haven).

APPROVAL OF OUTSIDE
EMPLOYMENT REQUEST

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

APPROVAL OF
**2021 COMMISSION MEETING
DATES**

The Chief Public Defender updated the Commission on the Division's staffing and budget.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John R. Day
Deputy Chief Public Defender