

MINUTES OF MEETING
PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 7, 2021

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

Members Present

Attorney Allison M. Near, **Chair**
G. Kenneth Bernhard, Esq.
Honorable William R. Dyson
Attorney Ramona Mercado-Espinoza
Thomas J. Rechen, Esq. (***Past Chair***)
Honorable Hillary B. Strackbein
Honorable Elpedio N. Vitale

Others Present

Christine Perra Rapillo, Chief Public Defender
John R. Day, Deputy Chief Public Defender
Diane M. Fitzpatrick, Director of Human Resources
Susan Hamilton, Director of Delinquency Defense and Child Protection, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford
Jennifer Bourn, Director of Legal Services
Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford
Bradford Buchta, Senior Assistant Public Defender
Fairfield Judicial District
John R. DelBarba, Supervisory Assistant Public Defender
Geographical Area 7 (Meriden)
Danae A. Dwyer, Assistant Public Defender
Hartford Juvenile Matters

Karen Hardy-Massaró, Assistant Public Defender
Waterbury/Torrington Juvenile Matters
Jassette Ann-Marie Henry, Senior Assistant Public Defender
Geographical Area 15 (New Britain)
Joshua Michtom, Assistant Public Defender,
Delinquency Defense and Child Protection Unit,
Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford

Former Commission Chair, Thomas J. Rechen, Esq., introduced Attorney Allison M. Near of Jacobs & Dow, LLC as the newly appointed Chair of the Public Defender Services Commission. Chairwoman Near presided over the meeting and was assisted by former Chair, Thomas J. Rechen, Esq.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW
COMMISSION CHAIR

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2021 meeting. Honorable Elpedio N. Vitale abstained from the vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to go into Executive Session at 4:43 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 7:35 p.m.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney Bradford Buchta to the position of Public Defender, Tolland Judicial District/Geographical Area 19.

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
BRADFORD BUCHTA

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney Karen Hardy-Massaró to the position of Supervisory Assistant Public Defender, New Britain Juvenile Matters.

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
KAREN HARDY-MASSARO

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney Erica A. Barber to the position of Assistant Public Defender, Legal Services Unit, Office of Chief Public Defender, Waterbury.

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
ERICA A. BARBER

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney Shanna Huggle to the position of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Legal Services Unit, Office of Chief Public Defender, Waterbury.

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
SHANNA HUGLE

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney Jennifer R. Flynn to the position of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Hartford Juvenile Matters.

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
JENNIFER R. FLYNN

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney William Schofield to the position of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Torrington Judicial District/ Geographical Area 18.

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
WILLIAM SCHOFIELD

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to ratify the appointment of Courtney L. McIlrath to the position of Public Defender Secretary II, Waterford/Willimantic Juvenile Matters.

RATIFICATION OF
COURTNEY L. MCILRATH

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to ratify the appointment of Heather Cremasco to the

RATIFICATION OF
HEATHER CREMASCO

position of Public Defender Secretary II, Torrington Judicial District/Geographical Area 18.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to ratify the appointment of Christopher Dutcher to the position of Public Defender Secretary II, Tolland Judicial District/Geographical Area 19.

RATIFICATION OF
CHRISTOPHER DUTCHER

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the outside employment requests of Director of Legal Services, Jennifer Bourn, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford.

APPROVAL OF OUTSIDE
EMPLOYMENT REQUESTS

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 Assistant Public Defender, Rosanna L. Cappetta, Geographical Area 5 (Derby).

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, Geographical Area 14 (Hartford).

APPROVAL OF OUTSIDE
EMPLOYMENT REQUEST

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the outside employment request of Director of Delinquency Defense and Child Protection, Susan Hamilton, 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 Supervisory Assistant Public Defender, M. Elizabeth Reid, Geographical Area 20 (Norwalk).

APPROVAL OF OUTSIDE
EMPLOYMENT REQUEST

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the following Authorizations to Incur Expenses: 9-2021-01, 9-2021-02 and 9-2021-03.

APPROVAL OF EXPENSES

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, Caitlin Mongillo, 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 Public Defender Secretary II, Bridget Girch, Geographical Area 21 (Norwich), 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 Public Defender Secretary I, Sonia Machado, Legal Services Unit, Office of Chief Public Defender, 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 reappoint the following attorneys to a new four-year

ATTORNEY
REAPPOINTMENTS

term: Senior Assistant Public Defender, Abra Rice, Geographical Area 23 (New Haven), expiring on 8/12/2025; Senior Assistant Public Defender, Adele Patterson, Legal Services Unit, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford, expiring on 8/22/2025; Director of Assigned Counsel, Alix Walmsley, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford, expiring on 9/9/2025; and Public Defender, Joseph J. Bruckmann, Fairfield Judicial District, expiring on 9/24/2025.

The Chief Public Defender discussed the Division's staffing and budget.

The Chief Public Defender further discussed her request for pay increases for the Exempt staff to become in line with union staff.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the pay increases for Exempt staff.

APPROVAL OF PAY INCREASES FOR EXEMPT STAFF

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the proposed job description for the soon-to-be-hired position of *Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*.

APPROVAL OF JOB DESCRIPTION

A Governor's Proclamation was read out loud by Commission member, Attorney Ramona Mercado-Espinoza, to thank former Chairman, Thomas J. Rechen, Esq. for 14 years of dedicated service to the Public Defender Services Commission.

GOVERNOR'S PROCLAMATION TO THANK FORMER CHAIRMAN, THOMAS J. RECHEN, ESQ. FOR HIS YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES COMMISSION

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John R. Day
Deputy Chief Public Defender