

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES COMMISSION
APRIL 25, 2023**

The special meeting of the Public Defender Services Commission was convened at 4:31 p.m. in conference room 1008 at the Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford, Connecticut.

Members Present

Honorable Richard N. Palmer, **Chair**
Honorable William R. Dyson
Michael Jefferson, Esq.
Russell Morin
Honorable Sheila M. Prats
Honorable Elliot N. Solomon

Others Present

TaShun Bowden-Lewis, Chief Public Defender
John R. Day, Deputy Chief Public Defender
Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Legal Counsel, Director
Paula Lohr, Acting Director of Human Resources
Steve Hunt, Financial Director
Michael Richards, Supervisory Assistant Public Defender,
Geographical Area 4 (Waterbury)
Susan Hamilton, Director of Child Protection and
Delinquency Defense
Christopher Eddy, Public Defender, New Britain Judicial District/
Geographical Area 15
Jennifer Bourn, Chief of Legal Services, Legal Services Unit
Pamela Nagy, Supervisory Assistant Public Defender,
Legal Services Unit

Public Comment

J. Patten Brown, Esq.

Joseph Lopez, Director, Complex Litigation Unit, OCPD

Corrie Mainville, Public Defender, Litchfield Judicial District /
Geographical Area 18 (Torrington)

David Warner, Supervisory Assistant Public Defender,
Geographical Area 14 (Hartford)

Attorney Laila Haswell, Union President, Local 381

Attorney Douglas Ovian, Union Vice President, Local 381

Members of the Commission introduced themselves, and the Chair made opening comments.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED by majority of the Commission to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2023, and February 7, 2023, meetings. Attorney Michael Jefferson abstained from the vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Legal Counsel, Director, presented regarding the role of Legal Counsel for the agency.

Steve Hunt, Financial Director, presented regarding the current state of the agency budget and the budget process, followed by a Q & A with members of the Commission.

Paula Lohr, Acting Director of Human Resources, presented regarding the Human Resources unit and recruitment efforts, followed by a Q & A with members of the Commission.

Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Legal Counsel, Director, presented regarding the income eligibility guidelines for Division

services and the Commission's role in approving adjustments to the same.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the 200% of the federal poverty guidelines standard and adopt the guidelines as presented.

ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

The Chief Public Defender provided an agency update, including, but not limited to: her vision for the future of the Division; current legislative efforts; efforts of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion office; upcoming training opportunities; rebranding efforts; plans for re-entry assistance; the proposed External Affairs Unit; the Annual Meeting; the work of the Racial Justice and Cultural Competency Committee; and attorney caseload goals and statistics. A Q & A with members of the Commission followed her presentation.

The Commission provided a period for public comments.

Attorney J. Patten Brown spoke regarding concerns about the current compensation rates for assigned counsel, followed by a brief Q & A with Commission members.

Attorney Joseph Lopez spoke regarding concerns about the state of the agency and morale.

Attorney Laila Haswell and Attorney Douglas Ovia of Local 381 spoke on behalf of the union membership regarding concerns including, but not limited to, caseloads, compensation, and a request to be permitted to address the Commission on a regular basis. A Q & A with members of the Commission followed their comments.

Attorney David Warner spoke regarding caseloads, followed by a brief Q & A with Commission members. Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Legal Counsel, spoke briefly to clarify caseload goals as outlined in the *Rivera v. Rowland* matter.

Attorney Corrie Mainville spoke regarding caseloads and the assignment of cases to assigned counsel.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to go into Executive Session at 7:33 p.m. The reason for convening in Executive Session was in accordance with Sections 1-200 (6) (A), (B) and (E) of the Connecticut General Statutes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Commission came out of Executive Session at 9:19 p.m.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney Elizabeth Hrywniak to the position of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, New Britain Judicial District/Geographical Area 15.

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
ELIZABETH HRYWNIAC

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney Kacey Stone to the position of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Geographical Area 4 (Waterbury).

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
KACEY STONE

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney Ellen Morgan to the position of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Child Protection Parent Defense.

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
ELLEN MORGAN

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney Karen Damboise to the position of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Child Protection Parent Defense.

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
KAREN DAMBOISE

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney Hope Estrella to the position of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Legal Services Unit (Waterbury).

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
HOPE ESTRELLA

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to ratify the appointment of Shavonne Moore to the position of Social Worker I, Part-Time, New Haven Judicial District.

RATIFICATION OF
SHAVONNE MOORE

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to table the ratification of the appointment of Dominica Zdonek to the position of Administrative Assistant, Legal Counsel Unit, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford.

RATIFICATION OF
DOMINICA ZDONEK

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to table the ratification of the appointment of Leslie OBrien to the position of Executive Assistant to the Chief Public Defender, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford.

RATIFICATION OF
LESLIE OBRIEN

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the following Authorizations to Incur Expenses: 04-2023-01; 04-2023-02; 04-2023-03; 04-2023-04; 04-2023-05; 04-2023-06; 04-2023-07; and 04-2023-08.

APPROVAL OF
EXPENSES

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED

ATTORNEY
REAPPOINTMENTS

unanimously to reappoint the following attorneys to a new four-year term: Jessica Missios, Assistant Public Defender, Geographical Area 23 (New Haven), expiring on 3/4/2027; Benedict Daigle, Assistant Public Defender, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford, expiring on 4/12/2027; and Isaias Pedraza, Assistant Public Defender, Bridgeport Judicial District, expiring on 4/12/2027.

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 Amy Baez, Financial Officer, Office of Chief Public Defender, 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 Rashad Glass, Public Defender, Waterbury Judicial District, 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 Marcus Adorno, Fiscal Database Assistant, 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 Stephanie Busto, Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Geographical Area 23 (New

PERMANENT STATUS

Haven), upon the successful completion of her 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 Evan Dorney, Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Geographical Area 4 (Waterbury), 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 Cody Layton, Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Geographical Area 10 (New London), 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 Sean Scott, Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Geographical Area 2 (Stamford), 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 Hilary Carpenter, Senior Assistant Public Defender, Geographical Area 14 (Hartford).

OUTSIDE
EMPLOYMENT REQUEST

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the educational reimbursement request of Kate Kowalyshyn, Systems Specialist, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford.

EDUCATIONAL
REIMBURSEMENT
REQUEST

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to deny the educational leave request of Rebekah Whelan, Public Defender Secretary I, Middletown Judicial District / Geographical Area 9.

EDUCATIONAL LEAVE
REQUEST

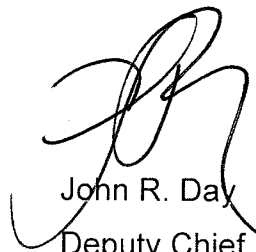
Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to go into Executive Session at 9:36 p.m. The reason for convening in Executive Session was in accordance with Sections 1-200 (6) (A), (B) and (E) of the Connecticut General Statutes. The Commission excused the Chief Public Defender and Deputy Chief Public Defender for this Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Commission came out of Executive Session at 10:04 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, it was VOTED unanimously to adjourn at 10:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



John R. Day
Deputy Chief Public Defender