

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES COMMISSION
JUNE 27, 2023

The meeting of the Public Defender Services Commission was convened at 4:44 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
Steve Hunt, Financial Director
Paula Lohr, Acting Director of Human Resources
Alix Walmsley, Director of Assigned Counsel
Daryl McGraw, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Director
Amy Baez, Financial Officer
Isaias Pedraza, Assistant Public Defender
Amber Storey, Investigator I
Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Legal Counsel, Director

Public Comment

Claud Chong, Senior Assistant Public Defender, Hartford J.D.
Attorney Julie Costello
Joseph Lopez, Director, Complex Litigation Unit, OCPD

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the minutes of the May 24, 2023, Commission meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

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

Alix Walmsley, Director of Assigned Counsel, presented regarding the compensation rates and case assignment statistics for Assigned Counsel, followed by a Q & A with members of the Commission.

Daryl McGraw, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Director, presented regarding the efforts of his unit, followed by a Q & A with members of the Commission.

Amy Baez, Isaias Pedraza, and Amber Storey of the Racial Justice and Cultural Competency Committee Executive Team presented regarding the Committee's efforts and future goals, followed by a Q & A with members of the Commission.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to address any Updates and Information, the CT Innocence Project Update, New Business, Commission Correspondence, and Public Comments prior to convening Executive Session.

AGENDA

Chief Public Defender TaShun Bowden-Lewis presented regarding the agency's logo, Annual Meeting, compensation rates for both Assigned Counsel and Division attorneys, the IMRP International Justice Exchange delegation to Germany, and a bequest made to the CT Innocence Project. A brief Q& A followed with members of the Commission.

Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Legal Counsel, Director, presented regarding the bequest made to the CT Innocence Project.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED BEQUEST unanimously to approve receipt of the bequeathed funds and the creation of an individual account for their use.

The Commission provided a period for public comments.

Attorney Claud Chong spoke regarding his experiences with the agency, followed by a Q & A with members of the Commission.

Attorney Julie Costello spoke and provided documents regarding her separation from the agency and requested that her status be changed to "good standing."

Attorney Joseph Lopez spoke regarding his observations of agency culture, followed by a Q & A with members of the Commission.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED RECESS unanimously to take a brief recess at 7:15 pm.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to go into Executive Session at 7:44 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 10:45 p.m.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED by majority of the Commission to approve the following Authorizations to Incur Expenses: 06-2023-01, 06-2023-02, 06-2023-03, 06-2023-04, 06-2023-05, 06-2023-06, 06-2023-07, 06-2023-08, 06-2023-09, and 06-2023-10. The Honorable Richard N. Palmer abstained from the votes regarding 06-2023-02 and 06-2023-04.

APPROVAL OF EXPENSES

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

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
KAYLA STEPHEN

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Nicole Van Lear to the position of Assistant Public Defender, Legal Services Unit (Hartford).

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
NICOLE VAN LEAR

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Justin Chan to the position of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, G.A. 4 (Waterbury).

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
JUSTIN CHAN

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Matthew Costello to the position of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, G.A. 4 (Waterbury).

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
MATTHEW COSTELLO

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Daniel Lage to the position of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, G.A. 23 (New Haven).

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
DANIEL LAGE

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to ratify the appointment of Elke Sweeney to the position of Social Worker I, Danbury J.D./G.A. 03.

RATIFICATION OF
ELKE SWEENEY

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to ratify the appointment of Linda Ververis to the position of Secretary I (Part Time), Windham J.D./G.A. 11.

RATIFICATION OF
LINDA VERVERIS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to ratify the appointment of Kaleb Garrett to the position of Secretary I (Part Time), G.A. 14 (Hartford).

RATIFICATION OF
KALEB GARRETT

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to ratify the appointment of Briana Paramhance to the position of Secretary I (Part Time), New Britain J.D./G.A. 15.

RATIFICATION OF
BRIANA PARAMHANCE

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: Jennifer Bourn, Legal Services Unit (Hartford), expiring on 05/18/2027; Caroline Watson, G.A. 2 (Bridgeport), expiring on 05/18/2027; Arnold Amore, CT Innocence Project and Post Conviction Unit, expiring on 06/07/2027; and Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Office of Chief Public Defender, expiring on 06/07/2027.

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 Joy Fredette,

PERMANENT STATUS
JOY FREDETTE

Secretary II, Windham J.D./G.A. 11, 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 Denis O'Malley, Assistant Public Defender, Legal Services Unit (Hartford), upon the successful completion of his probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS
DENIS O'MALLEY

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 LaFantasie, Administrative Assistant, Complex Litigation Unit (OCPD), upon the successful completion of her probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS
STEPHANIE LAFANTASIE

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 Christopher Brenes, Deputy Assistant Public Defender, G.A. 12 (Manchester), upon the successful completion of his probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS
CHRISTOPHER BRENES

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 Christin Cofield, Social Worker I, G.A. 12 (Manchester), upon the successful completion of her probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS
CHRISTIN COFIELD

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 Olivia Haubert, Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Middletown J.D./G.A. 9, upon the successful completion of her probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS
OLIVIA HAUBERT

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 William Deegan, Deputy Assistant Public Defender, New Britain J.D./G.A. 15, upon the successful completion of his probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS
WILLIAM DEEGAN

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the outside employment request of Jennifer Buckler, Fellowship Attorney, Tolland J.D./G.A. 19.

APPROVAL OF OUTSIDE
EMPLOYMENT REQUEST

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

APPROVAL OF OUTSIDE
EMPLOYMENT REQUEST

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to take no action regarding the request made by Attorney Julie Costello.

PUBLIC REQUEST

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve three invoices submitted by Shipman & Goodwin reimbursing the Office of the Attorney General.

EXPENSES

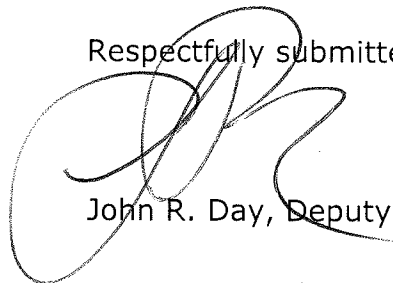
Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the next meeting date of July 25, 2023.

MEETING DATE

There being no further business to come before the Commission, upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:55 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,



John R. Day, Deputy Chief Public Defender