

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
PUBLIC DEFENDER COMMISSION MEETING January 9, 2024

In person meeting at OCPD Hartford

Meeting commenced at 4:35 pm

Members Present

Hon Richard Palmer (Chair)
Herman Woodard
Attorney Michael Jefferson
Hon Shelia Pratts
Russell Morin

Other Agency Staff

TaShun Bowden-Lewis, Chief Public Defender
John Day, Deputy Chief Public Defender
Steve Hunt, Financial Director
Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Director, Legal Counsel
Paula Lohr, Acting Director of Human Resources
Katherine Farrell, Chief Social Worker

Comments by the CPD to add Paula Lohr to the minutes of the December 5, 2023, meeting. In addition, the CPD raised concerns about the time limit imposed upon the members of the public addressing the Commission members on the aforementioned date.

MM 2nd – Unanimous to approve the minutes of the December 5, 2023, Commission Meeting as amended to add Paula Lohr.

MM 2nd – Unanimous to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2023, Special Meeting of the Commission.

MM 2nd – Unanimous to approve the Annual Report for submission.

MM 2nd – Unanimous to approve the salary adjustment for the CPD DCPD and the Public Defenders to remain in parity with the State's Attorneys' positions respectively and retroactively to 7/1/2023.

A period of discussion between the members of the Commission and the CPD regarding:

- The line item for experts in the agency budget
- The projected cost of raising the rate paid to private investigators from \$35/hr to either \$50/hr or \$55/hr

- The process for the approval of raising the aforementioned rate – whether it is a Commission matter or one to be presented to the Appropriations Committee of the State Legislature. Finance Director Steve Hunt indicated that previous CPDs have not obtained Commission approval for budget requests to the legislature but did inform the Commission about the budget.

MM 2nd – Unanimous to approve the increase of the rate for private investigators from \$35/hr to \$55/hr

A period of public Commentary was provided:

- Gaylord Salters addressed the Commission regarding the importance of having ample resources available to both staff members of the agency and Assigned Counsel so that they may provide the best possible defense for the clients they represent.
- J. Sheim Perry addressed the Commission echoing the comments made by Mr. Salters and adding particular emphasis on the need for thorough investigation in post-conviction matters.

INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION 5:40

MM 2nd – unanimous Pursuant to C.G.S 1-200 (6) A, B and E

OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION 9:57

MM 2nd Unanimous to approve the following Authorizations to Incur Expenses

- 0109001
- 0109002
- 0109003
- 0109004
- 0109005
- 0109006
- 0109007
- 0109008 (ratification)

MM 2nd Unanimous to approve the following appointments, reappointments, and outside employment requests:

Appointments:

- Katherine Doyle DAPD GA #4
- Marina Seigel DAPD GA #22
- Dawn Gorgone DAPD GA #21
- Sean Langberg DAPD GA #14

- Claudia Lynch DAPD GA #14
- Wendy Aguire Investigator III Danbury JD/GA #3
- Brittany Franco Investigator I GA #14 (ratification)
- Dominica Zdonek Administrative Assistant, Legal Counsel, OCPD (ratification)
- Leslie OBrien Executive Assistant to the CPD, OCPD (ratification)

The DAPD position for GA #7 will be reposted.

Reappointments:

- Michael Paris GA#2
- Jonathan Gable GA #2
- William Kraekel GA #23

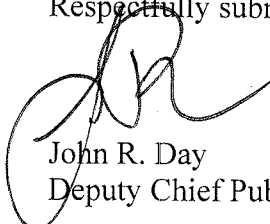
Outside Employment Requests:

- Jennifer Bourn (2)
- Toni Esposito

MM 2nd Unanimous to approve OCPD Policy #205 regarding agency recruitment and hiring procedures to be reaffirmed and followed “as it is written” going forward including any currently existing or pending matters. The Commission noted that the policy being affirmed has been “deviated from” and it will be making a review of other agency policies in the future.

MM 2nd Unanimous to Adjourn at 10:06

Respectfully submitted,



John R. Day
Deputy Chief Public Defender