

MINUTES OF MEETING
PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES COMMISSION
MARCH 5, 2024

The meeting of the Public Defender Services Commission was convened at 4:38 p.m. at the Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford, Connecticut.

Members Present

Honorable Richard N. Palmer, **Chair**

Michael Jefferson, Esq.

Honorable Russell Morin

Honorable Sheila M. Prats

Honorable Elliot N. Solomon

Herman Woodard, Jr., Esq.

Others Present

John R. Day, Acting Chief Public Defender

Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Director, Legal Counsel

Renee Cimino, Director of Delinquency Defense and
Child Protection

Stephen Hunt, Financial Director

Dr. Isabel Logan, Logan Consulting & Therapeutic Services
(via Zoom)

Dr. Courtney Broschious, Logan Consulting & Therapeutic
Services

A presentation was made by Dr. Isabel Logan and Dr. Courtney Broschious of Logan Consulting & Therapeutic Services regarding a proposal for conducting a needs assessment on behalf of the Commission to examine the racial climate and microaggressions throughout the Division.

PRESENTATION BY
DR. ISABEL LOGAN AND
DR. COURTNEY BROSCIOUS

There was a question-and-answer segment by the Commission regarding the presentation's proposal. The expected time demand for the conducted needs assessment would be six months. Commission Chairman, Justice Palmer suggested that the Commission prepare some questions as a follow-up to the presentation by Logan Consulting & Therapeutic Services.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the minutes of the February 6, 2024 Commission meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the minutes of the February 9, 2024 special Commission meeting.

APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MINUTES

Financial Director, Stephen Hunt, updated the Commission on the Division's budget including the proposed increase of 20 social worker positions for Child Protection cases. He also updated the Commission on the increase to the Division's position count in January of 2025 due to an increase in the income eligibility guidelines, and on the proposed increase to the Assigned Counsel rate.

BUDGET UPDATE

The Commission discussed the update to the Division's budget given by the Financial Director, Stephen Hunt.

Director of Delinquency Defense and Child Protection, Renee Cimino, presented the proposed increase of 20 additional social worker positions for her unit.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the payment of an invoice for \$9,000 to the law firm of Shipman & Goodwin.

APPROVAL OF INVOICE

The Commission discussed reviewing Policy 205 of the Division's Administrative Policy and Procedures Manual and passing amendments thereto.

Commission member, Honorable Sheila M. Prats, indicated that Acting Human Resources Director, Paula Lohr, should be present at future Commission meetings to be available for questions regarding Division's staffing and policies.

Under Public Comments of the agenda, Jacqueline Rodriguez of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority spoke on behalf of the members of her organization in support of Chief Public Defender, TaShun Bowden-Lewis. A prepared statement was read to the Commission, and she was thanked for her comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to go into Executive Session at 5:31 p.m. The reason for convening the 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 7:58 p.m.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the following Authorizations to Incur Expenses: 3-2024-01; 3-2024-02; 3-2024-03; 3-2024-04; 3-2024-05; and 3-2024-06.

APPROVAL OF EXPENSES

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to ratify the following Authorization to Incur Expenses: 3-2024-07.

RATIFICATION OF EXPENSES

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Acting Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to grant permanent status to part-time, Public Defender Secretary I, Kaleb Garrett, Geographical Area 14 (Hartford), upon the successful completion of his probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Acting Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to grant permanent status to Public Defender Administrative Assistant, Dominica Zdonek, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford, upon the successful completion of her probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the outside employment request of Senior Assistant Public Defender, Robert Famiglietti, Parole Revocation Unit, Office of Chief Public Defender, Waterbury.

APPROVAL OF OUTSIDE
EMPLOYMENT REQUEST

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to ratify the appointment of Cloressa Goldson-Gondwe to the position of Investigator I, Geographical Area 23 (New Haven).

RATIFICATION OF APPOINTMENT
CLORESSA GOLDSON-GONDWE

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to reclassify Stephen Hunt to the position of Chief Fiscal Officer, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford.

RECLASSIFICATION OF
STEPHEN HUNT

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to reclassify Tammie Parker to the position of Executive Assistant to the Deputy Chief Public Defender, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford.

RECLASSIFICATION OF
TAMMIE PARKER

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to reclassify Leonie Campbell to the position of Executive Assistant to the Public Defender Services Commission, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford.

RECLASSIFICATION OF
LEONIE CAMPBELL

Commission Chairman, Justice Palmer made the following statement, "Pursuant to subsection (d) of Connecticut General Statutes, Section 51-290, the Commission will schedule a hearing in the matter of Chief Public Defender, TaShun Bowden-Lewis for a date in April 2024."

HEARING TO BE SCHEDULED IN
THE MATTER OF CHIEF PUBLIC
DEFENDER, TASHUN BOWDEN-
LEWIS

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John R. Day
Acting Chief Public Defender