

MINUTES OF MEETING
PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 4, 2025

The meeting of the Public Defender Services Commission was convened at 4:50 p.m., at the Office of Chief Public Defender, Rooms 1008/1011, Hartford, Connecticut.

Members Present

Honorable Richard N. Palmer, **Chair**
Michael Jefferson, Esq.
Honorable Elliot N. Solomon (via telephone)
Herman Woodard, Jr., Esq.

Others Present

John R. Day, Acting Chief Public Defender
Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Legal Counsel, Director
Erin M. Ryan, Director of Human Resources
John DelBarba, Assistant Legal Counsel
Stephen Hunt, Chief Fiscal Officer
Renee L. Cimino, Director of Delinquency Defense and Child Protection
Leonie Campbell, Executive Assistant to the Commission
Vishal Garg, Esq., Koch, Garg, Walker & Smart
Attorney Abigail Mason, Koch, Garg, Walker & Smart

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the minutes of the October 7, 2025, meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chief Fiscal Officer, Stephen Hunt, provided a budget update summary for FY 26. There was a brief question-and-answer segment.

BUDGET SUMMARY

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to go into Executive Session at 4:55 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 to discuss the following: Authorizations to Incur Expenses, Appointments, Reclassifications, Reappointments & Permanent Statuses, Outside Employment Requests, Educational Leave Requests, Strategy and Negotiations with Respect to Collective Bargaining, and Litigation Involving the Commission.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Other attendees included the Acting Chief Public Defender, John R. Day; Legal Counsel, Director, Deborah Del Prete Sullivan; Assistant Legal Counsel, John DelBarba; Director of Human Resources, Erin M. Ryan; Director of Delinquency Defense and Child Protection, Renee L. Cimino; Vishal K. Garg, Esq., Koch, Garg, Walker & Smart; and Attorney Abigail Mason, Koch, Garg, Walker & Smart.

The Commission came out of Executive Session at 6:55 p.m.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the following Authorizations to Incur Expenses: 11-2025-01; 11-2025-03; 11-2025-05; 11-2025-06; 11-2025-07; 11-2025-08; 11-2025-09; 11-2025-11; 11-2025-12; 11-2025-13 (at an hourly rate of \$350 for a maximum of 50 hours); and 11-2025-14.

APPROVAL OF EXPENSES

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to table the following Authorization to Incur Expenses until the next meeting: 11-2025-02.

TABLING OF EXPENSES

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to deny the following Authorizations to Incur Expenses in the following cases: 11-2025-04 and 11-2025-10.

DENIAL OF EXPENSES

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney Vivianne Mazzarella to the position of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Child Protection Parent Defense Unit, Office of Chief Public Defender.

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
VIVIANNA MAZZARELLA

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to ratify the appointment of Theresa Jarrett to the position of Social Worker I, Geographical Area 14 (Hartford).

RATIFICATION OF
THERESA JARRETT

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Acting Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to reappoint the following attorneys to a new four-year term: Assistant Public Defender, Thomas Leaf, Danbury Judicial District/Geographical Area 3, expiring on 11/9/2029; Assistant Public Defender, Laura Bryll, Hartford Judicial District, expiring on 11/14/2029; Assistant Public Defender, Laura Hamilton, New Haven Judicial District, expiring on 11/19/2029; Assistant Public Defender, Laura Hawk-Allen, Geographical Area 15 (New Britain), expiring on 11/19/2029; Assistant Public Defender, Christopher Huben, Geographical Area 2 (Bridgeport), expiring on 11/19/2029; and Assistant Public Defender, Michael Whiteley, Danbury Judicial District/Geographical Area 3, expiring on 11/19/2029.

ATTORNEY
REAPPOINTMENTS

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 Secretary II, Esmeralda Soto, Geographical Area 14 (Hartford), upon the successful completion of her 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 Executive Assistant Public Defender, John DelBarba, Legal and Legislative Affairs Unit, 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 Acting Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to grant permanent status to Public Defender Secretary I, Dejah Whittingham, Geographical Area 23 (New Haven), upon the successful completion of her 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 Investigator II, Christopher Kramer, 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 Acting Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to grant permanent status to Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Ryan Flanagan, Geographical Area 1 (Stamford), 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 Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Paige Sorenson, Geographical Area 23 (New Haven), upon the successful completion of her 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 Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Joyce Lopes, Geographical Area 23 (New Haven), upon the successful completion of her 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 Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Owen Smith, Danbury Judicial District/ Geographical Area 3, upon the successful completion of his probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS

The Acting Chief Public Defender reported on the Division's Transfers, Retirements, Resignations, and Administrative Leaves.

REPORT OF ACTING CHIEF
PUBLIC DEFENDER

The Acting Chief Public Defender further presented on his report of the Division.

REPORT OF ACTING CHIEF
PUBLIC DEFENDER

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to cancel the December 2, 2025, Commission meeting. A Special meeting was scheduled for December 9, 2025.

SCHEDULING OF SPECIAL
MEETING ON
DECEMBER 9, 2025

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John R. Day
Acting Chief Public Defender