

Minutes  
Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and  
Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters  
September 10, 2019

The Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters met in Courtroom 400 of the Hartford Judicial District Courthouse located at 95 Washington Street, Hartford, CT, on September 10, 2019.

Those in attendance: Judge Michael Albis (chair); Judge Edward Graziani; Attorney Susan Hamilton (designated by Attorney Christine Perra Rapillo); Attorney Justine Rakich-Kelly; Attorney Danielle S. Rado; Ms. Liza Andrews, Policy Director, CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence; Mr. Stephen B. Carragher, Public Health Services Manager, Practitioner Licensing and Investigations Section, Department of Public Health; and Attorney Mark Korber;

Absent: Attorney Byran Cafferelli

Also in attendance were Attorney Damon Goldstein and Mr. Samuel Bruder from the Judicial Branch's Court Operations Unit.

The meeting was called to order at 2:15 PM by Judge Albis.

I. Review and Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Sue Hamilton and seconded by Judge Graziani to approve the minutes from the meeting held on June 4, 2019. The motion passed with Judge Albis, Judge Graziani, Sue Hamilton, Justine Rakich-Kelly, and Danielle Rado voting in favor. Liza Andrews, Stephen Carragher, and Mark Korber abstained. The minutes were approved.

II. Changes to the Active List of Persons Qualified to Serve as a GAL/AMC

The following list of persons had been previously voted on by the Committee for reinstatement to the active list. A motion was made by Mark Korber and seconded by Sue Hamilton to ratify the votes that were taken.

a. Attorney Ross Kaufman

Attorney Ross Kaufman was removed from the active list because he did not respond to an email sent to him on November 15, 2015. Attorney Kaufman emailed a request to be reinstated to the active list on June 25, 2019. Attorney Kaufman meets all the requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62. The Committee approved his reinstatement by a 9-0 vote on June 26, 2019.

b. Attorney Michael Fasano Jr.

Attorney Michael Fasano, Jr. was removed from the active list because he did not respond to an email sent to him on November 16, 2016. Attorney Fasano emailed a request to be reinstated to the active list on July 17, 2019. Attorney Fasano meets all the requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62. The Committee approved his reinstatement by a 9-0 vote on July 17, 2019.

c. Attorney Stacey Votto

Attorney Stacey Votto was removed from the active list because she did not respond to an email sent to her on November 16, 2018. Attorney Votto emailed a request to be reinstated to the active list on July 18, 2019. Attorney Votto meets all the requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62. The Committee approved her reinstatement by a 9-0 vote on July 18, 2019.

d. Attorney Robert Skovgaard

Attorney Robert Skovgaard was removed from the active list because he did not respond to an email sent to him on November 17, 2017. Attorney Skovgaard emailed a request to be reinstated to the active list on July 26, 2019. Attorney Skovgaard meets all the requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62. The Committee approved his reinstatement by a 9-0 vote on July 26, 2019.

e. Attorney Robert McLaughlin

Attorney Robert McLaughlin was removed from the active list because he did not respond to an email sent to him on November 16, 2018. Attorney McLaughlin emailed a request to be reinstated to the active list on August 19, 2019. Attorney McLaughlin meets all the requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62. The Committee approved his reinstatement by an 8-0 vote on August 27, 2019, with Stephen Carragher absent.

III. Process and Removal of Individuals from List of Persons Qualified to Serve as GAL/AMC

Damon Goldstein reported the removal process by complaint became effective on September 3, 2019 and all necessary documents and forms are available on the Judicial Branch public website. He and Michael Bowler, with the assistance of External Affairs, recorded a podcast to help explain the GAL/AMC removal process. The podcast is expected to be available on the Judicial Branch website for public download beginning next week. Judge Albis thanked the Committee members for their hard work and efforts in making this possible.

IV. 2019 Request for Updated Information from Individuals on the List of Persons Qualified to Serve as a GAL/AMC

Per Connecticut Practice Book Sections 25-62(c)(1) and 25-62A(c)(1), active persons on the GAL/AMC list must certify that they have completed at least twelve hours of relevant training, three of which must be in ethics, every three years, in order to maintain their eligibility.

The Committee will include notice of this requirement during the annual request for certification sent to all persons on the active list in November. The notice will ask each individual to certify that the Practice Book requirements have been met and to retain their records detailing such relevant training; records of which will need to be made available for review by the Committee upon request.

Damon Goldstein will prepare a draft email, as well as a second email which will follow and serve as a reminder, for the Committee's consideration at the next scheduled meeting.

V. Pre-service Training Proposal

A brief discussion was had regarding how the Committee could address the need for additional qualified individuals who will accept state rates for reimbursement. In order to be added to the list of persons qualified to serve as a GAL/AMC, an individual must first complete 20 hours of pre-service training as determined by the Committee. Per Practice Book Section 25-61A(b)(2), the Committee has the authority to approve the curriculum for the required training.

Additional information will be gathered for the next meeting, allowing for further discussion.

VI. Schedule of Future Meetings

The next meeting for the Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters will be October 22, 2019 at 2:00 PM. The meeting will be held in the Hartford Judicial District Courthouse located at 95 Washington Street, Hartford, CT, with the room to be determined.

Judge Albis adjourned the meeting at 3:35 PM