

Minutes
Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and
Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters
October 3, 2022

The Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters met on October 3, 2022. The meeting was convened by the chair in Courtroom 2 at 95 Washington Street, Hartford, Connecticut.

Those in attendance: Judge Michael Albis (chair); Judge Jennifer Macierowski; Attorney Bryan Cafferelli; Mr. Stephen B. Carragher, Public Health Services Manager, Practitioner Licensing and Investigations Section, Department of Public Health; Attorney Nisa J. Khan; Attorney Danielle S. Rado; Attorney Justine Rakich-Kelly; Attorney Susan Hamilton (designated by the Chief Public Defender); Ms. Liza Andrews, Policy Director, CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Absent: None

Also in attendance were Attorney Michael Bowler, Counsel to the Standing Committee, Attorney Jennifer Gagosz, Assistant Bar Counsel, Attorney Grace Pelo, Assistant Bar Counsel, and Attorney Damon Goldstein from the Judicial Branch's Court Operations Unit.

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 PM by Judge Albis.

I. Review and Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Justine Rakich-Kelly and seconded by Bryan Cafferelli to approve the minutes from the meeting held on July 27, 2022. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0 with Judge Macierowski, Stephen Carragher, Nisa Khan, and Danielle Rado abstaining.

II. Possible Removal of Individuals from List of Persons Qualified to Serve as a GAL/AMC

At 2:08 PM, in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes §1-200(6)(a), Danielle Rado moved, and Bryan Cafferelli seconded, to enter executive session to discuss complaints for removal of guardians ad litem. The Committee approved going into executive session by a 9-0 vote. Michael Bowler, Jennifer Gagosz, Grace Pelo, and Damon Goldstein were asked by the Committee to remain present for the executive session. The executive session concluded, and the Committee reconvened in open session at 2:20 PM.

a. Complaint #22-0002

A motion was made by Liza Andrews and seconded by Bryan Cafferelli to accept the Probable Cause Panel's finding of no probable cause and recommendation of dismissing the complaint. The motion passed by a 9-0 vote. The complaint was dismissed.

b. Complaint #22-0003

A motion was made by Susan Hamilton and seconded by Judge Macierowski to accept the Probable Cause Panel's finding of no probable cause and recommendation of dismissing the complaint. The motion passed by an 8-0 vote with Justine Rakich-Kelly

abstaining. The complaint was dismissed.

c. Complaint #22-0004

A motion was made by Bryan Cafferelli and seconded by Danielle Rado to accept the Probable Cause Panel's finding of no probable cause and recommendation of dismissing the complaint. The motion passed by a 9-0 vote. The complaint was dismissed.

d. Complaint #22-0005

A motion was made by Judge Macierowski and seconded by Danielle Rado to accept the Probable Cause Panel's finding of no probable cause and recommendation of dismissing the complaint. The motion passed by an 8-0 vote with Justine Rakich-Kelly abstaining. The complaint was dismissed.

e. Complaint #22-0006

A motion was made by Liza Andrews and seconded by Judge Macierowski to accept the Probable Cause Panel's finding of no probable cause and recommendation of dismissing the complaint. The motion passed by a 9-0 vote. The complaint was dismissed.

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

No business was brought before the Committee on this agenda item.

IV. GAL Pre-Service Training Update

Susan Hamilton reported that links to register for the online GAL pre-service training were placed on the Division of Public Defender Services website and this Committee's home page at the end of August. Qualified individuals who are interested in taking the pre-service training can now do and self-certify their completion. The Division of Public Defender Services also can verify that each participant has completed the 20 hours of training in its entirety.

As of this date, 10 individuals have signed up for the training. One has completed the training and their progress is currently being verified by the Division of Public Defender Services. The other 9 individuals are in various stages of completing the training.

Susan Hamilton will continue to keep the Committee apprised of how the online training process is going.

V. 2022 Request for Updated Information from Individuals on the List of Persons Qualified to Serve as a GAL/AMC

Damon Goldstein reported that the email sent annually to request updated information from all active GALs/AMCs will be sent out on November 18. A reminder email will be sent on December 9 and all responses will be due by December 16.

Also, every 3 years, Connecticut Practice Book Rules 25-62(c)(1) and 25-62A(c)(1) state that individuals deemed eligible to be appointed as a guardian ad litem or attorney in family matters must "certify that they have completed twelve hours of relevant training within the past three years, three hours of which must be in ethics". This information was last requested of all

GALs/AMCs in 2019 and, since it has been 3 years, will be requested again this year as a part of the email that will be going out.

Finally, a question will be added to this year's email asking individuals to indicate if they are fluent in a language other than English. New GALs/AMCs are asked this question for the benefit of the public and the court when they complete their per-service training. The hope is that any existing GALs/AMCs who have not indicated that they are fluent in a language other than English will do so as part of the annual update.

VI. GALs/AMCs Who Speak a Language Other Than English

As mentioned in the previous agenda item, a question will be added to this year's email requesting updated information from all active GALs/AMCs that asks individuals to indicate if they are fluent in a language other than English.

VII. Schedule of Future Meetings

The next meeting of the Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters will be held January 9, 2023 at 2:00 PM.

VIII. Such Other Matters as may Properly Come Before the Standing Committee

No other matters were brought before the Committee.

Justine Rakich-Kelly moved, and Bryan Cafferelli seconded, a motion to adjourn the meeting. The Committee approved the motion by a 9-0 vote. Judge Albis adjourned the meeting at 2:59 PM.