

Minutes
Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and
Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters
March 25, 2021

The Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters met remotely via Microsoft Teams on March 25, 2021. The meeting was convened by the chair in Courtroom 407 at 1 Court Street, Middletown, Connecticut and live streamed to the public on YouTube.

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

Absent: No members were absent

Also in attendance were Attorney Michael Bowler, Counsel to the Standing Committee, and Attorney Damon Goldstein and Ms. Lauren Orlowski from the Judicial Branch's Court Operations Unit.

The meeting was called to order at 2:01PM by Judge Albis. Attorney Susan Hamilton joined the meeting at 2:03 PM.

I. Review and Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Liza Andrews and seconded by Danielle Rado to approve the minutes from the meeting held on January 21, 2021. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0 with Judge Jennifer Macierowski abstaining.

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

At 2:04 PM, in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes §1-200(6)(a), Danielle Rado moved, and Justine Rakich-Kelly seconded, to enter executive session to discuss complaints for removal of guardians ad litem. The Committee approved going into executive session by a 6-0 vote, with one member abstaining. Judge Michael Albis recused himself from the executive session and the consideration of any complaints discussed therein and designated Danielle Rado as acting chair. Judge Albis then excused himself from the meeting. Michael Bowler, Damon Goldstein and Lauren Orlowski were asked by the Committee to remain present for the executive session.

A motion was made by Bryan Cafferelli, and seconded by Mark Korber, to end the executive session. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0 with Judge Michael Albis abstaining, and absent from the executive session. The executive session concluded and the Committee reconvened in open session at 2:18 PM.

a. Complaint 1 (21-0001)

A motion was made by Mark Korber, and seconded by Bryan Cafferelli, to accept the Probable Cause Panel's finding of no probable cause and recommendation of dismissing the first complaint in question. The motion passed by a 7-0 vote with Judge Michael Albis abstaining, and absent from the vote. The complaint was dismissed.

Following the vote on the complaint, Judge Albis rejoined the meeting.

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

a.) Elise Cousineau

Attorney Elisa Cousineau was removed from the active list because she did not respond to an email sent to her in 2015. Attorney Cousineau emailed a request to be reinstated to the active list on February 11, 2021. Attorney Cousineau meets all the requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62.

After a brief discussion by the participating Committee members, Mark Korber moved, and Justine Rakich-Kelly seconded, that Attorney Cousineau be reinstated to the active list. The Committee approved the reinstatement by an 8-0 vote.

b.) Jill Alward

Attorney Jill Alward was removed from the active list because she did not respond to an email sent to her in 2019. Attorney Alward emailed a request to be reinstated to the active list on March 18, 2021. Attorney Alward meets all the requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62.

After a brief discussion by the participating Committee members, Danielle Rado moved, and Mark Korber seconded, that Attorney Alward be reinstated to the active list. The Committee approved the reinstatement by an 8-0 vote.

IV. Pre-service Training

Susan Hamilton led the discussion, providing an update regarding the Subcommittee's preparations the pre-service training tentatively scheduled to be held later this year for prospective Guardians Ad Litem and Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters. The Subcommittee will reconvene in April or May, at a date to be determined, then submit the final curriculum to the full Committee for approval.

V. 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 May 14, 2021 at 2 PM.

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

No other matters were brought before the Committee. Mark Korber moved, and Liza Andrews seconded, a motion to adjourn the meeting. The Committee approved the motion by an 8-0 vote. Judge Albis adjourned the meeting at 2:44 PM.