

Minutes  
Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and  
Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters  
June 19, 2018

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 June 19, 2018.

Those in attendance: Judge Elizabeth Bozzuto (Chair); Ms. Liza Andrews, Policy Director, CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence; Judge Edward Graziani; Attorney Danielle S. Rado; Attorney Susan Hamilton (designated by Attorney Christine Perra Rapillo)

Those participating by phone: Attorney Michael Cronin

Absent: Mr. Samuel S. Gray, Jr., President and CEO, Boys & Girls Clubs of Hartford; Mr. Stephen B. Carragher, Public Health Services Manager, Practitioner Licensing and Investigations Section, Department of Public Health; Attorney Justine Rakich-Kelly

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: 16 PM by Judge Bozzuto.

I. Review and Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Judge Graziani and seconded by Liza Andrews to approve the minutes from the meeting held on May 15, 2018. The motion passed unanimously and the minutes were approved.

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

a. Judge Lynda Munro

Judge Munro previously served as a Superior Court Judge and she facilitated and helped to design previous GAL/AMC trainings. She has since returned to private practice and is asking to be placed on the active GAL/AMC list.

After discussion, it was determined Attorney Goldstein would reach out to Judge Munro for her to confirm she has met the previously required training requirements in accordance with the current practice. Judge Bozzuto moved, and Danielle Rado seconded, that once Judge Munro had confirmed her participation in accordance with the current process, she would be an active GAL/AMC. The Committee approved the motion 5-1 with Michael Cronin opposed to the motion and three Committee members absent.

b. Attorney Joseph Auger

Attorney Auger was removed from the active list because he did not respond to an email sent to him on November 15, 2017. Attorney Auger emailed a request to be reinstated to the active list on June 11, 2018. Attorney Auger meets all the requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62.

After a brief discussion by the participating Committee members, Judge Bozzuto moved, and Sue Hamilton seconded, that Attorney Auger be reinstated to the active list. The Committee approved his reinstatement by a 6-0 vote with three Committee members absent.

c. Attorney Donald Meehan

Attorney Meehan was removed from the active list because he did not respond to an email sent to him on November 15, 2017. Attorney Meehan emailed a request to be reinstated to the active list on June 18, 2018. Attorney Meehan meets all the requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62.

After a brief discussion by the participating Committee members, Judge Bozzuto moved, and Sue Hamilton seconded, that Attorney Meehan be reinstated to the active list. The Committee approved his reinstatement by a 6-0 vote with three Committee members absent.

d. Attorney Nancy McMahan

Attorney McMahan was removed from the active list because she did not respond to an email sent to him on November 15, 2017. Attorney McMahan emailed a request to be reinstated to the active list on June 18, 2018. Attorney McMahan meets all the requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62.

After a brief discussion by the participating Committee members, Judge Bozzuto moved, and Sue Hamilton seconded, that Attorney McMahan be reinstated to the active list. The Committee approved her reinstatement by a 6-0 vote with three Committee members absent.

e. Attorney Thomas Fiorentino

Attorney Fiorentino was removed from the active list because he did not respond to an email sent to him on November 15, 2017. Attorney Fiorentino emailed a request to be reinstated to the active list on June 18, 2018. Attorney Fiorentino meets all the requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62.

After a brief discussion by the participating Committee members, Judge Bozzuto moved, and Sue Hamilton seconded, that Attorney Fiorentino be reinstated to the

active list. The Committee approved his reinstatement by a 6-0 vote with three Committee members absent.

f. Attorney Barbara Morelli

Attorney Morelli was removed from the active list because she did not respond to an email sent to her on November 15, 2017. Attorney Morelli emailed a request to be reinstated to the active list on June 18, 2018. Attorney Morelli meets all the requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62.

After a brief discussion by the participating Committee members, Judge Bozzuto moved, and Sue Hamilton seconded, that Attorney Morelli be reinstated to the active list. The Committee approved her reinstatement by a 6-0 vote with three Committee members absent.

g. Ms. Diane DeFronzo

The Committee was notified Ms. Diane DeFronzo is no longer accepting appointments as a GAL. Damon Goldstein will verify that she no longer wishes to take appointments and he will offer to remove her from active status if that is her request.

III. Report on the Pre-Service Training Held for New GALs/AMCs

Sue Hamilton reported to the Committee the pre-service training went well. The majority of participants attended all of the training sessions, with some cancelling prior to first day and one individual having to leave for a personal matter. It was recommended that the third day of training, consisting of administrative and courtroom processes, be moved to the first day in order for participants who are licensed mental health professionals to have a better awareness of what happens in court throughout the other training sessions. Feedback from participants was insightful in that future trainings could include a segment geared towards non-attorneys unaware of court procedure, separate from attorney participants.

The list of participants who successfully completed all three days of training will be sent to Damon Goldstein. He will email the participants to gather certain specifics (i.e. what languages they speak, which locations they will be active in) that will also ask them to certify the information provided, as required by Practice Book Section 25-62. Participants will also be reminded that they will need to annually respond to the email inquiring if they wish to continue on as active status.

Sue Hamilton informed the Committee that the Public Defender's Office is considering contracts for the next fiscal year beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>. Some attorneys interested in this work are not on the active list of persons eligible to serve as a GAL/AMC. Attorney Hamilton will give these attorneys a deadline to request reinstatement to GAL/AMC active status at which point the Committee will be provided a list of names. The Committee will vote electronically on reinstatement, which will require all Committee members to respond.

IV. Process for Removal of Individuals from List of Persons Qualified to Serve as a GAL/AMC

Judge Bozzuto reported Judicial Branch Legal Services and Attorney Mike Bowler had reviewed the Committee's proposal for a removal process and made suggestions. The Committee discussed the process with agreement on who has standing to bring a complaint, the standard, the burden of proof and the period of limitations. The Committee decided to schedule a future meeting with a representative from Legal Services and Attorney Bowler to assist with the process portion of the proposal.

V. 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 decided upon at a future date.

Judge Bozzuto adjourned the meeting at 3:28 PM