

Minutes  
Family Commission  
June 23, 2010

The Family Commission met in room 607L at the Middlesex Judicial District Courthouse located at 1 Court Street, Middletown, CT on June 23, 2010.

Those in attendance: Hon. Lynda B. Munro (Chair), Hon. Holly Abery-Wetstone, Hon. Sandra Sosnoff Baird, Hon. John D. Boland, Attorney Steven Dembo, Hon. Stephen F. Frazzini, Attorney Constance Frontis, Hon. Elaine Gordon, Johanna Greenfield, David Iaccarino, Attorney Maureen Murphy, Attorney Thomas Parrino.

Also in attendance were Attorney Joseph Del Ciampo and Attorney Nancy Porter from the Judicial Branch's Legal Services Unit.

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

I. Review and approval of minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on April 21, 2010 were approved by the members of the Commission who were in attendance.

II. Discussion of P.B. § 34a-21(c) & (d) of the juvenile rules

The topic was whether to adopt a family rule similar to P.B. § 34a-21(c) & (d), perhaps adapting the juvenile rule to family. The Commission would like to pursue a separate family rule, but the contexts of juvenile and family are too different to take the existing juvenile provisions and adapt them easily to family, so many suggested changes were proposed. Language was suggested and a proposal will be drafted and circulated to members of the Commission.

It was also raised for consideration that P.B. § 25-60 refers only to evaluations and studies by Family Relations, but perhaps should apply to other court-ordered studies as well.

III. Discussion of P.B. § 13-11(b)

The topic was whether P.B. § 13-11(b) should apply to family matters. The members of the Commission agreed that it would be beneficial to have some clarification. It was concluded that it was not appropriate for the rule as written to apply to family matters and that there should be a separate rule for family. Language was suggested and a proposal will be drafted and circulated to members of the Commission.

#### IV. Rule requiring GALs & AMCs to take the newly instituted training

Judge Munro will draft a proposal and circulate it to the members of the Commission looking toward an effective date of July 1, 2011. She indicated that the Branch is committed to co-sponsoring the GAL/AMC training. Questions were raised with regard to how a GAL would go about getting the court's attention on a matter, the role of the GAL, and the end date of the GAL's responsibility in a case. These issues will be discussed at a later date.

#### V. Preview of planning the family docket for the future

Judge Munro indicated that she has been discussing with members of Family Relations and Court Operations how to more meaningfully track family cases. These discussions have involved many topics including the use of meta-indicators, such as the identification of family violence (and there may be other useful meta-indicators as well); whether trial lists remain useful; the scheduling of court hearings/individual calendar scheduling for judges; the scheduling of dates for the parties to meet with family relations; the scheduling of meaningful pretrials at the right time, and the taking of same-day agreements. She indicated that there needs to be more discussion about how to handle discovery disputes.

Issues suggested for consideration by Commission members included:

- Management of cases post-judgment.
- Helping parties better understand the impact of their agreements.
- Coordination of multiple files involving the same parties.

Judge Munro will be meeting with Judge Quinn on these ideas first, then, if approved, she would bring them to the judges and then to bar groups.

#### VI. Such other matters that may come before the Commission

No other business was brought before the Commission.

#### VII. Next Meeting

The next meeting date is August 25, 2010.

Judge Munro adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.