

**Minutes**  
**Public Service and Trust Commission**  
**Self-represented Parties Workgroup**  
**July 21, 2010**

The Self-represented Parties Workgroup met on Wednesday, July 21, 2010, at 3:30pm in Conference Room 204 at 225 Spring Street, Wethersfield, CT.

Those in attendance: Hon. Elizabeth A. Bozzuto (Chair), Hon. Raymond Norko (Chair), Hon. Henry S. Cohn, Attorney Jeffrey Mickelson, Ms. Krista Hess

Meeting was called to order at 3:40pm.

1. The minutes of May 26, 2010 meeting were approved.

2. Discussion regarding Unbundling Proposal

The draft unbundling proposal was presented to the Workgroup. A discussion ensued pertaining to the benefits of the unbundling program and whether there would be a pilot location or roll out statewide. Krista Hess mentioned that many of the pilot programs in other states have limited jurisdiction. Judge Norko recommended that the unbundling program be piloted statewide. Unbundling would include training for attorneys. Suggestions for training were in the form of seminars or possibly a tutorial posted on the website, but agreed that some form of training would be necessary for participation.

A question was raised as to why the proposal was written as a pilot as opposed to a rule change. After much discussion the suggestion was made to change the comment on page one in "The Workgroup recommends that the Commentary to Rule 1.2(c)", to read: "*Rules 1.2 and 6.5 shall not prohibit the Superior Court by vote of the judges from establishing limited scope representation,*" for this pilot.

3. Expansion of Volunteer Attorney Program

- a. Fifteen volunteer attorneys have signed up for the next round in the Hartford Judicial District, starting September 8<sup>th</sup> through May 24<sup>th</sup> (running 9 months). Schedules have not been completed yet.
- b. Fifteen volunteer attorneys have signed up for the new program in Waterbury which begins September 10<sup>th</sup> through February 25<sup>th</sup>. Judge Bozzuto will be conducting an informal meeting Monday, August 2<sup>nd</sup> during lunch recess. Krista Hess and two volunteers from the Hartford program, Jeff Mickelson and Amy Horowitz, will be present to promote the program and answer any questions.

Judge Bozzuto asked about those who did not wish to participate in the program again and suggested that the committee inquire why. Jeff Mickelson commented that the volume of other volunteer programs can over-extend the attorneys, but asked Krista Hess for a list of those attorneys not participating again.

Attorney Jeff Mickelson was asked about his experience in the program. He replied it was 90% satisfying and enjoyable. With divorce filings up by 11%, the volume of self-represented parties seeking advice was more than he anticipated.

Statistics from the volunteer attorney advice day program will be included in the unbundling proposal.

An issue was raised for when an attorney provides advice to a husband and later provides advice to the wife in a divorce or support case; would this be considered a conflict of interest. Krista Hess read Practice Book, Rule 6.5 which states; attorneys providing limited legal services under non-profit or court sponsored programs are not required to systemically screen for a conflict of interest.

4. Discussion regarding expansion of Greeter Program

- a. Milford program will be starting on August 10<sup>th</sup>, running every Tuesday and Wednesday mornings from 9:00 to 10:30am.
  - i. Two greeters – Amy Smith (office clerk) and Jim Quinn (chief clerk)
- b. Choosing locations that do not have public information desks
- c. Waiting to hear from Norwich GA
- d. Continuing in New Haven
- e. Proposed having a greeter for Hartford Judicial District

5. Other Business

**Family Support Magistrate Video Advisement of Rights** – Spanish version has been recorded; need to select pilot site, Bridgeport was suggested.

**Videos for self-represented parties:** The English versions of the videos are being recorded on the following dates:

- a. *Uncontested Divorce* – recorded 7/16/2010
- b. *Filing for Divorce* – record on 7/28/2010
- c. *Apply for a Temporary Restraining Order* – record end of August
- d. Requests for Polish and Spanish for all above

Notices should be posted in the courthouses about the videos.

**ADR** – met with Roberta Palmer, identified current ADR programs that the Branch has namely; Court Annexed Mediation, Foreclosure Mediation Program, Family Relations Mediation, Housing Specialists Mediation and Juvenile Mediation. Plain language publications in English and Spanish will be developed for these programs to be posted in non-judicial locations.

6. Future Meeting

Future meeting date to be determined.

Meeting adjourned 4:30pm.