

Minutes
Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and
Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters
March 3, 2025

The Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters met on March 3, 2025. The meeting was convened by the Chair in Center Court at 95 Washington Street, Hartford, Connecticut.

Those in attendance: Judge Leo Diana (Chair); Attorney Bryan Cafferelli; Attorney Renee Cimino (designated by the Chief Public Defender); Attorney Nisa Khan; Attorney Justine Rakich-Kelly

Absent: Judge Jennifer Macierowski; Ms. Liza Andrews, Policy Director, CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence; Attorney Edward Bryan; Mr. Stephen B. Carragher, Public Health Services Manager, Practitioner Licensing and Investigations Section, Department of Public Health

Also in attendance were Ms. Barbara Cass, Senior Advisor to the Commissioner for Long Term Care, Department of Public Health; Attorney Grace Palo, Assistant Bar Counsel; Attorney Damon Goldstein and Ms. Nicole Collins from the Judicial Branch's Court Operations Unit.

The meeting was called to order at 2:06 PM by Judge Diana.

I. Review and Approval of the Minutes

A motion was made by Justine Rakich-Kelly and seconded by Bryan Cafferelli to approve the minutes from the meeting held on January 6, 2025. The motion passed by a 4-0 vote with Nisa Khan abstaining and four members absent.

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

At 2:07 PM, in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes §1-200(6), Bryan Cafferelli moved, and Justine Rakich-Kelly seconded, to enter executive session to discuss complaints for removal of guardians ad litem. Barbara Cass was asked by the Committee to remain present for the executive session.

A motion was made by Bryan Cafferelli and seconded by Justine Rakich-Kelly to conclude the executive session. The motion passed by a 5-0 vote with four members absent. The Committee reconvened in open session at 2:16 PM.

a. Complaint #24-0009

A motion was made by Bryan Cafferelli and seconded by Nisa Khan to accept the Probable Cause Panel's findings of no probable cause and recommendation of

dismissing the complaint. The motion passed by a 4-0 vote with Justine Rakich-Kelly abstaining and four members absent. The complaint was dismissed.

b. Complaint #24-0012

A motion was made by Bryan Cafferelli and seconded by Nisa Khan to accept the Probable Cause Panel's findings of no probable cause and recommendation of dismissing the complaint. The motion passed by a 4-0 vote with Justine Rakich-Kelly abstaining and four members absent. The complaint was dismissed.

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

a. Attorney C. Michael Budlong

Attorney Budlong was removed from the active list in September 2015 because there was no reply to a request for updated information. Attorney Budlong emailed a request to be reinstated on the active list on February 21, 2025. Attorney Budlong meets all the requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62(b).

After a brief discussion by the participating Committee members, Bryan Cafferelli moved and Justine Rakich-Kelly seconded, that Attorney Budlong be reinstated to the active list. The Committee approved the reinstatement by a 5-0 vote with four members absent.

b. Attorney Jodie Oshana

Attorney Oshana was removed from the active list in January 2020 because the committee did not receive her response to its annual request for updated information. Attorney Oshana emailed a request to be reinstated on the active list on February 19, 2025. Attorney Oshana meets all the requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62(b).

After a brief discussion by the participating Committee members, Bryan Cafferelli moved and Nisa Khan seconded, that Attorney Oshana be reinstated to the active list. The Committee approved the reinstatement by a 4-0 vote with Justine Rakich-Kelly abstaining and four members absent.

c. Attorney Edward J. Joy

Attorney Joy was removed from the active list in January 2021 because the committee did not receive his response to its annual request for updated information. Attorney Joy emailed a request to be reinstated on the active list on March 3, 2024. Attorney Joy meets all requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62(b).

After a brief discussion by the participating Committee members, Bryan Cafferelli moved and Justine Rakich-Kelly seconded, that Attorney Joy be reinstated to the active list. The Committee approved the reinstatement by a 5-0 vote with four members absent.

IV. Revisions to Connecticut Practice Book Rule Section 25-62(b)(1)

Damon Goldstein distributed the final proposed revisions to Practice Book Rule Section 25-62(b) as advanced by the Rules Committee for public hearing for the Committee's review. Following the public hearing in May, the Rules Committee will decide whether to advance the proposed changes for consideration at the annual meeting of Superior Court Judges in June.

V. Review and Possible Revisions to the Procedures by Which an Individual May be Removed from the List of Those Deemed Eligible for Appointment as a Guardian Ad Litem or Attorney for the Minor Child in Family Matters

Grace Palo distributed to the members of the Committee an updated draft of the proposed revisions to the procedures by which an individual may be removed from the active GAL/AMC for their review. Further discussion on the proposed revisions were tabled until the next meeting.

VI. 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 on Monday May 5, 2025 at 2:00 PM.

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

Damon Goldstein introduced Barbara Cass who will serve as a member of the GAL/AMC Standing Committee effective April 18th. Barbara will be the representative for the Department of Public Health replacing Stephen Carragher

Justine Rakich-Kelly moved, and Judge Diana seconded, a motion to adjourn the meeting. The Committee approved the motion by a 5-0 vote with four members absent. Judge Diana adjourned the meeting at 2:47 PM.