

Minutes
Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and
Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters
June 17, 2024

The Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters met on June 17, 2024. The meeting convened by the chair in Courtroom B-1 at 90 Washington Street, Hartford, Connecticut.

Those in attendance: Judge Leo Diana (Chair); Ms. Liza Andrews, Policy Director, CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence; Attorney Edward Bryan; Attorney Renee Cimino (designated by the Chief Public Defender); Attorney Justine Rakich-Kelly; Attorney Nisa Khan; Mr. Stephen B. Carragher, Public Health Services Manager, Practitioner Licensing and Investigations Section, Department of Public Health

Absent: Judge Jennifer Macierowski; Attorney Bryan Cafferelli

Also in attendance were Attorney Jennifer Gagosz, First 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 2:01 PM by Judge Diana.

I. Review and Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Liza Andrews and seconded by Edward Bryan to approve the minutes from the meeting held on April 22, 2024. The motion passed by a 5-0 vote with Justine Rakich-Kelly and Nisa Khan abstaining and two members absent.

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

At 2:02 PM, in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes §1-200(6), Justine Rakich-Kelly moved, and Liza Andrews seconded, to enter executive session to discuss complaints for removal of guardians ad litem. Judge Diana recused himself from the executive session and left Courtroom B-1 for the discussion of Complaint #23-0007, Complaint #24-0004, Complaint #24-0005 and Complaint #24-0006. Upon completion of the discussion of the four complaints, Judge Diana rejoined the executive session for the discussion of the remaining complaints. A motion was made by Justine Rakich-Kelly and seconded by Judge Diana to conclude the executive session. The motion passed by a 7-0 vote with two members absent. The Committee reconvened in open session at 2:15 PM.

a. Complaint #23-0007

A motion was made by Liza Andrews and seconded by Edward Bryan to accept the Probable Cause Panel's findings of no probable cause and recommendation of dismissing the complaint. The motion passed by 6-0 vote with Judge Diana abstaining and two members absent. The complaint was dismissed.

b. Complaint #24-0002

A motion was made by Liza Andrews and seconded by Justine Rakich-Kelly to accept the Probable Cause Panel's findings of no probable cause and recommendation of dismissing the complaint. The motion passed by a 7-0 vote with two members absent. The complaint was dismissed.

c. Complaint #24-0003

A motion was made by Justine Rakich-Kelly and seconded by Edward Bryan to accept the Probable Cause Panel's findings of no probable cause and recommendation of dismissing the complaint. The motion passed by a 7-0 vote with two members absent. The complaint was dismissed.

d. Complaint #24-0004

A motion was made by Liza Andrews 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 5-0 vote with Judge Diana and Justine Rakich-Kelly abstaining and two members absent. The complaint was dismissed.

e. Complaint #24-0005

A motion was made by Liza Andrews and seconded by Renee Cimino 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 Judge Diana, Justine Rakich-Kelly and Edward Bryan abstaining and two members absent. The complaint was dismissed.

f. Complaint #24-0006

A motion was made by Nisa Khan and seconded by Renee Cimino 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 Judge Diana, Justine Rakich-Kelly and Edward Bryan abstaining and two members absent. The complaint was dismissed.

g. Complaint #24-0007

A motion was made by Liza Andrews 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 7-0 vote with two members absent. The complaint was dismissed.

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

a. Attorney Michael Cartier

Attorney Cartier was removed from the active list in January 2019 because the committee did not receive his response to its annual request for updated information. Attorney Cartier emailed a request to be reinstated on the active list on May 7, 2024. Attorney Cartier meets all requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62(b).

After a brief discussion by the participating Committee members, Edward Bryan moved and Justine Rakich-Kelly seconded, that Attorney Cartier be reinstated to the active list. The Committee approved the reinstatement by a 7-0 vote with two members absent.

b. Christina Torres

Ms. Torres emailed an inquiry on April 30, 2024 asking if Board Certified Behavior Analysts can serve as guardians ad litem in family matters after successfully completing the required pre-service training? After a discussion among the Committee members, it was agreed that Board Certified Behavior Analysts are not listed as one of the mental health professions currently eligible to serve as a guardian ad litem in family matters pursuant to Practice Book Section 25-62(b)(1). Therefore, Board Certified Behavioral Analysts cannot serve as guardians ad litem in family matters.

IV. GAL Pre-Service Training

On behalf of the Training Subcommittee, Justine Rakich-Kelly informed the rest of the Committee that the GAL pre-service training is scheduled to begin in September 2024 and will be held virtually. The Training Subcommittee has secured faculty for each training session and is in the process of finalizing the training schedule.

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 on Monday August 26, 2024 at 2:00 PM.

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

No other matters were brought before the Committee.

Justine Rakich-Kelly moved, and Renee Cimino seconded, a motion to adjourn the meeting. The Committee approved the motion by a 7-0 vote with two members absent. Judge Diana adjourned the meeting at 2:41 PM.