

Minutes
Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and
Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters
May 5, 2025

The Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters met on May 5, 2025. The meeting was convened by the Chair in Center Court at 95 Washington Street, Hartford, Connecticut.

Those in attendance: Judge Leo Diana (Chair); Judge Jennifer Macierowski; Attorney Bryan Cafferelli; Attorney Renee Cimino (designated by the Chief Public Defender); Attorney Justine Rakich-Kelly; Attorney Edward Bryan; Ms. Rachel Boucher, Clinical Director, CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence; Ms. Barbara Cass, Senior Advisor to the Commissioner for Long Term Care, Department of Public Health

Absent: Attorney Nisa Khan

Also in attendance were Attorney Damon Goldstein and Ms. Nicole Collins from the Judicial Branch's Court Operations Unit.

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

Damon Goldstein began the meeting by welcoming two new committee members, Ms. Rachel Boucher and Ms. Barbara Cass.

I. Review and Approval of the Minutes

A motion was made by Justine Rakich-Kelly and seconded by Judge Macierowski to approve the minutes from the meeting held on March 3, 2025. The motion passed by a 7-0 vote with Edward Bryan abstaining and one member absent.

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

At 2:08 PM, in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes §1-200(6), Justine Rakich-Kelly moved, and Edward Bryan seconded, to enter executive session to discuss complaints for removal of guardians ad litem and agenda item V, GAL/AMC Application and Annual Review Process.

A motion was made by Justine Rakich-Kelly and seconded by Edward Bryan to conclude the executive session. The motion passed by a 8-0 vote with one member absent. The Committee reconvened in open session at 2:26 PM.

a. Complaint #24-0011

A motion was made by Bryan Cafferelli 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 Justine Rakich-Kelly abstaining and one member absent. The complaint was dismissed.

b. Complaint #24-0014

A motion was made by Judge Macierowski 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 6-0 vote with Justine Rakich-Kelly and Edward Bryan abstaining and one member absent. The complaint was dismissed.

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

a. Attorney Polina Bodner Shapiro

Attorney Shapiro was removed from the active list in January 2019 because the committee did not receive her response to its annual request for updated information. Attorney Shapiro emailed a request to be reinstated on the active list on March 14, 2025. Attorney Shapiro meets all the requirements of Practice Book 25-62(b).

After a brief discussion by the participating Committee members, Justine Rakich-Kelly moved and Edward Bryan seconded, that Attorney Shapiro be reinstated to the active list. The Committee approved the reinstatement by an 8-0 vote with one member absent.

b. Attorney Tracie Molinaro

Attorney Molinaro was removed from the active list in January 2025 because the committee did not receive her response to its annual request for updated information. Attorney Molinaro emailed a request to be reinstated on the active list on April 7, 2025. Attorney Molinaro meets all the requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62 (b).

Following discussion by the participating Committee members, Justine Rakich-Kelly moved, and Judge Macierowski seconded, that Attorney Molinaro be reinstated to the active list. The Committee approved the reinstatement by a 7-1 vote with one member absent.

IV. 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

This agenda item was tabled and will be discussed at the next scheduled meeting.

V. GAL/AMC Application and Annual Review Process

This agenda item was discussed by the Committee during the executive session following agenda item II.

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, June 2, 2025 at 3:00 PM.

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

No other matters were brought before the Committee.

Justine Rakich-Kelly moved, and Edward Bryan seconded, a motion to adjourn the meeting. The Committee approved the motion by a 8-0 vote with one member absent. Judge Diana adjourned the meeting at 2:50 PM.