

# Chief Child Protection Commission MEETING MINUTES

**Thursday, May 18, 2006**

5:30pm 30 Trinity St., 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room

In the absence of the required Commission members, no formal meeting was held and no votes were cast as the quorum was unable to be reached. However, a discussion was had with the parties present to prepare an agenda for the next meeting.

Present: Carolyn Signorelli, Esq.; Judge Michael Mack; Judge John Turner;  
Susan Cousineau, Esq.; Christine Gio, Esq.; Professor Paul Chill;  
Susan Forbes, Adm. Serv. Coordinator

Absent:

The following is an outline of the discussions:

- Carolyn discussed the new hires for the department with their backgrounds;
- Set up meeting with Cynthia Cunningham to establish a point person in each court to specifically send us the attorney assignment request;
- Sue Cousineau suggested some sort of attorney conflict check system when assigning an attorney to a case – Possibly include this in the Standards of Practice;
- Computer database issues: PD IT cannot handle the large database we require. Can we obtain the program from Judicial and have their help;
- Will the Leaser hold the space for us until January?;
- Carolyn work with Judge Barbara Quinn, give her lead time of 3 months;
- Judge Mack stated they can put a link on the Judicial Website to our office;
- Change the word “current” regarding Quorum in the By Laws;
- Chair person duties? – signing documents, sending letters not appointed to Commission;
- Can Commission members participate via Conference call? Can they vote via conference call?;

Discussion regarding Standards – Children

- Role of GAL v. Attorney for Child;
- Approve seminar participation as CLE credits;
- Mandatory attendance of seminars;
- Scholarship for an attorney to attend other workshops then come back and share it with the other attorneys as a presentation;
- Phase in pre-service training as a prerequisite before getting a contract;

- Allow for more experienced attorneys to use their experience as the prerequisite to obtain the initial contract then subsequently make seminars mandatory;
- There will be a public meeting May 22, 2006 regarding the changes to the Rules of Professional Conduct (100 pages) Note: Significant changes to Rule 1.14;
- Possibly adopt Uniform State Laws of Representation of Children at this time it is not automatic but by choice;
- Supreme Court Case - Lawyer appointed by court given immunity - Definition of advocate for the "Courts" best interest as opposed to the child's (RE: Carruba?) "Best Interest" ambiguous;
- Question of maximum and minimum cases allowed per solo practitioner & how many court locations they will be allowed to have;
- Consideration of the quality of representation to # of cases an individual can handle;
- Attorneys covering for other attorneys – question of confidentiality or absence of conflict checks;
- As part of the contract have the attorney present a substantial plan for coverage (not boiler plate);
- Establish some sort of attorney attendance tracking system i.e.: who is not showing up or having a lot of other attorneys covering their cases;
- Propose, review and agree the role of the GAL & Attorney for the minor child;
- The attorney must ask the Judge to define the role in each case for the child as well as the parent;
- Expand scope of Representation Refer to #10 and 11 of Standards for Children; those who age out or agree to services still need representation;
- Give some place for older kids to turn to ask for representation;
- Establish 2 small working groups, approx 4-5 people to review the standards 1) group for children 2) the other for parents;
- Paul Chill has agreed to chair the Parents Group, Sue Cousineau stated she will join this group;
- Ask the following individuals (email) if they would like to chair the Child Group:
  - Art Webster
  - David Stone
  - Fred Brenneman (sp?)
  - Representative from Martha Stone Office
  - Lynn Cochran
  - John Kelly
  - Mildred Duty
  - Ray Rigat
  - Carolyn Kaas – Qunnipiac
  - George Duhaime
- Commission to review draft put the draft Standards on the website for 2 weeks and give the attorneys the opportunity to email comments from July 15<sup>th</sup> - Aug 1<sup>st</sup>;
- Commission members to review comments aim for finalization of Standards for September 1<sup>st</sup>;
- Training has been scheduled for 1 day in September 2006 and 1 day in October 2006;

- The Commission to comments with final approval of the Attorney Application - send via email to members and include out website address;
- Explain #7;
- Explain #10 – put word “approximately”;
- Make both Children and Parents Standards format the same;
- Next meeting June 15, 2006;