

STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN
FAMILY LAW SECTION COUNCIL

Date: April 1, 2023
Location: Weber's Inn, Ann Arbor, MI
Time: 9:30 AM

MINUTES

I. Administrative Matters

A. Attendees

1. *Council members present:* Shelly Kester (Chair, non-voting), Kristen Robinson (Chair-Elect), Liisa Speaker (Treasurer), Don Wheaton (Corresponding Secretary), Josh Pease (Recording Secretary), Peter Kulas-Dominguez, Steve Heisler, Alicia Storm, Mat Kobliska, Cara Willing, Hon. Carla Testani, Jim Chryssikos, Randy Pitler, Michelle Letourneau, Gail Towne, Kristen Wolfram, Jordan Ahlers
2. *Council members absent:* Keela Johnson, Amy Spilman, Julie Griffiths, Steve Reinheimer, Sean Blume
3. *Ex officio:* Liz Bransdorfer, Traci Rink, Susan Paletz, Kent Weichmann, Liz Sadowski
4. *Section Members:* Ron Foon, Peter Conway, Maria Hoebeke
5. *Guests:* Stephanie Johnson

B. Chair Kester called the meeting to order at 9:31 AM and found quorum with 16 council members present.

C. *Chair Report:* No report.

D. *Recording Secretary:* Pease moved to approve minutes from the March meeting, and Speaker seconded. The motion passed by acclamation.

E. *Corresponding Secretary:* Wheaton is working on the section blurb for the next bar journal

F. *Treasurer*: No report.

II. Key Committee Reports

A. *Legislative Committee*: Regarding SB 83, Chryssikos moved to support the concept of extreme risk protection orders but opposed SB 83 as drafted, and Wheaton seconded. The motion passed 14-1-1 (Testani). Chryssikos moved to support the two packages of child marriage bills (HBs 4293-4301 and SBs 209-217), and Wheaton seconded. The motion passed 9-5-2 (Testani and Willing). Chryssikos moved to oppose the package of bills criminalizing gender transition procedures for minors (HBs 4257-4260), and Pitler seconded. The motion passed 15-0-1 (Testani). Stephanie Johnson reported that the surrogacy bills are likely to be introduced very soon and that the dedicated family court bills may also be introduced in the near future.

B. *Amicus*: The amicus brief in *Pueblo v Haas* was filed, and oral argument is April 4.

C. *Court Rules*: Kulas-Dominguez moved to support ADM File No 2021-30 (confidentiality for complainants in JTC proceedings), and Wheaton seconded. The motion passed 10-3-2 (Testani and Kulas-Dominguez). The committee is also considering ADM File No 2021-10 (stylistic changes to the Michigan Rules of Evidence) and is looking at potential proposals regarding joint petition and fee waiver courts rules.

D. *Dedicated Family Court*: Bransdorfer and Hon. Tina Yost Johnson met with Justices Cavanagh and Bolden regarding proposed court rules. The justices did not express disagreement with the ideas in the court rules and were open to a combination of court rules and legislation. Chief Justice Clement publicly stated that family court judges should know family law.

III. Standing Committee Reports

A. *Adoption*: No report.

B. *ADR/Collaborative*: There are some upcoming collaborative divorce trainings.

C. *Annual Meeting*: The annual meeting will be Sunday, September 10 in Detroit.

D. *CLE/ICLE*: No FLI schedule yet.

- E. *Domestic Violence*: The committee submitted a written report with no action items.
- F. *Family Court Forum*: No report.
- G. *Family Law Journal*: No report.
- H. *Family Law Journal Advertising*: No report.
- I. *Family Support*: SCAO is reviewing comments they've received.
- J. *Member Education and Public Relations*: The committee is done with webinars for a few months other than joining with the LGBTQ+ Section for an upcoming roundtable regarding *Obergefell*. The committee did a presentation at MSU Law.
- K. *Membership*: The committee is looking into doing a Lugnuts game in July.
- L. *Midsummer/Midwinter*: Robinson is looking for locations for the 2024 midwinter. There is a full-page ad for midsummer in the family law journal. Midsummer is still looking for a few sponsors. Wheaton moved to submit a contract with Shepler's Ferry Company to the State Bar for Approval. Heisler made a friendly amendment to extend the dates of the ferry discount to include the same dates of discount for midsummer. Wheaton accepted the friendly amendment, and Letourneau seconded the motion. The motion passed 15-0-1 (Heisler).
- M. *PAC*: No report.
- N. *QDRO/Taxation*: No report.
- O. *Technology/Social Media*: No report.

IV. Ad Hoc Committee Reports

- A. *Court Administration and Procedure*: No report.
- B. *GAL Committee*: Johnson has started a spreadsheet of who is writing which chapter. The committee is discussing trainings for GALs.
- C. *SCAO Child Support*: No report.

D. *SCAO Forms*: No report.

E. *Shared Parenting*: No report.

F. *Parental Education*: No report.

G. *SDNL*: The committee will begin drafting proposed language at the next meeting.

V. Liaison Reports

A. *Children's Law Section*: MPJA reached out to Pease and to Dion Roddy about a proposal for amending the step-parent adoption statute. This would have some of the same proposals, including the *AGD* fix, which were considered last year, but would be much more limited. Pease will be taking this to CLS for consideration. CLS has also been asked to look at amending the statute for Section 45 hearings.

B. *Committee on Civil Procedure and Courts*: No report.

C. *LGBTQA Section*: The first section journal will come out in November.

D. *Probate and Estate Planning Section*: No report.

E. *Board of Commissioners*: No report.

VI. New Business

A. Robinson announced that there will schedule changes for council meetings starting in September. The 2023-24 schedule will be as follows:

1. Sunday, September 10 at 9 AM (annual meeting) in Detroit
2. Saturday, October 21 at 9 AM in Traverse City
3. Friday, November 17 following FLI in Novi
4. Thursday, December 14 at 5 PM in Lansing
5. Thursday, January 25 at 5 PM by Zoom
6. Thursday, March 7 at 5 PM in Lansing
7. Sunday, April 7 at 9 AM in Grand Rapids
8. Friday, May 3 at 12 PM in Lansing
9. Saturday, June 1 at 9 AM in Detroit

VII. Announcements

- A. Speaker, Pease, Wolfram, and Hon. Tina Yost Johnson have all been appointed the Child Protective Legal Representation Task Force with the Michigan Supreme Court, which will be chaired by Justices Cavanagh and Bolden.

VIII. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 11:46 AM.