

STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN  
FAMILY LAW SECTION COUNCIL

Date: January 7, 2023  
Location: Sheraton, Novi, Michigan  
Time: 9:30 AM

**MINUTES**

**I. Administrative Matters**

**A. Attendees**

1. *Council members present:* Shelly Kester (Chair), Kristen Robinson (Chair-Elect), Liisa Speaker (Treasurer), Don Wheaton (Corresponding Secretary), Josh Pease (Recording Secretary), Keela Johnson, Steve Reinheimer, Steve Heisler, Sean Blume, Alicia Storm, Cara Willing, Hon. Carla Testani, Jim Chryssikos, Randy Pitler, Michelle Letourneau, Gail Towne, Amy Spilman, Kristen Wolfram, Julie Griffiths
2. *Council member absent:* Peter Kulas-Dominquez, Mat Kobliska
3. *Ex officio:* Liz Sadowski, Liz Bransdorfer, Amy Yu, Dick Halloran
4. *Section Members:* Dion Roddy, Jordan Ahlers, Lindsey DiCesare, Matt Catchick, Hon. Tina Yost Johnson, Hon. Kameshia Gant, Ruhul Mumen

B. Chair Kester called the meeting to order at 9:37 AM and found quorum with 19 council members present.

C. *Chair Report:* Committee chairs must provide Heisler the completed form for putting the committee information on the website. Kester will be resigning from her council seat after the Midwinter Conference, so there will be an election for a seat at the March meeting. Robinson will chair the Shared Parenting Committee. Kester will chair the Parental Education Committee. Kester wants committee chairs to write down their policies and procedures to pass to successors, and Storm will keep those policies and procedures. Kester created a liaison position for the American-Indian Law Section and names Yost Johnson as the liaison.

- D. *Recording Secretary*: Pease moved to approve minutes from the December meeting, and Wheaton seconded. Motion passed by acclamation.
- E. *Corresponding Secretary*: SBM has not been publishing the section blurbs which Wheaton has been sending.
- F. *Treasurer*: No report.

## II. Key Committee Reports

### A. *Legislative Committee*: Three items:

- a. Chryssikos moved to create an ad hoc Public Notice of Pleadings Committee to review potential revisions to MCL 552.6a. Speaker seconded. The motion passed 19-0-0. Wheaton volunteered to chair the committee.
- b. Chryssikos moved to respond to an email from SBM Public Policy Counsel Nathan Triplett that council has no further concerns with HB 5340 (considered in the last legislative session). Wheaton seconded. The motion passed 18-0-1 (Speaker).
- c. Chryssikos moved council to find a Representative Assembly member to submit our position on age of judicial retirement (76 as mandatory retirement age) at the April Representative Assembly meeting. Blume seconded. The motion passed 18-1-0.

### B. *Amicus*: No report.

### C. *Court Rules*: Two items:

- a. Pease moved to support ADM File No. 2022-05 (asserting ineffective assistance of appellate counsel in termination of parental rights appeals). Speaker seconded. The motion passed 18-0-0.
- b. Pease moved to support ADM File No. 2022-34 (advice of appellate rights in juvenile delinquencies; extending time for requesting appellate counsel from 14 to 21 days in juvenile court proceedings). Wheaton seconded. Speaker made a friendly amendment to add MCR 3.993(F) which reads "If a party was denied the right to appellate review or the appointment of appellate counsel due to errors by the party's prior attorney or the court, or other factors outside the party's control, the trial court must issue an order restarting the time in which to file an appeal or request counsel, except that the court must not issue any order which would extend the time for appealing an order terminating parental rights beyond 63 days from entry

of the order terminating rights.” Pease and Wheaton accepted the friendly amendment. The motion passed 18-0-0.

- D. *Dedicated Family Court*: Council continues to send letters to the Governor’s office regarding appointments to open family division seats. Yost Johnson will be teaching at new judges’ school this year. Yost Johnson is working on a procedural fairness bill of rights. The committee has finished revising draft legislation received from Legislative Services Bureau. Speaker moved that council approve sending the revised drafts back to LSB. Pease seconded. The motion passed 19-0-0.

### III. Standing Committee Reports

- A. *Adoption*: No report.
- B. *ADR/Collaborative*: No report.
- C. *Annual Meeting*: No report.
- D. *CLE/ICLE*: ICLE will start planning the 2023 Family Law Institute very soon.
- E. *Domestic Violence*: No report.
- F. *Family Court Forum*: The committee is hoping to revive the forum in the future.
- G. *Family Law Journal*: Spilman requests policy that council members submit articles during the second year of their three-year terms.
- H. *Family Law Journal Advertising*: Status quo.
- I. *Family Support*: No report.
- J. *Member Education and Public Relations*: There are more than 100 registrants for the first webinar at 1/12. The committee is meeting with the LGBTQA Section to discuss a roundtable in the spring.
- K. *Membership*: The committee is working on putting together a presentation for law students at MSU. The committee is ordering new items to give out in the future.

- L. *Midsummer/Midwinter*: Registrants for Midwinter depart on 1/21. Details for 2024 Midwinter will go out in June. Midsummer is almost ready to publicize the roster of speakers and will hopefully submit forms to SBM before Midwinter. Solicitation materials for sponsors will go out immediately after Midwinter.
- M. *PAC*: Pitler will be contacting council members who are delinquent in contributing to PAC.
- N. *QDRO/Taxation*: No report.
- O. *Technology/Social Media*: The committee will do a survey regarding the Friday Funnies on the list serv. Discussion about creating a spreadsheet of contact information for council and committee members. Discussion about how to be removed as counsel of record in e-filing systems.

#### **IV. Ad Hoc Committee Reports**

- A. *Court Administration and Procedure*: No report.
- B. *GAL Committee*: No report.
- C. *SCAO Child Support*: The next meeting is 1/12.
- D. *SCAO Forms*: No notification yet of the April meeting.
- E. *Shared Parenting*: No report.
- F. *Parental Education*: No report.
- G. *SDNL*: No report

#### **V. Liaison Reports**

- A. *Children's Law Section*: Case law/court rules/statutes update on 1/12.
- B. *Committee on Civil Procedure and Courts*: No report.
- C. *LGBTQA Section*: No report.

D. *Probate and Estate Planning Section*: The section is experimenting with hybrid meetings.

E. *Board of Commissioners*: No report.

VI. **New Business**: Pease is meeting with MJI to discuss judicial training topics and is looking for topic suggestions to pass along. Kester would like an exploration of issues related to conflicts with clerk's offices, possibly through the Court Administration and Procedure ad hoc committee.

VII. **Adjournment**: Meeting adjourned at 12:35 PM.