

## OCA Nominating Committee Minutes

Meeting Minutes  
November 18, 2025  
5:00 – 8:00 pm

Date of meeting: Tuesday, November 18, 2025

Start time: 5:02 pm

End time: 5:22 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

| Member Votes |  | Present | Vote I* | Vote II |
|--------------|--|---------|---------|---------|
| 1            | <b>Kiame Mahaniah</b> – Secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) ( <i>Chair</i> )  | X       | X       | X       |
| 2            | <b>Staverne Miller</b> – Department of Children and Families (DCF) Commissioner  | X       | X       | X       |
| 3            | <b>Cecely Reardon</b> – Department of Youth Services (DYS) Commissioner  | X       | X       | X       |
| 4            | <b>Beth Lucas</b> – Department of Mental Health (DMH) Acting/Interim Commissioner  | X       | -       | -       |
| 5            | <b>Jennifer Valenzuela</b> – Children’s Trust, Executive Director  | X       | X       | X       |
| 6            | <b>Linda Sagor</b> – Pediatrician experienced in treating victims of child abuse, designated by the Mass Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics           | X       | X       | X       |
| 7            | <b>Neha Sharma</b> – Child Psychiatrist, designated by Mass. Psychiatric Society   | X       | -       | -       |
| 8            | <b>Margo Townsley</b> – Child Psychologist, designated Mass. Psychological Association   | X       | X       | X       |
| 9            | <b>Meri Viano</b> – Associate Director of the Parent/Professional Advocacy League (PPAL); Representative from Massachusetts Association for Mental Health (MAMH) | X       | X       | -       |
| 10           | <b>Rachel Gwaltney</b> – Representative of organization that advocates for children at risk of abuse designated by Children’s League of Mass (CLM)               | X       | X       | -       |

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| 11 | <b>Daniel Mahoney</b> – Attorney experienced in care and protection cases designated by the Mass. Bar Association  | X | X | X |
| 12 | <b>Sandra Best Bailly</b> – Social Worker designated by the Mass Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers                                     | X | - | - |
| 13 | <b>Kate Shea</b> - Representative of organized labor designated by the president of a collective bargaining unit that represents social workers (SEIU 509) | X | X | X |
| 14 | <b>Amy Nechtem</b> – Person with experience in the juvenile justice system designated by the Chief Justice of the Juvenile Court Department                | X | X | X |

\* (X) Voted in favor; (O) Opposed; (A) Abstained from vote; (-) Absent from meeting or during vote

The Nominating Committee convened its third meeting to continue to work on the selection process for the next Child Advocate. A quorum was confirmed.

#### **Call to Order & Approval of Minutes**

Secretary Mahaniah called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. Meeting minutes from the prior session were approved by rollcall vote following a motion by Commissioner Reardon and a second by Linda Sagor.

#### **Proceedings**

##### **Overview of the Interview Questions**

The submitted interview questions were presented to the Committee, and Thomas McCartney from human resources organized the submitted questions under existing competency areas. Members were given time to read the slides.

Secretary Mahaniah addressed the Committee sharing that now that the larger Nominating Committee has reviewed the submitted interview questions, the meeting could adjourn and the subcommittee members would go into Executive Session.

The two charges for the subcommittee include discussion of candidates and distilling the interview questions submitted by Committee members.

The date of the potential next meeting was shared as November 25, and additional information and the meeting agenda would be forthcoming.

#### **Adjournment**

Secretary Mahaniah requested a motion to adjourn. Daniel Mahoney made a motion and Jenn Valenzuela seconded the motion and approved by rollcall vote. The meeting was adjourned at 5:22 **p.m.** and the subcommittee went into Executive Session