

PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT INFO.:

Mayor-Elect Bob DaSilva: 401-569-3593

Mayor-Elect DaSilva Selects Probate Court Judge

EAST PROVIDENCE, RI — East Providence Mayor-Elect Bob DaSilva selects Maria Ferro-Deaton to serve as East Providence Probate Court judge.

Deaton has sat as the city’s Associate Probate Court judge since 2017 serving in instances where the Probate Judge is absent, sick or has a conflict.

As Probate Judge, Deaton will oversee the probate of wills; the granting of administration; motions for the appointment of custodians and guardians of persons and estates; name changes; and additional matters within the jurisdiction of Probate Court.

“As Probate Judge, Maria Deaton will bring to the bench years of experience and a deep commitment to justice which will serve this city and our community well,” DaSilva said. She understands the process, knows the law and most importantly, she’s devoted to the community we serve.”

Deaton is a founding partner with the Providence law firm Lynch & Pine where she represents individuals on a range of issues including civil, probate, family court and criminal matters.

Prior to joining the firm in 2011, she worked as a Special Assistant Attorney with the Rhode Island Attorney General’s Office serving as lead counsel in felony and misdemeanor jury trials. During her time with the AG’s office, Deaton worked in the Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Narcotics and Organized Crime Units. She also served as the designated firearms prosecutor.

Deaton also served as Assistant District Attorney for the Cape and Islands District Attorney’s Office from 1999 through 2006. During her time there she served as a specialized bilingual prosecutor and as the judicial liaison for the Portuguese-speaking community.

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Her appointment will serve as another avenue for Deaton, a long-time resident of East Providence, to give back to the city where she and her family first settled after immigrating to the United States from Cabo Verde in 1974.

When she's not in the courtroom, Deaton is educating others. She has shared her litigation knowledge with recruits at the RI State Police and Providence Police Municipal Academies as well as with citizens of the Barnstable and Sandwich Police Citizens Academies.

Deaton earned her Juris Doctorate in law from the New England School of Law and her Bachelor of Arts in political science from Providence College.

Christine Engustian, the city's current Probate Court judge, will continue her service to the community in her new role of Associate Probate Court judge.

"I am delighted that Associate Judge Engustian has accepted my offer to stay on board to serve both as a mentor to Judge Deaton and to continue in her service to the community as a whole," DaSilva added.

The appointments of Deaton and Engustian are subject to approval of the City Council at the Jan. 8, 2019 meeting.

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If you would like more information, please call Mayor-Elect Bob DaSilva at 401-569-3593.