JOSEPH DUNICAN

v.

ASHLEY CARRUTHERS

Submitted on Briefs November 25, 2024
Decided December 5, 2024

Panel: STANFILL, C.J., and HORTON, CONNORS, LAWRENCE, and DOUGLAS, JJ.

MEMORANDUM OF DECISION

Ashley Carruthers appeals from an order of the District Court (Biddeford, *Tice, J.*) determining parental rights and responsibilities for the parties' minor child. Carruthers challenges two of the court's findings of fact; however, because those findings are supported by competent record evidence, we find no error. *Emerson v. Laffan*, 2021 ME 53, ¶ 8, 263 A.3d 160; *Vibert v. Dimoulas*, 2017 ME 62, ¶ 15, 159 A.3d 325 ("We review the record, and reasonable inferences that may be drawn from the record, in the light most favorable to the trial court's judgment to determine if the findings are supportable by competent evidence." (alteration and quotation marks omitted)). Because we find that the court properly centered the child's "safety and well-being" in its best interest analysis and based its ultimate determination on evidence relevant to the statutory factors, we also find no abuse of discretion in the court's determination of parental rights and responsibilities. 19-A M.R.S. § 1653(3) (2024); *Doe v. Walsh*, 2023 ME 2, ¶ 7, 288 A.3d 787 ("Section 1653(3) affords the trial court broad discretion in making its best interest determination, so long as children's safety and well-being are central to the court's decision. . . . The critical test in determining the propriety of the exercise of judicial discretion is whether, under the facts and circumstances of the

particular case, it is in furtherance of justice." (citation and quotation marks omitted)). We thus affirm the trial court's order.

The entry is:

Judgment affirmed.

Ashley Carruthers, appellant pro se

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