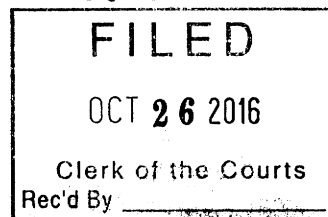


ADM2016-00039



THE TENNESSEE BOARD OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT

511 Union Street
Suite 600
Nashville, TN 37219

October 24, 2016

James M. Hivner, Clerk
100 Supreme Court Building
401 Seventh Avenue, North
Nashville, TN 37219-1407
615-253-1470

MEMBERS OF THE TENNESSEE BOARD OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT

Chris Craft
Chairperson

Timothy R. Discenza
Disciplinary Counsel

Patrick J. McHale
Assistant Disciplinary Counsel

Kenny Armstrong
Miles Burdine
Angelita B. Dalton

Joe F. Fowlkes
Tas Gardner
Dee Gay

J. Ronald Hickman
Chris A. Hodges
Thomas W. Lawless

Christy R. Little
Larry J. Logan
Norma Ogle
Ward Phillips
J. Michael Sharp
Dwight E. Stokes

FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

The Honorable Bill Anderson, Jr.
General Sessions Court Judge
Shelby County Justice Center
201 Poplar Ave., Suite LL-56
Memphis, TN 38103

RE: Board of Judicial Conduct Complaint
Board of Judicial Conduct No. B16-6435

Dear Judge Anderson:

This letter shall serve as a public letter of reprimand pursuant to your agreement with an investigative panel of this Board.

This matter involves an incident on December 20, 2015. You learned on December 19, 2015 that an acquaintance had been arrested and placed in the Bartlett, Tennessee jail. You made multiple telephone calls to learn if a bond had been set or if not, when a bond would be set. Having learned no information as of Sunday morning, December 20, you personally went to the Bartlett jail. There you learned that bail would be set the following day, Monday, December 21.

You disagreed with the Bartlett procedure for the setting of bond. One of the two Bartlett judges had died the previous week, and you asked the jailers at the Bartlett jail on that Sunday morning for the telephone number of the other/remaining Bartlett judge. The jailer in charge said the jail did not have the judge's number, and declined to check to

see if anyone else had it. Hence, and while still at the jail, you informed the jailer in charge that as a General Sessions Judge with Shelby County jurisdiction, you were setting bail for the acquaintance and the acquaintance was to be released on his own recognizance. The jailer declined to follow your directive.

Later on Sunday, after you had left the jail, you learned that bond had been set at \$10,000. Later you had a conversation with a Bartlett Municipal judge, and asked if the Bartlett Judge had knowledge that you had previously directed a release on recognizance. The Bartlett Judge declined to reduce the bond he had set.

The Canon or rules violated by the above-described conduct are therefore the following, as they were in effect at the time of the conduct:

CANON 1 — A JUDGE SHALL UPHOLD AND PROMOTE THE INDEPENDENCE, INTEGRITY, AND IMPARTIALITY OF THE JUDICIARY, AND SHALL AVOID IMPROPRIETY AND THE APPEARANCE OF IMPROPRIETY.

RULE 1.1 Compliance with the Law

A judge shall comply with the law, including the Code of Judicial Conduct.

RULE 1.2 Promoting Confidence in the Judiciary

A judge shall act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary, and shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety.

RULE 1.3 Avoiding Abuse of the Prestige of Judicial Office

A judge shall not abuse the prestige of judicial office to advance the personal or economic interests of the judge or others, or allow others to do so.

CANON 2 — A JUDGE SHALL PERFORM THE DUTIES OF JUDICIAL OFFICE IMPARTIALLY, COMPETENTLY, AND DILIGENTLY.

Rule 2.4 External Influences on Judicial Conduct

(B) A judge shall not permit family, social, political, financial, or other interests or relationships to influence the judge's judicial conduct or judgment.

Rule 2.5 Competence, Diligence, and Cooperation

(B) A judge shall cooperate with other judges and court officials in the administration of court business.

Rule 2.8 Decorum, Demeanor, and Communication with Jurors

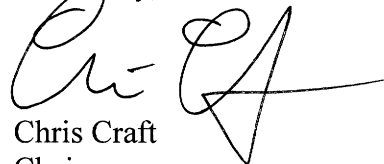
(B) A judge shall be patient, dignified, and courteous to litigants, jurors, witnesses, lawyers, court staff, court officials, and others with whom the judge deals in an official capacity, and shall require similar conduct of lawyers, court staff, court officials, and others subject to the judge's direction and control.

CANON 3 — A JUDGE SHALL CONDUCT THE JUDGE'S PERSONAL AND EXTRAJUDICIAL ACTIVITIES TO MINIMIZE THE RISK OF CONFLICT WITH THE OBLIGATIONS OF JUDICIAL OFFICE

Upon receiving notice from Disciplinary Counsel in this matter, you promptly and with candor responded and have fully cooperated with the Board of Judicial Conduct. You have fully and without hesitation or reservation complied with and assisted the Board of Judicial Conduct in addressing and resolving this matter. You do not have previous negative encounters with the Board of Judicial Conduct in your service as Judge since 2010.

Accordingly, this letter constitutes a Public Reprimand for your actions in the above matter, pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 17-5-301.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Craft", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chris Craft
Chairman

cc: Mr. James R. Garts, Jr.
Attorney at Law
369 North Main Street
Memphis, Tennessee 38103