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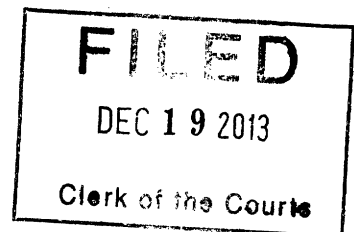
December 16, 2013

Michael W. Catalano, Clerk
100 Supreme Court Building
401 Seventh Avenue, North
Nashville, TN 37219-1407
615-253-1470

FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

The Honorable Connie Kittrell
132 West Main Street
Gallatin, Tennessee 37066

RE: Complaint
File No. B13-5454



Dear Judge Kittrell:

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

This reprimand relates to your duties as the Judge of the Municipal Court of Gallatin, Tennessee. You are the elected City Recorder of Gallatin, Tennessee, and the City Charter of Gallatin, Tennessee, provides that the elected City Recorder shall also sit as the Municipal Judge of Gallatin. As Municipal Judge your duties include the handling of traffic citations and city code violations, most of which are uncontested matters routinely handled by the Court Clerk and not you as the judge.

On February 25th, 2011, a traffic citation was issued to a person who was a close relative of yours, this relative being within the third degree of relationship with you. In the normal course of the Court's business, the Court Clerk is authorized to dismiss citations such as this if the cited person presents proof of registration and insurance. The assigned court date for this citation was on April 4, 2011, and this relative did not appear on this date and that person's status was changed by the clerk to Failure to Appear. A reminder letter was also sent to that relative on May 13, 2011, and the citation was placed in an office folder to be sent to the Tennessee Department of Safety for possible license suspension.

At some point prior to May 13, 2011, you learned that this relative did have insurance on the vehicle at the time the citation was issued (but lacked proof of the insurance at the time) and that the relative had obtained registration for the vehicle prior to the first court date. Based on that information, on August 12, 2012, you brought the ticket to an employee of the office and asked that it be dismissed and it was dismissed.

You have indicated that you never intended to confer a benefit on this relative by your dismissal of the citation. However, you have also recognized that your handling of this matter violated the Code of Judicial Conduct and you have given assurances that this would not happen again.

Your ordering the dismissal of this citation was a violation of Canons 1 and 2 of the Code of Judicial Conduct as set forth in Rule 10 of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Tennessee that provide in pertinent part:

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.

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

Rule 2.11 Disqualification

(A) A judge shall disqualify himself or herself in any proceeding in which the judge's impartiality might reasonably be questioned, including but not limited to the following circumstances:

- (1) The judge has a personal bias or prejudice concerning a party or a party's lawyer, or personal knowledge of facts that are in dispute in the proceeding.

(2) The judge knows that the judge, the judge's spouse or domestic partner, or a person within the third degree of relationship to either of them, or the spouse or domestic partner of such a person is:

(a) a party to the proceeding, or an officer, director, general partner, managing member, or trustee of a party.

Accordingly, this letter constitutes a public reprimand for your action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Craft". The signature is stylized with large, flowing letters and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chris Craft
Board Chair

CC/bep

cc: Disciplinary Counsel
Investigative Panel