



**BEFORE THE STATE COMMISSION
ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT**

CJC No. 19-1083

**PUBLIC REPRIMAND
AND
ORDER OF ADDITIONAL EDUCATION**

**HONORABLE THOMAS G. JONES
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE, PRECINCT 1, PLACE 1
DALLAS, DALLAS COUNTY, TEXAS**

During its meeting on December 4-6, 2019, the State Commission on Judicial Conduct concluded a review of the allegations against the Honorable Thomas G. Jones, Justice of the Peace, Precinct 1, Place 1, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas. Judge Jones was advised by letter of the Commission's concerns and provided written responses. Judge Jones appeared before the Commission on August 6, 2020 and gave testimony:

BACKGROUND

Judge Jones presided over post-judgment discovery and enforcement matters in a damage suit brought by former tenant, Charlotte Smith ("Smith") of defendants/landlords, Norman and John Olsen ("Norman" and "John", respectively). Smith began collection efforts on her judgment in 2018 with post-judgment interrogatories. Some months later, Smith, claiming the interrogatories had been ignored, made an oral motion for contempt and Judge Jones issued an Order to Show Cause setting a hearing for April 2, 2019. John appeared at the Show Cause hearing but was escorted from the courthouse following a disturbance. Another show cause hearing was scheduled, but neither defendant appeared, and Judge Jones ordered that a writ of attachment issue for John's arrest.

During his appearance before the Commission, Judge Jones testified he issued the initial show cause order to the Olsens based on an oral motion from Smith. Judge Jones also testified he orally reset the show cause hearing in open court in the presence of both Smith and John.

After considering the evidence before it, the Commission enters the following Findings and Conclusions:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. At all times relevant hereto, the Honorable Thomas G. Jones was Justice of the Peace for Precinct 1, Place 1 in Dallas, Dallas County, Texas.
2. Smith began collection efforts on her 2018 judgment against the Olsens with post-judgment interrogatories.
3. Smith made an oral motion for contempt, claiming her interrogatories had been ignored. There is no evidence that either defendant was properly served with the interrogatories.
4. Based on Smith's oral motion, Judge Jones issued an Order to Show Cause, setting a hearing for April 2, 2019.
5. Although neither defendant was properly served with the Show Cause Order, John appeared, though no hearing was ultimately conducted as the parties engaged in a verbal altercation which caused them to be escorted from the courthouse.
6. The Commission does not credit Judge Jones' assertion that the Show Cause hearing was reset orally in open court.
7. Judge Jones issued a notice of hearing resetting the contempt matter for May 14, 2019. There is no evidence that either defendant was served with notice of the hearing.
8. On May 14, 2019, neither defendant appeared for the hearing, but Smith appeared and asked Judge Jones to issue a writ of attachment for only one defendant, John.
9. The writ of attachment incorrectly states that John had been served with an order compelling responses and for sanctions on May 14, 2019, and that he failed to comply on that same day.

RELEVANT STANDARDS

1. Canon 3B(2) of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct provides, in relevant part, that a judge shall maintain professional competence in the law.
2. Canon 3B(8) of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct states, in pertinent part, "A judge shall accord to every person who has a legal interest in a proceeding...the right to be heard according to law."
3. Article V, §1-a(6)A of the Texas Constitution provides, in pertinent part, that a judge may be disciplined for, among other things, incompetence in performing the duties of the office, or willful or persistent conduct that is inconsistent with the proper performance of his duties..."

CONCLUSION

Based upon the record before it and the factual findings recited above, the Texas State Commission on Judicial Conduct has determined that the Honorable Thomas G. Jones, Justice of the Peace, Pct. 1, Pl. 1 in Dallas, Dallas County, Texas, should be publicly reprimanded and

ordered to obtain additional education for; (i) improperly issuing a show cause order for John based on Smith's oral motion for contempt; and, (ii) failing to insure that John had notice and an opportunity to respond to the motion for contempt, which constitute willful violations of Canons 3B(2) and 3B(8) of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct. The Commission further determined that Judge Jones' conduct in these regards constituted conduct that is clearly inconsistent with the proper performance of his duties, in violation of Article V, §1-a(6)A of the Texas Constitution.

Pursuant to this Order, Judge Jones must obtain **four (4) hours** of mentor education, in addition to his required judicial education for Fiscal Year 2021. In particular, the Commission desires that Judge Jones receive additional education in the areas of; (a) landlord/tenant law; (b) proper use of contempt and contempt procedures; and, (c) service of process. Pursuant to the authority contained in §33.036 of the Texas Government Code, the Commission authorized the disclosure of certain information relating to this matter to the Texas Justice Court Training Center to the extent necessary to enable that entity to assign the appropriate mentor for Judge Jones.

Judge Jones shall complete the additional **four (4) hours** of instruction recited above within **sixty (60) days** from the date of written notification of the assignment of a mentor. Upon receiving such notice, it is Judge Jones' responsibility to contact the assigned mentor and schedule the additional education.

The Commission has taken this action pursuant to the authority conferred it in Article V, §1-a of the Texas Constitution in a continuing effort to protect the public and promote confidence in the judicial system.

Issued this the 21st day of January, 2021.



David Hall
Chairman, State Commission on Judicial Conduct