

**JUDICIAL BRANCH CERTIFICATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

First Floor Conference Room
Tom C. Clark Building
205 W. 14th Street
Austin, Texas 78701
Friday, May 3, 2024
(10:15 a.m. Until Adjournment)

The meeting of the Judicial Branch Certification Commission (Commission) was called to order by Judge Sid Harle, Chair, at 10:15 a.m. Members in attendance were Judge Sid Harle; Judge William Sowder; Judge Polly Spencer; Judge Glen Harrison; Judge Victor Villarreal; Velma Arellano; Ann Murray Moore; and Mark Blenden. Don Ford appeared via Zoom.

Staff members in attendance were Jeff Rinard, Commission Director; Scott Gibson, Commission General Counsel; Sheryl Jones, Deputy Director; Melinda Saucedo, Compliance Manager; Amy Smith, Investigator; Tyees Holcombe, Judicial Regulatory Assistant; Rachel Davis, Legal Assistant; Kanasha Daniels, Legal Assistant; and Veena Mohan, Assistant General Counsel.

Advisory Board Members in attendance via zoom were Rhonda Hughey, Process Servers Advisory Board; Molly Pela, Court Reporters Advisory Board; and Judge Gladys Burwell, Guardianship Advisory Board.

Agenda Item III. Opening Remarks

Judge Harle welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Jeff Rinard, Commission director, thanked the Commission for their service and the staff for their hard work. Mr. Rinard noted that there are two new staff members, Annette Arevalo and Matt Sanford, and the JBCC is fully staffed. Since the last meeting, there have been several complaint review committees, and 26 candidates took the guardianship exam, LCI exam coming up. Working with Judicial Council and Megan Lavoie, Administrative Director for the Texas Office of Court Administration, to address court reporter shortage, also working with associations. There has been a 22% drop in court reporters since 2005, and an increase in the number of courts. There is a shortage especially in the rural areas.

Agenda Item IV. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

The February 2, 2024, minutes were approved.

Assistant General Counsel Veena Mohan presented agenda items V, VI, VII, VIII, and IX.

Agenda Item V. Approval of Commission Disciplinary Action, by Default, and Issuance

of Final Order

Process Servers Certification

- A. In the Matter of Jenn’J King, Cause No. 0436
The Commission voted to remand the matter back to the Complaint Review Committee for further consideration.
- B. In the Matter of Earl Nevels, Cause No. 0439
Sanction: Permanently revoke the certification and assess an administrative penalty of \$2000 total at \$500 per rule, due within 12 months after the date of the Final Order.
- C. In the Matter of Sharon Young, Cause No. 0451
Sanction: Assess an administrative penalty of \$500 and order to complete the seven-hour precertification civil process service education course due within 12 months after the date of the Final Order.
- D. In the Matter of Kevin Blessing, Cause No. 0452
Sanction: Permanently refuse to renew certification and assess an administrative penalty of \$3000 due within 12 months after the date of the Final Order.
- E. In the Matter of Nancy Ruiz, Cause No. 0459
Sanction: Reprimand and assess an administrative penalty of \$500 total, due within 12 months after the date of the Final Order
- F. In the Matter of Trevian Crowe, Cause No. 0470
Sanction: Permanently refuse to renew the certification or approve the application for process server certification and assess an administrative penalty of \$2500 total due within 12 months after the date of the Final Order
- G. In the Matter of Rachel Alexander, Cause No. 0496
The Commission voted to remand the matters back to the Complaint Review Committee for further consideration.
- H. In the Matter of Rachel Alexander, Cause No. 0542
The Commission voted to remand the matters back to the Complaint Review Committee for further consideration.
- I. In the Matter of Flora Pardo, Cause No. 0497
Sanction: Permanently revoke certification and assess an administrative penalty of \$2000 total due within 12 months after the date of the Final Order

Agenda Item VI. Approval of Agreed Final Order - Acceptance by Respondent of Penalty and Sanction

Process Server Certification

- A. In the Matter of Abraham Rojas, Cause No. 0437
Sanction: Permanently revoke certification and assess an administrative penalty of \$2000 total at \$500 per rule, due within 12 months after the date of the Final Order
- B. In the Matter of Christina Edwards, Cause No. 0455

Sanction: Reprimand and assess an administrative penalty of \$500 total, due within 12 months after the date of the Final Order

- C. In the Matter of Santiago Castillo, Cause No. 0461
Sanction: Reprimand

Guardianship Certification

- D. In the Matter of Ginger Lott, Cause No. 0593

Sanction:

1. Order the following:

(a) No later than 30 days after the date of the Final Order, the Respondent must file resignations for all guardianships cases in all counties for which she is the certified guardian.

(b) No later than 60 days after the Respondent's resignation date per (a), she must file all final accounts and final reports of the person in each of her guardianship cases.

(c) No later than 90 days after the date the Respondent files her final account and final report of the person per (b), the Respondent must permanently surrender her guardianship certification by completing and submitting the Commission's surrender form to the Compliance Department or her guardianship certification will be permanently revoked.

2. Assess an administrative penalty of a total of \$5,000, due within 90 days after the date of the Final Order.

Agenda Item VII. Advisory Board Complaint Review Committee Recommendations to Dismiss Complaints

Upon proper motion and second, the Commission dismissed the following complaint:

Court Reporter Certification

- A. In the Matter of Robin Washington, Cause No. 0557

Agenda Item VIII. Administrative Dismissal of Complaints

Upon proper motion and second, the Commission ratified administrative dismissal of the following complaints:

Process Servers Certification

- A. In the Matter of Cause No. 0456
B. In the Matter of Cause No. 0465
C. In the Matter of Cause No. 0472
D. In the Matter of Cause No. 0478
E. In the Matter of Cause No. 0483
F. In the Matter of Cause No. 0484

- G. In the Matter of Cause No. 0488
- H. In the Matter of Cause No. 0490
- I. In the Matter of Cause No. 0509

Court Reporters Certification

- J. In the Matter of Cause No. 0529
- K. In the Matter of Cause No. 0548
- L. In the Matter of Cause No. 0558
- M. In the Matter of Cause No. 0564
- N. In the Matter of Cause No. 0606
- O. In the Matter of Cause No. 0648
- P. In the Matter of Cause No. 0649
- Q. In the Matter of Cause No. 0660
- R. In the Matter of Cause No. 0661
- S. In the Matter of Cause No. 0663

Court Reporting Firms

- T. In the Matter of Cause No. 0530

Licensed Court Interpreters

- U. In the Matter of Cause No. 0633

Guardianship Certification

- V. In the Matter of Cause No. 0555
- W. In the Matter of Cause No. 0610
- X. In the Matter of Cause No. 0672
- Y. In the Matter of Cause No. 0673

Professions Not Regulated by the Commission

- Z. In the Matter of Cause No. 0639

Agenda Item IX. Administrative Matters Relating to the Commission

Jeff Rinard, Commission Director, gave an update on the following agenda items:

- A. Pending Litigation – *Holmgren and Preferred Legal Services, Inc. v. JBCC, Storycloud et. al.* Went into closed session at 10:43 am to confer with Legal Counsel and reconvened in public session at 11:17 am.
- B. Upcoming Advisory Board Meetings.
 - 1. Guardianship Certification – May 14, 2024
 - 2. Court Reporters Certification – May 17, 2024
 - 3. Process Servers Certification – May 23, 2024
 - 4. Licensed Court Interpreters – TBD
- C. Update on Guardianship Certification Code of Ethics and Minimum

Standards: Staff are working internally on changes to be presented at next commission meeting once reviewed by the advisory board.

- D. Update on Guardianship Certification Sanction Matrix: Staff are working internally on changes to be presented at next commission meeting once reviewed by the advisory board.
- E. Update on Process Servers Certification Sanction Matrix: Staff are working internally on changes to be presented at next commission meeting once reviewed by the advisory board.
- F. Uniform Format Manual Update: The document is still with the Supreme Court and still have not heard back from them.
- G. Commission Meeting Dates
 - 1. Next Commission Meeting Friday, August 2, 2024
 - 2. Proposed Meeting Dates for FY 2025
 - a. Friday, November 1, 2024
 - b. Friday, February 7, 2025
 - c. Friday, May 2, 2025
 - d. Friday, August 1, 2025

Agenda Item X. Remembering Mr. Art Richardson

The Commission extends its condolences to the family of Mr. Art Richardson.

Agenda Item XI. Public Comment

The following individual provided public comment:

- David Ross: Remembered Mr. Art Richardson

Agenda Item XII. Closing Remarks

Judge Harle thanked everyone for their attendance and for their hard work.

Agenda Item XIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:36 a.m.



Judge Sid Harle, Chair

Date

August 5, 2024