



NEW YORK STATE
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

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NEWS RELEASE

February 10, 2016

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St. Lawrence County Town Justice Resigns After Being Charged with Theft

The New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct has closed its investigation of a complaint against Lisa J. Powers, a Justice of the Clare Town Court, St. Lawrence County, who resigned from office on December 9, 2015 and agreed pursuant to a stipulation dated January 6, 2016, that she will neither seek nor accept judicial office at any time in the future. The Commission accepted the stipulation on February 8, 2016, concluding the matter.

Under the terms of the stipulation, Judge Powers waived the statutory provision of confidentiality applicable to Commission proceedings, to the limited extent that the stipulation and Commission's decision and order would be public.

The Commission had commenced an investigation after Judge Powers was charged with third degree grand larceny, a felony, for allegedly stealing more than \$4,200 from the Russell Pee Wee Association, of which she was the treasurer. She subsequently pled guilty.¹

¹ On December 15, 2015, the judge pled guilty to a reduced charge of fourth degree grand larceny, also a felony, admitting that between October 2007 and July 2014 she stole an amount exceeding \$1,000 from bank accounts belonging to the Russell Pee Wee Association at the North Country Savings Bank, where she was employed.

Judge Powers, who is not an attorney, had served as a Justice of the Clare Town Court since January 7, 2015.

The stipulation and the Commission's order closing the case can be found on the Commission's website: www.cjc.ny.gov.

Statistics Relating to Prior Commission Decisions

The Commission has accepted 59 such stipulations since the procedure was instituted in 2003.

Since 1978, the Commission has issued 260 determinations of admonition against judges in New York State, 315 determinations of censure and 168 determinations of removal.

The Court of Appeals has reviewed 95 Commission determinations. The Court accepted the Commission's sanctions in 79 cases (70 of which were removals, six were censures and three were admonitions). Of the remaining 16 cases, two sanctions were increased from censure to removal, and 13 were reduced: nine removal determinations were modified to censure, one removal was modified to admonition, two censures were modified to admonition, and one censure was rejected and the charges dismissed. The Court remitted one matter to the Commission for further proceedings.

Statement by Commission Administrator

Commission Administrator Robert H. Tembeckjian made the following statement:

“Public trust in the integrity of the judiciary is shaken when a judge is charged with a felony and admits to theft. By accepting a resignation and barring such a person from ever returning to the bench, we hope to restore some measure of public confidence in the courts.”

Press Availability

Mr. Tembeckjian is available throughout the day by telephone: (646) 386-4800.

Counsel

In the proceedings before the Commission, Judge Powers was represented by Edward F. Narrow, of Dumas and Narrow, PC, 20 Park Street, Canton, New York 13617, (315) 386-8500.

The Commission was represented by Robert H. Tembeckjian, Administrator and Counsel to the Commission; and Cathleen S. Cenci, Deputy Administrator in Charge of the Albany office. Investigator Laura Misjak assisted in the investigation.

Background Information on Judge Powers

First took office: 1/7/2015
Current Term Expires: 12/31/2019

Members of the Commission

The Commission members serve four-year terms. A list of members is appended.

The Public File

The stipulation and order are attached. They are also available for inspection during regular business hours at the Commission's three offices:

61 Broadway Suite 1200 New York, New York 10006	Corning Tower, Suite 2301 Empire State Plaza Albany, New York 12223	400 Andrews Street Suite 700 Rochester, New York 14604
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MEMBERS OF THE STATE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

Member	Appointing Authority	Term End
Hon. Thomas A. Klonick, Chair	Former Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman	March 31, 2017
Hon. Terry Jane Ruderman, Vice Chair	Former Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman	March 31, 2016
Hon. Rolando T. Acosta	Former Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman	March 31, 2018
Joseph W. Belluck, Esq.	Governor Andrew M. Cuomo	March 31, 2016
Joel Cohen, Esq.	Former Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver	March 31, 2018
Jodie Corngold	Governor Andrew M. Cuomo	March 31, 2019
Richard D. Emery, Esq.	Former Senate Minority Leader John L. Sampson	March 31, 2016
Paul B. Harding, Esq.	Assembly Minority Leader Brian M. Kolb	March 31, 2017
Richard A. Stoloff, Esq.	Former Senate President Pro Tem Dean Skelos	March 31, 2019
Hon. David A. Weinstein	Governor Andrew M. Cuomo	March 31, 2018
Vacant	Governor	March 31, 2017