



**BEFORE THE
STATE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT**

CJC No. 05-0264-MU

PUBLIC ADMONITION

**HONORABLE JAMES L. SUPKIS
FORMER MUNICIPAL JUDGE
NASSAU BAY, HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS**

During its meeting on May 11, 2006, the State Commission on Judicial Conduct concluded a review of the allegations against the Honorable James L. Supkis, former Municipal Court Judge for the City of Nassau Bay, in Harris County, Texas. Judge Supkis was advised by letter of the Commission's concerns and provided a written response. Judge Supkis was invited to appear before the Commission on June 9, 2005, for a suspension hearing, but failed to appear. On or about August 23, 2005, Judge Supkis was advised by letter of the Commission's Request for Order of Suspension filed with the Texas Supreme Court. On or about October 11, 2005, Judge Supkis was notified that the Texas Supreme Court had suspended him from office, without pay, pending final disposition of the charge pending against him. As of this date, Judge Supkis has made no attempt to resolve the charge against him by obtaining the required judicial education for fiscal year 2003. After considering the evidence before it, the Commission entered the following Findings and Conclusions.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. At all times relevant hereto, the Honorable James L. Supkis was a Municipal Court Judge for the City of Nassau Bay in Harris County, Texas.
2. On or about November 12, 2004, the Court of Criminal Appeals reported that Judge Supkis failed to obtain the required judicial education for fiscal year 2003 (September 1, 2002 through August 31, 2003).
3. On or about March 15, 2005, the Commission received the affidavit of Hope Lochridge, Executive Director for the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center,

- in which she stated that during fiscal year 2003, Judge Supkis completed 0 hours out of the 12 hours of judicial education required of a municipal court judge. Judge Supkis was granted a conditional waiver from this requirement if he completed two 12-hour education programs in fiscal year 2004; however, Judge Supkis completed only one 12-hour program in fiscal year 2004.
4. On or about March 16, 2005, Judge Supkis was asked to respond to the allegation that he had failed to obtain the required judicial education for fiscal year 2003. Judge Supkis failed to respond to the Commission's inquiry.
 5. On or about May 11, 2005, Judge Supkis was invited to appear before the Commission on June 9, 2005, for a suspension hearing pursuant to Rule 15b of the Texas Procedural Rules for the Removal or Retirement of Judges.
 6. The May 11 notice sent to the judge's court address was returned to the Commission marked "return to sender."
 7. On June 9, 2005, the Commission went forward with the suspension hearing. Judge Supkis failed to appear.
 8. At the conclusion of the June 9 hearing, the Commission voted to recommend to the Texas Supreme Court that Judge Supkis be suspended from office, without pay, pending final disposition of the charge against him.
 9. On or about June 24, 2005, the Commission notified Judge Supkis at his last known address of the Commission's intent to file a Request for Order of Suspension with the Texas Supreme Court. On July 26, 2005, the information was returned to the Commission marked "unclaimed."
 10. On or about August 23, 2005, the Commission filed its Request for Order of Suspension with the Texas Supreme Court and notified Judge Supkis of the filing. On September 20, 2005, the information mailed to the judge was returned to the Commission marked "unclaimed."
 11. On or about October 11, 2005, the Texas Supreme Court suspended Judge Supkis from office, without pay. A copy of the Order was provided to Judge Supkis.
 12. As of May 11, 2006, Judge Supkis had made no attempt to resolve the charge pending against him by obtaining his judicial education requirements for fiscal year 2003.
 13. As of May 11, 2006, Judge Supkis had been replaced as municipal judge for the City of Nassau Bay.

RELEVANT STANDARD

Canon 3B(2) of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct states, in pertinent part: "A judge shall maintain professional competence in [the law]."

CONCLUSION

The Commission concludes from the facts and evidence presented that by failing to complete his judicial education requirements for fiscal year 2003, Judge Supkis failed to maintain professional competence in the law, in violation of Canon 3B(2) of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct.

In condemnation of the above-recited conduct that violated Canon 3B(2) of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct, it is the Commission's decision to issue a **PUBLIC ADMONITION** to the Honorable James L. Supkis, former Municipal Court Judge for the City of Nassau Bay, Harris County, Texas.

Pursuant to the authority contained in Article V, Section 1-a(8) of the Texas Constitution, it is ordered that the actions described above be made the subject of a **PUBLIC ADMONITION** by the Commission.

The Commission has taken this action in a continuing effort to protect public confidence in the judicial system and to assist the state's judiciary in its efforts to embody the principles and values set forth in the Texas Constitution and the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct.

Issued this the __25th__ day of May, 2006.

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Honorable Monica A. Gonzalez, Chair
State Commission on Judicial Conduct