



**BEFORE THE  
STATE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT**

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**CJC No. 19-0662**

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**PUBLIC ADMONITION  
AND  
ORDER OF ADDITIONAL EDUCATION**

**HONORABLE BEATRICE ('BEBE') ROCHA  
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE, PCT. 1  
HORSESHOE BAY, LLANO COUNTY, TEXAS**

During its regularly scheduled meeting on June 5-6, 2019, the State Commission on Judicial Conduct concluded a review of the allegations against the Honorable Beatrice ('Bebe') Rocha, Justice of the Peace, Precinct 1, Horseshoe Bay, Llano County, Texas. Judge Rocha was advised by letter of the Commission's concerns and provided a written response. Judge Rocha appeared before the Commission on August 7, 2019, and gave testimony. After considering the evidence before it, the Commission entered the following Findings and Conclusion:

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

1. At all times relevant hereto, the Honorable Beatrice ('Bebe') Rocha was Justice of the Peace for Precinct 1 in Horseshoe Bay, Llano County, Texas.
2. In January 2019, Judge Rocha and her husband, Harold Piatt, were going through a contentious divorce. During this time, Complainant states that she became Harold's "house sitter" while he was out of town.
3. On or about January 14, 2019, Judge Rocha contacted Complainant's catering company and requested to speak to Complainant's estranged husband, Enrique. Later that day, Complainant had one of her friends call Judge Rocha back and pretend to be Enrique.
4. During their phone call, Judge Rocha informed "Enrique" that his estranged wife, Complainant, was cohabitating with her estranged husband, Harold. A few minutes into the conversation, Judge Rocha identified herself as a local justice of the peace<sup>1</sup> and asked whether he was going to seek custody of their minor children. When "Enrique" indicated

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<sup>1</sup> "I am a Justice of the Peace in Horseshoe Bay, that's my biggest municipality..." [2:20 of recording].

that he was not sure whether he would seek custody of his children, Judge Rocha stated that Complainant was on probation for a DWI with a passenger under 15 years old. Towards the end of their conversation, Judge Rocha stated that Complainant “goes from older men to older men with money,” but clarified that she was not necessarily calling Complainant a “prostitute.”

5. Adult Probation Officer Kimberly Harris served as Complainant’s probation officer after her DWI arrest. Harris stated that on or about January 14, 2019, Judge Rocha contacted the probation office to inquire as to: (1) the status of Complainant’s criminal case, (2) whether Complainant had any felonies or misdemeanors on her record, and (3) whether Complainant’s children had been removed by CPS. Harris further stated that over the next several days, Judge Rocha attempted to contact her on multiple occasions to gather additional information about the status of Complainant’s criminal matters.
6. In her written responses to the Commission, Judge Rocha explained that the purpose of her call with “Enrique” was to inform him that Complainant was living with her ex-husband, and to caution him about some of the issues that his children may have living in her former house.
7. Judge Rocha stated that she referenced her judicial position in order to “give some validity” to her comments.
8. The judge acknowledged that she called the probation office to gather information on Complainant, but stated that before she could ask any questions, the clerk who answered the phone voluntarily disclosed that Complainant was on probation for a recent DWI arrest. Judge Rocha denied that she requested any specific information regarding the status of Complainant’s criminal cases.
9. During her appearance before the Commission, Judge Rocha acknowledged that she used the prestige of her office to advance her private interests.

#### RELEVANT STANDARD

Canon 2B of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct provides, in pertinent part, that a judge “shall not lend the prestige of judicial office to advance the private interests of the judge or others...”

#### CONCLUSION

The Commission concludes that Judge Rocha lent the prestige of her judicial office to advance her own private interests by invoking her judicial position during her telephone conversation with “Enrique” in an effort to convince him to seek custody of his minor children in his pending divorce against Complainant. The Commission concludes that Judge Rocha’s conduct, described above, constitutes a willful violation of Canon 2B of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct.

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In condemnation of the conduct described above that violated Canon 2B of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct, recited above, it is the Commission’s decision to issue a **PUBLIC ADMONITION AND ORDER OF ADDITIONAL EDUCATION** to the Honorable Beatrice (‘Bebe’) Rocha, Justice of the Peace for Precinct 1 in Horseshoe Bay, Llano County, Texas.

Pursuant to this Order, Judge Rocha must obtain **two hours** of instruction with a mentor, in addition to her required judicial education for Fiscal Year 2020. In particular, the Commission

desires that Judge Rocha receive this additional education in the areas of judicial ethics and professionalism.

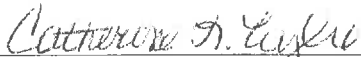
Judge Rocha shall complete the additional **two hours** of instruction recited within **sixty days** from the date of written notification of the assignment of a mentor. It is Judge Rocha's responsibility to contact the assigned mentor and schedule the additional education.

Upon the completion of the **two hours** of education described herein, Judge Rocha shall sign and return the Respondent Judge Survey indicating compliance with this Order. Failure to complete, or report the completion of, the required additional education in a timely manner may result in further Commission action.

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

The Commission has taken this action in a continuing effort to protect the 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 26<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2019.

  
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Honorable Catherine N. Wylie, Chair  
State Commission on Judicial Conduct