

BEFORE THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL,	:	No. 62 DB 2024
Petitioner	:	
	:	
v.	:	Attorney Registration No. 59610
	:	
RONNIE LOUIS CREAZZO,	:	
Respondent	:	(Northampton County)

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF
THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

TO THE HONORABLE CHIEF JUSTICE AND JUSTICES
OF THE SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA:

Pursuant to Rule 208(d)(2)(iii) of the Pennsylvania Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement, the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania (“Board”) herewith submits its findings and recommendations to your Honorable Court with respect to the above-captioned Petition for Discipline.

I. FINDINGS OF FACT

The Board makes the following factual findings:

1. Respondent, Ronnie Louis Creazzo, was born in 1964 and admitted to practice law in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on November 30, 1990. (P for D ¶2).
2. Respondent has no prior record of professional discipline.

The Christ Matter

3. Respondent represented Alex P. Christ in a divorce action filed in the Northampton County Court of Common Pleas in a case captioned: *Alex P. Christ v. Jessica R. Christ*, civil case no. C-48-CV-2022-07398. P for D ¶4.

4. Joseph V. Sebelin, Jr., Esquire, represented defendant, Jessica R. Christ, in the divorce action. 12/3/24 N.T. 13.

5. On or about October 13, 2023, Attorney Sebelin filed a Motion for Special Relief to Compel Discovery (hereinafter “Defendant’s Motion”) in the divorce action with the Northampton County Prothonotary’s Office. 12/3/24 N.T. 13, 20-23.

6. The original Defendant’s Motion filed by Attorney Sebelin with the Prothonotary’s Office was single-sided. 12/3/24 N.T. 23.

7. Attorney Sebelin provided a copy of Defendant’s Motion to Respondent. The copy was double-sided to save paper. 12/3/24 N.T. 23.

8. By email dated October 17, 2023, Respondent wrote to Attorney Sebelin, in pertinent part: “Joe, I’m in receipt of your correspondence of October 13, 2023. Please comport and comply with Pa.R.C.P. 204.1(5) and submit your documentation with lettering only on one side of the page. Please comply with the Rule on or before November 1, 2023, or I will file a motion to dismiss your Motion for Special Relief.” ODC-4 at 1; 12/3/24 N.T. 23.

9. Attorney Sebelin received Respondent’s email and replied to Respondent the same day: “I am aware of no such violation of Pa.R.C.P. 204.1(5) with the motion filed with the court. See you in December.” ODC-4 at 2; 12/3/24 N.T. 23.

10. Respondent received the email, and by email dated October 24, 2023, replied to Attorney Sebelin, stating in pertinent part:

In light of your email below, please be advised that I will accelerate a motion to

strike Defendant's Petition for Special Relief for failure to conform to rule that filings and other documentation must be presented on single-sided format. You are hereby notified that this motion will be presented on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 9 am in Northampton County Motions Court. I will get the motion to you before close of business on this Friday, October 27, 2023.

ODC-4 at 3; 12/3/24 N.T. 26-27.

11. By email dated October 25, 2023, Attorney Sebelin replied to Respondent, stating in pertinent part: "Finally, I am a loss for your absurd interpretation of Pa.R.C.P. 204.1(5). All docketed pleadings comply with this rule. Any frivolous motion designed to waste time or cost my client attorney fees will result in my office filing for sanctions against you and your client." ODC-4 at 4; 12/3/24 N.T. 27.

12. Respondent received Attorney Sebelin's email, and by email sent the same day, replied to Attorney Sebelin: "Again, reasonable demand is for your pleadings and documentation to be single sided. Please forward previous Motion and Discovery before the close of business Tuesday 10/31/23 to avoid motions court on 11/1/23." ODC-4 at 5.

13. Attorney Sebelin received Respondent's email, and by email sent the same day, replied to Respondent: "Again, your assertions are absurd. Please note, any motion you filed will be met with a counter motion for sanctions." ODC-4 at 6.

14. Respondent received this email, and by email dated October 27, 2023, replied to Attorney Sebelin, in pertinent part: "Joe – I'm changing the motions court date to Thursday, November 2, 2023. I'll get you the Motion on Monday." ODC-4 at 7.

15. Attorney Sebelin, by email sent the same day, replied to Respondent, in pertinent part:

Ronald: I've expended just about enough time talking about this issue. In fact, this is the last email I will send you regarding this issue of the "dreadful" double-sided motion. Your assertions regarding this motion are without merit...So I have attached a motion for you, one that I intend to present on Thursday. I look forward to you walking

into court and telling a judge about the importance of this issue, especially in light of all the actual serious matters that the court addresses on a daily basis. I assure you, I will enjoy presenting my motion once you finish speaking.

ODC-4 at 7.

16. With the above-referenced email sent on October 27, 2023, Attorney Sebelin provided Defendant Jessica Christ's Motion for Sanctions (hereinafter "Defendant's Motion for Sanctions") to Respondent. ODC-4 at 7; 12/3/24 N.T. 30.

17. Respondent received both the email and Defendant's Motion for Sanctions that Attorney Sebelin attached to the email. P for D ¶21.

18. By email to Attorney Sebelin dated October 31, 2023, Respondent attached and provided Plaintiff's Motion for Special Relief requesting the court, *inter alia*, strike Defendant's Motion and impose sanctions on defendant in the divorce action. P for D ¶22.

19. On November 2, 2023, Judge Anthony S. Beltrami conducted a hearing in Motions Court to address Plaintiff's Motion for Sanctions and Defendant's Motion for Sanctions. 12/3/24 N.T. 81-82; ODC-6.

20. In the Plaintiff's Motion for Sanctions, Respondent moved to strike Defendant's Motion and request sanctions because it was filed double-sided, in violation of the Rule of Civil Procedure 204.1. 12/3/24 N.T. 83-84. In Defendant's Motion for Sanctions, Attorney Sebelin sought sanctions because Plaintiff's Motion for Sanctions was frivolous. 12/3/24 N.T. 82. Judge Beltrami had no prior knowledge of the two motions before the hearing on November 2, 2023. 12/3/24 N.T. 82.

21. During the November 2, 2023 hearing, in response to questioning by Judge Beltrami, Attorney Sebelin stated that Defendant's Motion was filed single-sided with the

Prothonotary's Office. ODC-6 at 5. As the result of this information, Judge Beltrami engaged in the following exchange with Respondent:

The Court: "Did you check the clerk's file to see if he filed it single-spaced before you filed this motion?"

Respondent: "No, I did not. Why should I have to?"

The Court: "Well, why didn't you go downstairs to look at the Prothonotary to see what he filed?"

Respondent: "That's not gonna do me any good, Judge. Why-why should I go down-why should I chase things around that I am supposed to be legally served with?"

The Court: "You are supposed to go down there and see before you file a motion alleging that he filed something double-sided to see if he filed something double-sided. Yes, you are supposed to do that."

Respondent: "Okay, and what was I supposed to do, Judge? Stand there and make copies?"

ODC-6 at 6, 12, 13.

22. Judge Beltrami considered Respondent's tone to be unprofessional when Respondent questioned the requirement to check and make sure Defendant's Motion filed with the Prothonotary was in fact double-sided before submitting Plaintiff's Motion for Sanctions. 12/3/24 N.T. 85.

23. In reference to Plaintiff's Motion for Sanctions, Judge Beltrami opined: "I am going to be honest with you, this is the craziest, stupidest most ridiculous issue I have ever heard in Motions Court..." ODC-6 at 11.

24. At the conclusion of the hearing on November 2, 2023, Judge Beltrami instructed Respondent and Attorney Sebelin to "take your original motions down to the Prothonotary, file them, and send my office time-stamped copies and I will decide on both motions. And I will send you the decision." ODC-6 at 8.

25. By email dated November 2, 2023, sent to Judge Beltrami's secretary, Judith Mahar, and copied to Respondent, Attorney Sebelin complied with the court's directive and provided a time-stamped copy of Defendant's Motion for Sanctions on November 2, 2023. 12/3/24 N.T. 86; ODC-7 at 10. Respondent filed his original Plaintiff's Motion with the Prothonotary but did not comply with the court's directive and failed to send a time-stamped copy of Plaintiff's Motion for Sanctions to the court. 12/3/24 N.T. 86, 91.

26. By email dated November 2, 2023, to Ms. Mahar and copied to Attorney Sebelin, Respondent attached a proposed order regarding Plaintiff's Motion for Sanctions and wrote additional legal and factual arguments in his email that he had not presented to the court during the hearing. 12/3/24 N.T. 86-87; ODC-7 at 1. These additional legal and factual arguments were not solicited nor requested from Judge Beltrami. 12/3/24 N.T. 86.

27. By letter dated November 2, 2023, addressed to Judge Beltrami, copied to Respondent and filed with the Prothonotary's Office, Attorney Sebelin provided a response to Respondent's November 2, 2023 email. ODC-7 at 3 and 4.

28. On November 6, 2023, Respondent sent another email to Ms. Mahar, copied to Attorney Sebelin, complaining to Judge Beltrami about Attorney Sebelin's actions and making disparaging comments about his integrity. 12/3/24 N.T. 87-88; ODC-7 at 5.

29. Judge Beltrami has an office policy of not tolerating unsolicited communications from attorneys to chambers. 12/3/24 N.T. 88. Judge Beltrami views these communications sent to chambers as improper ex parte communications. 12/3/24 N.T. 89. Pursuant to this policy and in response to the unsolicited email from Respondent on November 6, 2023, Judge Beltrami wrote an email dated November 8, 2023 to both Respondent and Attorney Sebelin, stating in pertinent part:

My office is in receipt of Mr. Creazzo's email dated 11/6/23. I have not reviewed it. Like the email I received from counsel on 11/2/23, it is an unsolicited, improper ex parte communication with the court. *All communication with the court must be done in the courtroom with all of parties and their counsel present.*

For this reason, please do not contact my office via email or letter unless instructed to do so by me. If you need to communicate with the court, please do so by way of a petition with proper notice to the opposing party.

12/3/24 N.T. 88-89; ODC-7 at 9.

30. By Order dated November 8, 2023, Judge Beltrami denied Plaintiff's Motion for Sanctions and granted Defendant's Motion for Sanctions. 12/3/24 N.T. 92; ODC-8 at 2. Respondent was ordered to pay \$1,000 to Defendant. ODC-8 at 2. In reaching this decision, Judge Beltrami found:

The Motion for Special Relief filed by Attorney Creazzo should never have been presented to the court, as it was frivolous. Moreover, Attorney Creazzo's response to the court's legitimate question about whether he had checked the Prothonotary's file before making written allegations and oral representations about the Motion's alleged defectiveness was disrespectful and unprofessional. For all of the above reasons, Plaintiff's Motion for Special Relief must be denied, and Defendant's Motion for Sanctions will be granted. Attorney's fees are to be awarded as a sanction, with said fees to be paid by Attorney Creazzo and not by Plaintiff.

ODC-8 at 4.

31. Judge Beltrami testified at the disciplinary hearing that he believed Respondent was being disrespectful to everyone in the courtroom at the November 2, 2023 sanctions hearing because Respondent cut Judge Beltrami off when he was asking a legitimate question and raised his voice in an inappropriate, unprofessional, and sarcastic manner. 12/3/24 N.T. 115, 117, 118, 121.

32. On November 20, 2023, Respondent filed a Motion for Reconsideration that requested Judge Beltrami reconsider the above-referenced order finding Respondent's motion to be frivolous and imposing sanctions upon Respondent. 12/3/24 N.T. 92; ODC-

9. Judge Beltrami denied the Motion for Reconsideration on November 21, 2023. 12/3/24 N.T. 92; ODC-10 at 2.

33. On November 21, 2023, at 4:12 p.m., Respondent sent an email marked “Personal and Confidential” to Ms. Mahar for Judge Beltrami’s attention. Attorney Sebelin was not copied on the email. 12/3/24 N.T. 93; ODC-11 at 1. Respondent’s email to Judge Beltrami was an improper, prohibited ex parte communication. 12/3/24 N.T. 93.

34. On November 21, 2023, at 4:20 p.m., Respondent sent a second email to Ms. Mahar for Judge Beltrami’s attention, copied to Attorney Sebelin. 12/3/24 N.T. 94; ODC-11 at 2. This second email included some portions of what he had written in the first email but failed to include everything Respondent had written to Judge Beltrami in the first email. 12/3/24 N.T. 94; ODC-11 at 2. Respondent’s conduct created the false impression for Attorney Sebelin that Respondent had only communicated one time with the court via a single email that he sent on November 21, 2023. 12/3/24 N.T. 94; ODC-11 at 2. The second email sent by Respondent requested Judge Beltrami to reconsider his decision to impose sanctions against Respondent. ODC-11 at 2.

35. In response to the above emails from Respondent, on November 22, 2023, Judge Beltrami wrote an email to Respondent, copying Attorney Sebelin, and stating the following:

Mr. Creazzo:

I am in receipt of your email dated 11/21/23, shown below. I am also in receipt of the other email you sent to my office on 11/21/23, which Attorney Sebelin was not copied on and which was marked personal and confidential. I am attaching a copy of that second email to this email for Attorney Sebelin’s review, as it relates to this case.

In my email to you dated 11/8/23, I specifically directed you not to send me unsolicited ex parte communications, which are prohibited by Rule of Professional Conduct 3.5(b). That rule states that “[a] lawyer shall

not...seek to influence a judge...[or] communicate ex parte with [a judge] during the proceeding unless authorized to do so by law or court order.”

I have resolved all matters that were assigned to me regarding this case. Therefore, once again, you MAY NOT contact my office about this or any other case unless directed to do so by me or authorized by law.

12/3/24 N.T. 95; ODC-11 at 3.

36. Judge Beltrami believed the emails sent to chambers by Respondent on November 21, 2023 violated the rules prohibiting ex parte communications with the court. 12/3/24 N.T. 95; ODC-11 at 3. Judge Beltrami felt obligated to report Respondent’s improper conduct to the Disciplinary Board. 12/3/24 N.T. 96. On November 22, 2023, Judge Beltrami filed a disciplinary complaint against Respondent with Office of Disciplinary Counsel (“ODC”). 12/3/24 N.T. 179.

37. Attorney Sebelin testified that Respondent paid the \$1,000 sanction “after a rather significant time. I want to say it was probably in March of 2024, 2024.” 12/3/24 N.T. 40, 42. Attorney Sebelin explained the delay as attributable to Respondent appealing Judge Beltrami’s order to the Superior Court, where it was later dismissed. 12/3/24 N.T. 42.

ODC’s Investigation of the Disciplinary Complaint

38. Disciplinary Counsel (“DC”) Mark Gilson was assigned to investigate the complaint filed against Respondent by Judge Beltrami. 12/4/24 N.T. 246.

39. DC Gilson prepared a DB-7 Request for Statement of Respondent’s Position letter (hereinafter “the DB-7 letter”) dated December 14, 2023 that:

- a. notified Respondent of the complaint filed against him by Judge Beltrami;
- b. provided a detailed description of the allegations of misconduct in individually numbered paragraphs; and
- c. pursuant to Disciplinary Board Rule §87.7(b)(2), informed Respondent that he was required to provide a response to the DB-7 letter within 30 days, and that

failure to respond to the DB-7 letter without good cause would be an independent ground for discipline pursuant to Pa.R.D.E. 203(b)(7).

12/4/24 N.T. 247-48; P for D ¶¶65 and ¶¶66; ODC-3.

40. DC Gilson sent a copy of the DB-7 letter to Respondent via email on December 14, 2023. 12/4/24 N.T. 248; ODC-C. DC Gilson also mailed a copy of the DB-7 to Respondent's office address by regular U.S. mail and certified mail. 12/4/24 N.T. 248; ODC-C.

41. By email dated December 15, 2023, Respondent acknowledged receipt of the DB-7 letter and refused to provide a response to the DB-7 letter on the basis of a purported Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination. 12/4/24 N.T. 252; ODC-D. However, in this email, Respondent made numerous assertions that he described as "exculpatory information," one of which alluded to "indiscretions" involving the Northampton County Prothonotary. ODC-D.

42. By email dated December 18, 2023, DC Gilson acknowledged receipt of Respondent's email of December 15, 2023, advised Respondent that the Statement of Position contained in his email did not comply with the requirements of Disciplinary Board Rule §87.7(c), and requested a sufficiently detailed Statement of Position in compliance with Disciplinary Board rules. 12/4/24 N.T. 253-54; ODC-D.

43. On December 18, 2023, Respondent sent an email to DC Gilson indicating that he stood by his earlier response and asserted his suspicion that Judge Beltrami was having an affair with the Northampton County Prothonotary. 12/4/24 N.T. 254-55; ODC-D.

44. Respondent failed to provide a sufficiently detailed response to the DB-7 letter in accordance with Disciplinary Board Rule §87.7(c). 12/4/24 N.T. 262.

45. In light of the disciplinary complaint and investigation, and without the benefit of Respondent's position with respect to the averments in the DB-7, a determination was made by ODC that Respondent violated the disciplinary rules. ODC recommended that an informal admonition be imposed on Respondent. 12/4/24 N.T. 262. Pursuant to Pa.R.D.E. 208(a)(3), ODC's recommendation for an informal admonition was reviewed and approved by a Hearing Committee member in District II. See Disciplinary Board Rules §§ 87.9(b), 87.31, 87.32.

46. After being notified on May 14, 2024, that reviewing authorities had directed an informal admonition be imposed, Respondent exercised his right to request formal charges and by letter of June 7, 2024, informed the Board Prothonotary of his decision. See Disciplinary Board Rule § 87.54. By letter dated June 13, 2024, the Board Prothonotary informed ODC that Respondent requested formal charges and directed ODC to prepare and file a Petition for Discipline against Respondent. ODC-18 at 2.

The Disciplinary Proceedings at No. 62 DB 2024

47. On June 20, 2024, ODC filed a Petition for Discipline against Respondent. 12/4/24 N.T. 264; ODC-17.

48. Pa.R.D.E. 208(b)(2) requires personal service of the Petition for Discipline. The Rule provides in pertinent part: "A copy of the petition containing a notice to plead shall be personally served upon the respondent-attorney."

49. On June 20, 2024, ODC provided Respondent with a copy of the Petition for Discipline via first-class mail, certified mail, and email. 12/4/24 N.T. 265-66; ODC-I.

50. In the June 20, 2024 email sent at 3:27 p.m. to Respondent, ODC offered Respondent the option of accepting service of the Petition for Discipline by email, thereby

waiving the requirement of personal service pursuant to Pa.R.D.E. 208(b)(2) and Disciplinary Board Rule §89.53. 12/4/24 N.T. 265-66; ODC-I.

51. ODC attached an *Acknowledgement of Service* form to the email for Respondent to sign and return, and requested Respondent return the form immediately, or inform ODC if he preferred to be personally served with a copy of the Petition for Discipline. 12/4/24 N.T. 266; ODC-I.

52. According to the testimony of DC Gilson at the disciplinary hearing, Respondent did not respond to DC Gilson's email sent at 3:27 p.m., but after 3:27 p.m. on June 20, 2024, Respondent sent an email to the Board Prothonotary and copied DC Gilson, so Respondent "should have seen or would have seen my e-mail, but he wasn't responding to me." 12/4/24 N.T. 267; ODC-I.

53. Respondent's June 20, 2024 email to the Board Prothonotary and DC Gilson was sent from the same email address to which ODC sent documents and emails to Respondent. ODC-I.

54. Respondent never replied to DC Gilson's June 20, 2024 email sent at 3:27 p.m. 12/4/24 N.T. 268.

55. On June 21, 2024, around 1:50 p.m., ODC Investigator Robert McHugh attempted to personally serve Respondent with a copy of the Petition for Discipline at Respondent's home. 12/4/24 N.T. 269, 349-350.

56. Upon having contact with Investigator McHugh in Respondent's driveway, Respondent became angry, refused service of the Petition for Discipline, and threatened Investigator McHugh, yelling "Fuck you! Get the fuck off my property before there is a problem! And tell Mark Gilson he can go fuck himself!" ODC-K; 12/4/24 N.T. 275-76.

57. Due to Respondent's threats, Investigator McHugh left the property without completing personal service. ODC-K.

58. On June 21, 2024, Respondent sent three threatening emails to DC Gilson, with the subject line: "You're an ass":

a. "If you have someone come to my personal property again, they will not live to tell about it. You are a fucking ass." (sent at 1:54 pm);

b. "If you send someone from your office to my personal property again, they will not live to tell about it. This is outrageously uncalled for and unacceptable and action will be taken accordingly. You are a fucking ass." (sent at 2:20 pm);
and

c. "If you send from your office to my personal residence again for service they will not live to tell about. Trespassers are not welcome. You have my office address. This was extremely uncalled for. That was outrageous and extremely unprofessional and your superior will be notified." (sent at 2:33 pm).

12/4/24 N.T. 270-272; ODC-J.

59. On June 21, 2024 at 2:36 pm, Respondent also sent an email to Chief Disciplinary Counsel Thomas J. Farrell, stating "[g]et control of your personnel...". 12/4/24 N.T. 272; ODC-J.

60. DC Gilson testified at the disciplinary hearing that he considered these emails as "absolute threats," and he immediately warned ODC staff and Judge Beltrami to be "on the lookout for and be aware of Mr. Creazzo. He's threatening to kill people in this office." 12/4/24 N.T. 273-74.

61. Unable to personally serve Respondent, on June 24, 2024, ODC sought and received permission from the Board for substitute service whereby ODC sent a copy of

the Petition for Discipline to Respondent by email and mailed a copy to Respondent's office address by regular U.S. mail and certified mail. 12/4/24 N.T. 283-85.

62. Based on the events of June 21, 2024, on June 24, 2024, ODC filed a Petition for Rule to Show Cause why Respondent should not be placed on Emergency Temporary Suspension under Pa.R.D.E. 208(f)(5). 12/4/24 N.T. 275-276. By Order dated June 25, 2024, the Board Chair issued upon Respondent a Rule to Show Cause why he should not be placed on temporary suspension under Rule 208(f)(5) with a ten-day response return time. Respondent filed a response on July 2, 2024. A Rule to Show Cause hearing was held on July 11, 2024, before a Board Member. By recommendation filed with the Court on July 26, 2024, the Board recommended that Respondent be placed on temporary suspension. By Order dated December 30, 2024, the Court placed Respondent on temporary suspension, effective January 29, 2025.¹

63. On July 3, 2024, Respondent filed two private criminal complaints, one against DC Gilson and one against Investigator McHugh, in which he alleged multiple criminal charges based on trespass and conspiracy to commit trespass. Respondent mailed the criminal complaint to DC Gilson at his personal residence. 12/4/24 N.T. 281; ODC-N. These private criminal complaints were rejected and disapproved by the Northampton County District Attorney's Office. 12/4/24 N.T. 281-82.

64. On July 15, 2024, Respondent filed a verified Answer to the Petition for Discipline, in which he refused to answer any of the allegations set forth in the Petition for Discipline, asserting his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination.

¹ Separate disciplinary proceedings are pending based on Respondent's conduct that resulted in the December 30, 2024 order of temporary suspension.

65. On July 22, 2024, ODC received the unopened envelopes ODC had mailed to Respondent with handwritten notations from Respondent indicating he had refused service of the Petition for Discipline. 12/4/24 N.T. 285-87; ODC-Q. On the outside of the envelopes, Respondent wrote, *inter alia*:

- a. "Return to fired ADA Gilson";
- b. "Gilson for DA? Not competent to get elected dog catcher";
- c. "Gilson: clueless, classless, unethical, unprofessional, incompetent.";
- d. "Gilson-over aggressive"; and
- e. "Gilson: again, you don't know the rules, career government lacky [sic]!"

12/4/24 N.T. 285-87; ODC-Q.

66. On July 31, 2024, ODC filed a Motion to Deem All Allegations in the Petition for Discipline Admitted due to Respondent's failure to submit an answer in compliance with Pa.R.D.E. 208(b)(3). Respondent filed a response to the motion on September 16, 2024.

67. The Committee Chair conducted a prehearing conference on October 2, 2024.

68. On October 3, 2024, the Committee issued an order denying ODC's July 31, 2024 Motion and directing Respondent to file a verified amended answer to the Petition for Discipline that complied with the requirements of Pa.R.D.E. 208(b)(3) by 12:00 p.m. on October 10, 2024. The order further stated that, if the amended answer failed to comply with the rules, "all of the factual evidence set forth in the Petition for Discipline shall be ADMITTED as true for all purpose [sic] and without the need for ODC to file any further motion with respect to this issue."

69. On October 3, 2024, the Committee Chair issued a Pre-Hearing Order establishing deadlines for proposed stipulations, exchange of exhibits, identification of witnesses, objections, and motions.

70. Respondent did not file an amended answer to the Petition for Discipline.

The Disciplinary Hearing

71. The Committee conducted a disciplinary hearing on December 3 and 4, 2024. Respondent appeared pro se. During the first phase of the hearing, ODC introduced the testimony of Mr. Sebelin and Judge Beltrami, and introduced exhibits. Respondent did not present any witnesses at the first phase of the hearing but offered several exhibits.

72. Mr. Sebelin testified regarding his interactions with Respondent relating to Respondent's frivolous motion in the Christ matter. 12/3/24 N.T, 17, 29, 36-41.

73. Judge Beltrami testified regarding Respondent's frivolous motion, stating "it was one of the most frivolous motions that I have ever had in court and that the behavior associated with presenting it was, in my opinion, disrespectful and uncalled for." Judge Beltrami described Respondent's behavior before him in court as "totally inappropriate and unprofessional." 12/3/24 N.T. 118, 121.

74. During the second phase of the hearing to establish evidence of aggravating factors, ODC presented the testimony of Judge Beltrami and DC Gilson.

75. Judge Beltrami testified that after he filed the November 22, 2023 disciplinary complaint against Respondent, Respondent sent highly disrespectful, sarcastic, and mocking emails to Judge Beltrami. 12/3/24 N.T. 208-11.

76. In a January 22, 2024 email to Judge Beltrami, Respondent wrote: "I thought I would be respectful and professional and send you a courtesy copy of the 1925 B Statement. Since it is copied to Mr. Sebelin it is not considered ex parte." 12/3/24 N.T. 208; ODC-A.

77. In a May 22, 2024 email sent to Judge Beltrami, Respondent attached Rule 136 (Ex Parte communication) and wrote: "Perhaps it is time for Northampton County

jurisprudence to evolve into the 21st century. Can you say material misrepresentation to a tribunal? Have a nice day!” 12/3/24 N.T. 209; ODC-A.

78. In a May 23, 2024 email sent to Judge Beltrami, Respondent attached a complaint against Judge Beltrami Respondent was filing with the Judicial Conduct Board (“JCB”) and stated: “I hope you and Holly have a nice summer while the JCB investigates this complaint. The DBoard is already aware of your relationship and when the JCB received this complaint it will be as well. I will be shocked if the JCB does not see this as a STAIN on the Judiciary, literally and figuratively. A wise man once said – when you seek revenge there are two losers. When you seek to avenge there are multiple losers. I trust it was worth it to you Tony, you’re going to lose everything. Let’s see if you whisper this one in her ear. You should have checked with Mike before you decided to file a frivolous DBoard complaint against me. ‘Have a nice Day.’” (12/3/24 N.T. 210-11). (ODC-A). In this email, Respondent refers to his allegation that Judge Beltrami was having some kind of inappropriate relationship with Holly Ruggiero, the Northampton County Prothonotary. 12/3/24 N.T. 211; ODC-A. Respondent has made this allegation about Judge Beltrami on numerous occasions. 12/3/24 N.T. 211.

79. During the disciplinary hearing on December 3, 2024, Respondent again accused Judge Beltrami of having an affair with the Northampton County Prothonotary. 12/3/24 N.T. 229.

80. DC Gilson testified about the events concerning the attempted personal service of the Petition for Discipline and Respondent’s reaction where he emailed threats to kill ODC personnel. In addition to those life-threatening emails, DC Gilson testified regarding multiple other threatening, disparaging and demeaning emails Respondent has sent to him throughout the course of the disciplinary proceedings. 12/4/24 N.T. 250-259.

81. During Respondent's cross-examination of DC Gilson, Respondent was twice admonished by the Hearing Committee Chair to stop yelling at DC Gilson. 12/4/24 N.T. 305, 351. Respondent twice referred to DC Gilson as being incompetent. 12/4/24 N.T. 354, 423.

82. At one point during Respondent's cross-examination of DC Gilson, the Committee Chair directed Respondent to leave the hearing room and take a break to calm down. 12/4/24 N.T. 354.

83. In Respondent's testimony under oath during the second phase of the disciplinary hearing, he failed to accept responsibility for his actions and demonstrate any level of remorse for his conduct. 12/4/24 N.T. 365-426. Instead, Respondent attacked DC Gilson by calling him a liar (12/4/24 N.T. 404), made light of the rule violations (12/4/24 N.T. 405-07), and shifted blame by accusing ODC of harassing him with insignificant violations. 12/4/24 N.T. 405.

84. In mitigation, Respondent presented the testimony of one character witness, Charles Wynn.

85. Mr. Wynn, a veteran of the United States Air Force, testified that in the 1990s, Respondent represented Mr. Wynn in a divorce matter and obtained a successful outcome for his case. Over the years, Respondent represented Mr. Wynn in various other legal matters and Mr. Wynn has referred clients to Respondent. Mr. Wynn considers Respondent to be an excellent attorney who enjoys the highest client satisfaction ratings on the internet among attorneys in Northampton County. Mr. Wynn does not know Respondent to have a criminal record or any prior disciplinary problems and he is not aware of anyone who has spoken ill of Respondent either personally or professionally. Mr. Wynn has worked as a process server for Respondent and has been in court with

Respondent. While in court with Respondent, Mr. Wynn has never seen him act unruly or disrespectfully towards a judge. 12/4/24 N.T. 440-448. Mr. Wynn also submitted a letter on Respondent's behalf. Respondent Exhibit 13.

86. In addition to the testimony and letter of Mr. Wynn, Respondent offered into evidence seven character reference letters. Respondent Exhibit 13.

Post-Hearing Actions

87. Following the close of the record, ODC filed a post-hearing brief to the Committee on February 28, 2025, and requested that the Committee recommend to the Board that Respondent be suspended for not less than one year and one day.

88. After requesting and receiving an extension to file his brief, on May 20, 2025, Respondent filed a post-hearing brief to the Committee. Respondent titled his brief *The Case of the Promiscuous Prothonotary*. The brief was sarcastic in tone and contained inflammatory and derogatory statements and insinuations about Judge Beltrami and other judges on the Northampton County bench, the Northampton County Prothonotary, DC Gilson and other ODC staff. Respondent refuted that he violated any ethical rules, contended he did not disrespect the disciplinary system, and relied on his lack of prior discipline and testimony of his character witness as evidence of his fitness to practice. Respondent offered an apology for his "impassioned and emotional behavior and conduct before the panel." Respondent's Brief, second to last page (brief is not paginated). Respondent concluded his brief with the sarcastic postscript, "I must be fit to practice. I put together this 45 page brief competently and coherently."

89. By Report filed on July 21, 2025, the Committee concluded that ODC met its burden of proof as to violation of Rules of Professional Conduct 3.1, 3.5(a) and 3.5(b) and

Pa.R.D.E. 203(b)(7). The Committee found that Respondent's underlying misconduct was "severely exacerbated" by "significant" aggravating factors. HC Rpt., p. 23.

90. In aggravation, the Committee found that Respondent failed to accept responsibility, showed a lack of respect and disdain for the disciplinary process, failed to appreciate the seriousness of his conduct, and repeatedly made light of the ethical violations. The Committee found Respondent shifted blame to others and engaged in a "continuous and unmitigated campaign of impugning the motives and integrity of ODC and Judge Beltrami by hurling threats and making reckless and baseless accusations against them." HC Rpt., p. 24.

91. In mitigation, the Committee considered the good character testimony of Mr. Wynn and letters from former clients, but determined that the evidence was substantially outweighed by the aggravating factors and did not warrant a form of discipline less than suspension.

92. The Committee unanimously recommended that Respondent be suspended for a period of two years. The Committee further suggested that Respondent submit to psychological counseling prior to applying for reinstatement.

93. The parties did not take exception to the Committee's Report and recommendation.

94. The Board adjudicated this matter at the meeting on October 24, 2025.

II. CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

By his conduct as set forth above, Respondent violated the following Rules of Professional Conduct and Pennsylvania Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement:

1. RPC 3.1 – A lawyer shall not bring or defend a proceeding, or assert or controvert an issue therein, unless there is a basis in law and fact for doing so that is not frivolous, which includes a good faith argument for an extension, modification or reversal of existing law.
2. RPC 3.5(a) – A lawyer shall not seek to influence a judge, juror, prospective juror or other official by means prohibited by law.
3. RPC 3.5(b) – A lawyer shall not communicate ex parte with such a person [judge, juror, prospective juror or other official] during the proceedings unless authorized to do so by law or court order.
4. Pa.R.D.E. 203(b)(7) – The following shall be grounds for discipline: failure by a respondent-attorney without good cause to respond to Disciplinary Counsel’s request or supplemental request under Disciplinary Board Rules, § 87.7(b) for a statement of the respondent-attorney’s position.

III. DISCUSSION

This matter comes before the Board to consider the Report of the Hearing Committee concluding that Respondent violated Rules of Professional Conduct 3.1, 3.5(a) and 3.5(b) and Pennsylvania Rule of Disciplinary Enforcement 203(b)(7) and unanimously recommending that Respondent be suspended for a period of two years and suggesting that he submit to psychological counseling prior to applying for reinstatement. Upon our independent review, we conclude that a two year suspension is warranted.

ODC bears the burden of proving professional misconduct by clear and convincing evidence. *Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. Anonymous Attorney*, 331 A.3d

523 (Pa. 2025). By Respondent's failure to provide a substantive answer to the Petition for Discipline, Respondent is deemed to have admitted all factual allegations of misconduct. Pa.R.D.E. 208(b)(3). These admissions, supplemented by ODC's witness testimony, Respondent's testimony, and ODC's exhibits, clearly establish that Respondent violated RPC 3.1, 3.5(a) and (b), and Pa.R.D.E. 203(b)(7).

The record evidence demonstrates that Respondent violated RPC 3.1, which prohibits a lawyer from bringing or defending a proceeding, or asserting or controverting an issue therein, unless there is a basis in law and fact for doing so that is not frivolous, which includes a good faith argument for an extension, modification or reversal of existing law. In the Christ matter, Respondent filed Plaintiff's Motion for Sanctions alleging that Defendant's Motion for Special Relief should be struck and sanctions imposed because it was filed double-sided, in violation of Pa.R.C.P. 204.1(5). Prior to filing this motion, Respondent intentionally and willfully failed to check the Prothonotary's file to determine if the original Defendant's Motion was filed single-sided with the court. Had he done so, he would have discovered that Defendant's Motion was properly filed single-sided with the court, in compliance with the rule. Further, had Respondent exercised this level of reasonable care and diligence, it would have been plainly evident that there was no basis in law or fact to file Plaintiff's Motion for Sanctions. As Judge Beltrami ruled, Plaintiff's Motion for Sanctions should not have been brought because it was a frivolous motion. Accordingly, there is ample evidence on this record that Respondent violated RPC 3.1.

The record evidence established that Respondent violated RPC 3.5(a) and (b). RPC 3.5(a) prohibits a lawyer from seeking to influence a judge, juror, prospective juror or other official by means prohibited by law. RPC 3.5(b) further provides that a

lawyer is prohibited from communicating ex parte with such persons during the proceeding unless authorized to do so by law or court order. ODC presented substantial evidence to prove that Respondent violated these rules by sending an unsolicited, improper email to Judge Beltrami on November 21, 2023, without copying Attorney Sebelin. ODC-11 at 1. This email constituted an ex parte communication in which Respondent sought to improperly influence Judge Beltrami's decision to impose sanctions against Respondent for filing a frivolous motion. This email was sent to chambers even after Judge Beltrami sent an explicit email dated November 8, 2023, to both Respondent and Attorney Sebelin warning counsel not to send unsolicited emails to chambers and advising counsel that the court viewed such communications as improper and ex parte. ODC-7 at 9. Respondent's conduct in this regard evinced a complete lack of respect for the court and its directives.

Under Pa.R.D.E. 203(b)(7), it is a ground for discipline if a respondent-attorney fails "without good cause to respond to Disciplinary Counsel's request or supplemental request under Disciplinary Board Rules, § 87.7(b) for a statement of the respondent-attorney's position." Under Disciplinary Board Rules, § 87.7(c), "All statements of position shall be in writing and sufficiently detailed as to advise Disciplinary Counsel and any reviewing hearing committee member that the Executive Office may appoint under § 87.32 (relating to action by reviewing hearing committee member) of the nature of any defense. The respondent-attorney should include with the statement any corroborating documentation and may include in the statement mitigating factors and any relevant facts or circumstances that may assist Disciplinary Counsel in determining under § 87.8(b) the action to be taken or the disposition recommended."

Despite numerous requests by ODC, Respondent failed to provide a sufficiently detailed statement of position in response to the DB-7 in compliance with the rules, on the basis of a claim of privilege against self-incrimination. The averments in the DB-7 letter pertained to violations of ethical rules of conduct and not to any violations of criminal laws. In this context, Respondent's claim of a Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination is misplaced and does not constitute good cause for his failure to provide a sufficiently detailed statement of position to the DB-7 letter. Moreover, in Respondent's email of December 15, 2023, where he acknowledged receipt of the DB-7 letter and refused to provide a response to the DB-7 letter on the basis of a purported Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination, Respondent made numerous assertions that he described as "exculpatory information." ODC-D. By voluntarily making these assertions, it can reasonably be found that Respondent waived any privilege to remain silent and not disclose any information under the Fifth Amendment. Accordingly, ODC proved Respondent's violation of Pa.R.D.E. 203(b)(7).

Having concluded that Respondent engaged in professional misconduct, this matter is ripe for the determination of discipline. Disciplinary sanctions serve the dual role of protecting the public from unfit attorneys and maintaining the integrity of the legal system. *Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. Robert Costigan*, 584 A.2d 296, 300 (Pa. 1990). In assessing the appropriate quantum of discipline, the Board must weigh any aggravating and mitigating circumstances. *Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. Brian J. Preski*, 134 A.3d 1027, 1031 (Pa. 2016).

On this record, we find significant and weighty aggravating factors with no countervailing mitigation. The nature of these aggravating factors exacerbate the underlying misconduct to the degree that suspension of Respondent's law license is

necessary. To begin, we find that Respondent was uncooperative with the basic procedures of the disciplinary system. Even though Respondent requested that formal charges be initiated, he refused to accept service of the Petition for Discipline, going so far as to mail back unopened envelopes ODC had mailed to him and writing notations on the outside of the envelopes that disparaged DC Gilson. Respondent later failed to file an answer to the Petition that complied with the rules.

Considering this initial lack of cooperation, it is unsurprising that Respondent failed to accept responsibility for his actions and displayed an abject lack of remorse. Throughout these proceedings, Respondent has pointedly refused to acknowledge his conduct that precipitated these disciplinary proceedings: he was sanctioned for filing a frivolous motion and presenting it to Judge Beltrami in a disrespectful and unprofessional manner, and engaged in improper, prohibited ex parte communications contrary to Judge Beltrami's specific instructions for properly communicating with the court. Respondent failed to appreciate the seriousness of this misconduct and repeatedly made light of the violations. It is evident from the record that Respondent has engaged in zero self-reflection as to his actions, believes he did nothing wrong, and blames anyone and everyone but himself for these disciplinary proceedings.

To that end, the record established that in response to the disciplinary investigation and proceedings, Respondent chose to mount a continuous campaign of impugning the motives and integrity of others. The targets of his ire included Judge Beltrami and other Northampton County judges and personnel, as well as DC Gilson and other ODC staff. Respondent demonstrated extreme disrespect and contempt toward Judge Beltrami, sending the judge emails that were sarcastic in tone and that accused him of misrepresentation and engaging in an improper relationship with the Northampton

County Prothonotary. Egregiously, Respondent threatened Judge Beltrami that he would “lose everything.”

Respondent similarly blamed ODC for his disciplinary issues. During ODC’s investigation of the complaint filed by Judge Beltrami and throughout these disciplinary proceedings, Respondent sent numerous emails to DC Gilson attacking the investigation and attacking DC Gilson’s competence, intelligence and character, as well as threatening to file a disciplinary complaint and a civil action against DC Gilson. In an alarming example of Respondent’s recalcitrance, he obstructed ODC’s attempt to effectuate the required personal service of the Petition for Discipline by cursing and threatening the ODC investigator and then sending three threatening emails to DC Gilson that ominously stated, *inter alia*, “if you have someone come to my personal property again, they will not live to tell about it.” Respondent’s conduct pertaining to the service of the Petition for Discipline culminated in his temporary suspension from the practice of law; that specific conduct is currently the subject of a separate disciplinary action. However, we consider Respondent’s actions in the context of the instant matter as an aggravating factor that demonstrates the need for heightened discipline in the instant matter.

In further aggravation, Respondent’s behavior at the two-day disciplinary hearing was nothing short of unprofessional and exemplified his disrespectful attitude and disdain for the disciplinary system that has prevailed through the entirety of these proceedings. Respondent displayed contempt towards Judge Beltrami, accusing him of an improper relationship with the Northampton County Prothonotary. He disparaged DC Gilson by calling him incompetent and a liar. And, Respondent exhibited a lack of self-control that forced the Committee Chair to specifically admonish him on two occasions to

stop yelling at a witness. On another occasion, the Chair ordered Respondent to leave the hearing room for a break to calm down.

Finally, we take note of Respondent's post-hearing brief to the Committee, which captures the essence of Respondent's lack of professionalism. From the incendiary and inappropriate title on the first page, *The Case of the Promiscuous Prothonotary*, through the many derogatory comments made about Judge Beltrami, DC Gilson and others, and ending with the mocking postscript touting his competence on the last page, Respondent amply displayed both his utter contempt for these proceedings and lack of fitness to practice law.

In mitigation, we consider the character testimony of Respondent's witness and letters from former clients attesting to Respondent's competence and professionalism as an attorney. We also note that Respondent has no discipline of record, although he is currently under temporary suspension from the practice of law. We give no weight to this evidence, as we find the serious aggravating factors of record vitiate any attempt by Respondent to demonstrate that he is competent and professional.

Respondent's underlying misconduct, while concerning, essentially has been eclipsed by his reactive behavior to the disciplinary proceedings. He has single-handedly escalated a matter that may have been addressed with lesser discipline into a showcase for his lack of fitness that requires suspension. Precedent suggests that where an attorney files a frivolous pleading and engages in ex parte communication with a judge, the attorney is not considered unfit to practice and may receive discipline short of a license suspension. See *Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. Jeffrey Marc Robinson*, No. 180 DB 2019 (D. Bd. Order 11/6/2019) (Robinson filed frivolous pleadings resulting in sanctions levied against clients; Board imposed a public reprimand); *Office of Disciplinary Counsel*

v. Carol Tatem Herring, No. 153 DB 2017 (D. Bd. Order 10/16/2017) (Herring engaged in various acts of ethical misconduct in one matter, including ex parte communication with the court and raising frivolous claims; Board imposed a public reprimand).

Here, precedent supports elevated discipline based on the instant weighty aggravating factors of failure to accept responsibility, lack of remorse, shifting blame to others, failure to cooperate, disdain and disrespect for the disciplinary system and those who operate within it, and extreme unprofessional behavior during the proceedings. See *Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. William J. Weiss*, No. 133 DB 2021 (D. Bd. Rpt. 3/11/2024) (S. Ct. Order 5/2/2024) (Weiss's discipline was aggravated by his "combative, rude and disrespectful conduct at the disciplinary hearing"); *Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. Erik Benjamin Cherdak*, No. 50 DB 2021 (D. Bd. Rpt. 4/20/2022) (S. Ct. Order 10/28/2022) (Cherdak's discipline was aggravated by his "lack of respect for the disciplinary system, the Committee and Disciplinary Counsel" and for acting during the disciplinary hearing in a manner that caused the Committee Chair to chastise him); *Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. Allan K. Marshall*, No. 136 DB 2019 (D. Bd. Rpt. 5/28/2020) (S. Ct. Order 2/12/2021) (Marshall's discipline was aggravated by his "demonstrated disdain for the disciplinary system" and accusations against Disciplinary Counsel of "unprofessional conduct").

Upon the totality of facts and circumstances, we find that Respondent's misconduct in tandem with the significant aggravating circumstances establish his unfitness to practice law and support his removal from practice. Consistent with the goals of the disciplinary system to protect the public and preserve the integrity of the courts and the legal profession, we conclude that a two year period of suspension is warranted. We decline to adopt the Committee's suggestion that Respondent submit to psychological

counseling prior to applying for reinstatement as no evidence relating to Respondent's mental health was presented that would support that recommendation.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

The Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania unanimously recommends that the Respondent, Ronnie Louis Creazzo, be Suspended for two years from the practice of law in this Commonwealth.

It is further recommended that the expenses incurred in the investigation and prosecution of this matter are to be paid by the Respondent.

Respectfully submitted,

THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

By: 

Scott B. Cooper, Member

Date: 1/9/26