APPENDIX AA

In The Matter Of:

In Re: Paul M. Sushchyk

Commission Hearing Re Discipline Vol. I October 5, 2020



50 Franklin St., Boston, MA 02110 Phone (617) 426-2432

Original File Commission Hearing Re Paul Sushchyk.txt

Min-U-Script® with Word Index

Commission Hearing Re Discipline - Vol. I - October 5, 2020 1 Volume I Pages 1 to 26 Exhibit 1 COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT COMPLAINT NUMBER 2019-27 SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT CASE NO. 0E-143 IN RE: PAUL M. SUSHCHYK COMMISSION HEARING RE DISCIPLINE ALL PARTICIPANTS APPEARED REMOTELY VIA ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE COMMISSION MEMBERS: Hon. Julie J. Bernard, Chairperson Kathleen M. O'Donnell, Vice-chair Herby Duverne Katherine A. Field Jacqueline A. O'Neill Edward Ryan, Jr. Patricia Saint James Felicia P. Wiltz Hon. Daniel Wrenn COMMISSION STAFF:

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APPEARANCES:

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(By Daniel Carey, Esq.)
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for Emily Deines.

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APPEARANCES (Continued):
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         for Paul M. Sushchyk.
ALSO PRESENT:
         Emily Deines
         Hon. Paul M. Sushchyk
                    Held via Zoom
               Monday, October 5, 2020
                     10:01 a.m.
  (Alexander Loos, Registered Diplomate Reporter)
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1 PROCEEDINGS

CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: Good morning. I am calling this public hearing to order.

This is a public hearing in the matter of Judge Paul M. Sushchyk, associate justice of the Probate and Family Court, SJC Docket Number OE-0143, Commission Complaint Number 2019-17 (sic). It is being held pursuant to Mass. General Laws, Chapter 211C, Section 7, and Commission on Judicial Conduct Rule 11E. The sole purpose of this hearing relates to the Commission on Judicial Conduct's recommendation for discipline in this matter.

By way of background, a public hearing was held July 20th through July 22nd, 2020, virtually, pursuant to the Commission on Judicial Conduct temporary emergency order on protocols for remote formal hearings. On August 17th, 2020, retired Superior Court Judge Bertha J. Josephson entered her findings of fact and recommendation for sanctions in this matter. This order is available for review on the Commission website.

Notice of today's hearing was sent to all interested and concerned parties, including Judge Paul M. Sushchyk, associate justice of the Probate

1 and Family Court, Chief Justice John M. Casey of the 2 Probate and Family Court, Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, and Emily 3 Deines of the Massachusetts Trial Court. With no objection from Mr. Angelini, we 5 will mark for an exhibit in this matter the notice 6 7 that was sent to all parties giving notice of this hearing, the time, the rule that it is being 8 conducted by and the substance of and purpose of 9 10 this -- today's hearing. That will be marked as an exhibit for purposes of the hearing today. 11 12 (Document marked as Hearing 13 Exhibit 1 admitted into the record) 14 CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: I am now going to conduct a roll call of members of the Commission on 15 16 Judicial Conduct, and I'm going to state their status as either a judicial member, an attorney 17 member, or a lay member, and I'm going to ask every 18 member to say "present" once their name and status 19 is called. 20 21 Okay. As I previously stated, my name is 22 Judge Julie Bernard. I am chair, and I am a 23 judicial member. Vice-chair is Kathleen M. O'Donnell, and 24

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    she is an attorney member.
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             VICE-CHAIR O'DONNELL: Present.
3
             CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: Judge Daniel M.
    Wrenn, judicial member.
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5
             Judge Wrenn, can you unmute yourself and
    say "present."
6
7
             JUDGE WRENN: Sorry. Present.
             CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: Judge Kathryn A.
8
9
    Field, judicial member.
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             JUDGE FIELD: Present.
11
             CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: Edward P. Ryan,
12
    attorney member.
13
             MR. RYAN: Present.
14
             CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: Patricia Saint James,
    attorney member.
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16
             MS. SAINT JAMES: Present.
             CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: Dr. Felicia P. Wiltz,
17
    lay member.
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             DR. WILTZ: Present.
             CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: Jacqueline A.
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    O'Neill, lay member.
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             MS. O'NEILL: Present.
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             CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: Herby Duverne, lay
24
    member.
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Commission Hearing Re Discipline - Vol. I - October 5, 2020
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              MR. DUVERNE: Present.
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              CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: All members of the
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    Commission are present.
              Also present on this call are Attorney
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    Michael P. Angelini, attorney for Judge Paul M.
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    Sushchyk; Judge Paul M. Sushchyk; Ms. Emily Deines
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7
    of the Mass. Trial Court; and Attorney Dan M. Carey,
    who represents Emily Deines.
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             All right. As a reminder, the only subject
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    matter for discussion for today's hearing is the
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    recommendation for discipline. We will not
    entertain any new evidence, exhibits, witnesses or
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    cross-examination. You will have 30 minutes for
    your presentation. The Commission members may ask
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    questions regarding your presentation.
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              We will now start this hearing.
              I am first going to ask, Attorney Carey,
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    are you going to speak or is Ms. Deines going to
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    speak?
             MR. CAREY: Ms. Deines would like to make
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    her own statement, Judge Bernard.
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              CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: Ms. Deines, you may
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be heard.

1 STATEMENT BY MS. DEINES

MS. DEINES: Thank you.

And thank you, Judge Bernard.

Thank you for inviting me to speak here today. As a witness in the procedure, I have not had many opportunities to have my voice heard about this procedure and the determination.

I'd like to start by saying that I'm choosing to be blunt here because I think it's important. The Commission's handling of my reported incident was unnecessarily traumatic for me and my family. I should never have had to fight to keep my name out of the press release or fight to keep my mother, with terminal cancer, out of a courthouse during a global pandemic. My recorded testimony should never have played on the local news so that when I was out with my son I was stopped and asked about it. The Commission should have listened to my valid concerns for safety and privacy of my family and done what I know lawyers do best, argued for an adapted procedure to fit the circumstances: In my case, unwanted sexual contact in the workplace.

Regarding Mr. Sushchyk, I believe the Honorable Retired Judge Bertha Johnson said it

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with; that he feels self-recrimination as a result

of that and, as I said, is apologetic for it; that

he is taking steps to rehabilitate himself, and the

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like. And I'm aware of the fact, having previously represented the Commission in a matter charging a judge, that that is commonly the case and provides an opportunity for resolution.

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But I want to say to you very frankly, with Judge Sushchyk's full authority, that he did not have any intentional contact with Ms. Deines. We are sorry for what occurred to her. I feel badly, listening to her comment, of the extent to which her family has unnecessarily been involved in this. But Judge Sushchyk denies that he had any intentional physical contact with Ms. Deines, and because he denies it, and because that is his best recollection and belief after intensive self-examination, he cannot take what would be the easier course, because that would be dishonest; and you should not want, none of us should want a judge who expresses that dishonesty in the interest of expediency to be sitting as a judge. So I say that to you quite -with great respect.

I also want to say that I respect

Ms. Deines for coming forward, as does Judge

Sushchyk. She has a right to do it. We believe her honesty in saying that someone had physical contact

with her that evening. It was not Judge Sushchyk.

And while Judge Josephson -- Retired Judge Josephson has reached some conclusions, I do want to point the Commission to our objections that we filed and ask that each of you carefully read those objections.

If you do so, and if you reflect on the testimony in this matter, you will be reminded that Ms. Deines' conclusion that it was Judge Sushchyk who slid his hand under -- slid a hand under her buttocks and lifted and squeezed and pinched her, she concluded it was Judge Sushchyk because, in her statement to the Commission, she said it was Judge Sushchyk "because he was the only person behind me" or "passing behind me at the time."

I respect Ms. Deines' honesty during the course of this proceeding in which she acknowledged that, in fact, she was -- despite her statement under oath that Judge Sushchyk was the only person passing behind her, she acknowledged under oath that she had no knowledge whatsoever of who or how many people were passing behind her or were otherwise behind her. As her testimony said, quote:

"I cannot tell you what was going on behind my back," end quote.

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             CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: Excuse me, Attorney
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    Angelini.
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             MR. ANGELINI: Yes.
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             CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: You're arguing the
    facts. That's not --
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             MR. ANGELINI: I am.
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             CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: -- what's going to
    happen here today. We're here regarding discipline.
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             MR. ANGELINI: I believe the facts play an
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    important role in your recommendation, and, in the
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    absence of facts, I don't know, Judge, how you can
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    make a recommendation.
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             I want -- I argue -- well, I -- sorry for
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    your reaction --
             CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: I have --
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16
             MR. ANGELINI: -- but the facts, it seems
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    to me --
             CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: We have your written
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    objections. We have your written objections and the
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    arguments that you've made, but the sole purpose of
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    today is discipline and the recommendation for
22
    discipline.
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             MR. ANGELINI: Well, I suggest to you,
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    respectfully, that should not be the case; that the
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1 Commission, in considering what its recommendation 2 should be, should make an evaluation. Judge Josephson rendered advice to the Commission. 3 Judge Josephson's conclusions -- which I have pointed out, 4 I believe correctly, are not grounded in the 5 facts -- need to be evaluated for the Commission to 6 7 make a reasoned recommendation to the Supreme Judicial Court. 8 9 If you decline to hear any more of what I want to say about the facts of this case, I'll be --10 I'll take your instruction, since you're in charge 11 of this, but I think that's a significant error. It 12 13 does damage to Judge Sushchyk's situation. The fact of the matter is -- and I'll just say it briefly and 14 15 not belabor the point -- that the only percipient 16 witnesses to this act do not include Ms. Sushchyk --Ms. Deines. The only percipient witnesses to this 17 alleged act -- Ms. Patsos -- Attorney Patsos, 18

Attorney Welch and Judge Sushchyk -- all stated under oath facts which are entirely inconsistent with any implication of Judge Sushchyk in this matter, and I ask you to take that into account as

you consider what recommendation you make.

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Now I'll move beyond the facts, not because

I think they're unimportant, but because you've told me you don't want to be guided by them.

CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: We will consider your objections to the facts as far as your written submission to the Commission are heard, but today's hearing is regarding discipline.

MR. ANGELINI: Well, I appreciate that, and I believe those facts and my ability to argue those facts is important to that, but I defer to you, as I must, because you're in charge and I'm not, and I respect your responsibility here.

As you do so, I'll ask you to keep in mind that Judge Sushchyk has a unblemished -- an unblemished record as a military record, a record of community service, a record of public service as an elected selectperson in the town of Sterling, as a police officer, as a member of the Worcester County Bar Association and the Massachusetts Bar, indeed as a former president of the Worcester County Bar Association. He has had, for more than 40 years, experience in positions of authority and responsibility.

There is, to the best of our knowledge and to the record in this case, no other incident of any

1 wrongdoing on his part, much less any allegation of 2 wrongdoing involving intentional contact -intentional contact with another person of the type 3 of -- anything close to the type mentioned here. This is -- this act, which is complained 5 of, is a distinct -- distinct, short action. 6 7 Putting aside the fact that Judge Sushchyk did not engage in this act, it is something which is alleged 8 to have occurred between 5 and 15 seconds. It is 9 not a reflection of a course of conduct. It is not 10 a reflection of the absence of character. It is not 11 a reflection of a -- of a life which is other than a 12 13 life which Judge Sushchyk has led. And I believe, we believe that the Commission should take that into 14 account in evaluating this case. 15 16 From the very beginning of this case, the Commission has insisted, has insisted even before 17 the hearing of this case, this matter could be 18 resolved only by Judge Sushchyk's resignation. 19 20 is an extraordinary, extraordinary position. It is, 21 with respect to a person in his situation, capital 22 punishment, or the equivalent of it, and it is 23 certainly not warranted in this case given his record, given what's -- given his record of service, 24

given his record of behavior, regardless of the fact that it -- putting aside from his contest that this act did not occur.

Now, I will tell you that since the time of this hearing, which -- and by the way, I'm conscious of Ms. Deines' comments that this became a matter of public comment and of broad broadcast. I had asked respectfully that this not be conducted by Zoom in the interest of privacy of all kinds of people, including Ms. Deines and Judge Sushchyk.

But since that hearing, I have been contacted by tens and tens of people, including -- mostly including lawyers, mostly including the people who have practiced law with Judge Sushchyk, who have appeared before him. I've received e-mails, texts, notes, cards and telephone calls from many of these people, women and men, lawyers, townspeople who have known him for years, expressing their dismay that anyone could think that he would have done anything of this nature, and shocked that he's been accused of it. Some of them have described to me that Judge Sushchyk is a person of humility and not of ego; that he invariably gives the benefit of the doubt to others; that he is, by

nature, an accommodating person; that he is, by
their experience, respectful of people and
respectful of all people, regardless of gender or
national background or any affiliation, and
expressing their concern that he could be accused of
this as being entirely inconsistent with his
character, and that is the record of this case.

I have reviewed the record of discipline which has been imposed and/or recommended by the Commission in preparation for this, and have attempted to make as comprehensive a search as possible with respect to what has happened to others who have acknowledged wrongdoing -- not charged with it, but who have acknowledged wrongdoing -- and attempted to look at those instances of discipline as a way of determining what would be fair in this case even if, as is disputed, heatedly disputed, Judge Sushchyk had engaged in this conduct.

I note that two judges -- and I'll mention judges by name not because I mean anything about them other than the record, but it's important to the record -- have been found, by their own admission, guilty of drunk driving, endangering the lives of people after drinking to excess on public

highways -- in one case, on a major public
highway -- engaging in the most reckless form of
behavior that exposed other people, not simply to
harm, but to death. Those two judges received
virtually no punishment.

Judge Trainor completed a driver's alcohol education program and agreed to not sit in any appeal involving a charge of operating under the influence of alcohol for one year. He was an appeals court judge.

Judge Christine McEvoy -- and, by the way, I know Judge Trainor and Judge McEvoy, and I respect them. We all make mistakes. Judge McEvoy made a seriously -- a similarly serious mistake, operating a motor vehicle on Route 93, as I recall, under the influence of alcohol. She completed a driver's alcohol education program.

Those were the results of those activities.

Judge Lyons, Marie Lyons, in a case in which I represented the Commission, probate judge sitting in Hamden County, as I recall, was charged with a number of offenses involving entering orders -- orders that were not authorized, entering orders not requested by either of the parties,

refusing to allow parties to be heard, refusing to allow litigants, their lawyers to be heard, refusing to consider matters before her, refusing to enter temporary orders without considering the facts, and on and on, a course of conduct over several months -- indeed, as I recall, several years. Judge Lyons received a public reprimand, a three months' suspension without pay and two weeks of -- and a two-week educational program. That's a matter in which I represented the Commission.

There are cases in which judges have

been -- have resigned, or first resigned, but based

on my review of all of the matters involving alleged

wrongdoing by judges, I could not find any offense

close in any way to what Judge Sushchyk is charged

with doing which resulted in such an extraordinary

result, an extraordinary sanction, I should say.

And that -- that record, I must say, includes

several offenses in which there are public censures,

public reprimands.

And I will simply say -- and come close to ending with where I began -- the fact that Judge Sushchyk is not going to take an expedient way out, the fact that he is not going to admit to something

that he did not do, should not mean that he gets, or is suggested to receive, a stiffer penalty than he might otherwise receive. That would not be justice.

That would not be the law. He should not be compelled to admit to having done something he did not do simply to get a better recommendation from you with respect to reprimand.

Now Judge Sushchyk has asked me to read a

Now Judge Sushchyk has asked me to read a statement on his behalf, and I'm going to do so.

The statement is a follows:

"My name is Paul M. Sushchyk. I am 65 years of age, married, a father and a grandfather. I have three adult children and reside in Sterling, Massachusetts, where I was born.

"Since the age of 19, I have worked in a number of positions involving power, authority and responsibility. I have been a police officer, both state and local; a military veteran; and have served as an elected official in my home town of Sterling for a number of years, including on the board of selectmen. I have been a member of the Massachusetts bar since 1981

and have been involved in leadership positions in my local county bar association, including as its president.

"I was appointed to the bench in February of 2018. As a judge, I have always sought to act in a fashion which promoted respect for the law, respect for the judiciary and respect for those persons, varied and diverse, who appear before me and whom I have otherwise encountered.

"My judicial evaluation was positive.

It showed that I was considered to be a good judge by those who appeared before me.

I have tried very hard to conduct myself with the requisite poise and demeanor befitting my office as a judge.

"On the night in question, on
April 25, 2019, while I may have been
compromised by the length of the day and
consumption of alcohol, as I have said, I
was not inebriated, and I was not
intoxicated, and I did not have any
nonconsensual intentional physical contact

with Ms. Deines. Whether someone else did so, I do not know. There were others in the vicinity of Ms. Deines. I did not do so myself.

"This allegation against me stands alone on what I believe to be an otherwise unblemished record of service and behavior over the past 46 years. During these years I have been engaged in those professions in which I had responsibility for other people, and which other people reported to me and appeared before me. There has not been a single allegation of inappropriate behavior by me over" that -- "over all those years.

"My ... 2019" -- "May of 2019

statement, which has been the subject

matter of comment, was an honest

recollection by me at that time of the

events of that evening, according to what

was my memory at that time. I had not

revisited the location where the incident

took place or spoken with anyone else or

refreshed my memory in any way. I realized

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later, during the course of my investigation and recollection and conversations and self-engagement, that that statement was based upon an imperfect memory. My best memory is the one which I testified to under oath.

"I request that the Commission recommend that I be returned for future service as a judge. I have demonstrated in the past my ability to act as a judge and to perform with servitude the functions of my office, and I believe that I deserve to do so.

"I have learned invaluable and hard lessons since this complaint was made against me. I have been reminded that, while serving as a judge, I must conduct myself in a manner at all times befitting my office, 24 hours a day and seven days a week. I have been reminded that I must be cognizant and mindful of all of what -
"of all acts and statements and especially in social settings. I have been reminded that I must temper, if not abstain, from

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all alcohol consumption, particularly in a social setting. I have been reminded that I must continue, without reservation, to continue to respect the gender, nature and rights of all persons with whom I come into contact, both on the bench and off. And I have been reminded that I must never put myself in a position where claims of this nature could ever be made against me.

"Respectfully, Paul Sushchyk."

Judge Sushchyk, in February -- in the last part of February of this year was assigned administrative responsibilities. He has not been on the bench for all of these months.

In April of this past year, Judge Sushchyk began monitoring the Trial Court help phone desk and has spent his time receiving and dealing with and providing suggestions to between 10 and 20 calls per day, seeking to provide guidance, in accordance with the objectives of the help phone desk, to persons who had issues and needed some information regarding the Trial Court.

He has continued his public service during this time. He remains committed to public service.

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    He remains committed to the judiciary. He is
2
    65 years of age. He has five more years to spend as
    a judge. We ask you, respectfully, not to make a
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    recommendation which interferes with that objective.
             That is all I have to say. Thank you.
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             CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: Thank you,
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    Mr. Angelini.
             Are there any questions by Commission
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9
    members?
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             No questions by Commission members.
             I'm going to state that the Commission will
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12
    make its final recommendation to the Supreme
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    Judicial Court within 90 days of today's hearing.
             And with that, this hearing is adjourned.
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             MR. ANGELINI: Thank you.
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             CHAIRPERSON BERNARD: Thank you.
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                   (Whereupon, the hearing was
                   adjourned at 10:32 a.m.)
18
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	\sim 2	26
1	CERTIFICATE	
2	I, Alexander K. Loos, Registered Diplomate	
3	Reporter, do hereby certify that the foregoing	
4	transcript, Volume I, is a true and accurate	
5	transcription of my stenographic notes taken on	
6	October 5, 2020.	
7		
8	11	
9	Coh	
LO		
L1	Alexander K. Loos	
L2	Registered Diplomate Reporter	
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COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT 11 BEACON STREET, SUITE 525

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02108-3006

Phone: (617) 725-8050 Fax: (617) 248-9938

September 15, 2020



BY EMAIL (mangelini@bowditch.com)

Mr. Michael P. Angelini, Esq. Bowditch & Dewey, LLP 311 Main Street P.O. Box 15156 Worcester, MA 01615

RE: Complaint Number 2019-27/SJC OE-0143

Dear Mr. Angelini:

I am contacting you to follow-up on my September 9, 2020 letter to you in response to your request, on behalf of your client, Judge Paul M. Sushchyk, to be heard before the Commission, regarding its recommendation for discipline in the above-referenced matter, pursuant to Commission Rule 11D.

The Commission had originally scheduled that hearing for 10 a.m., on September 21, 2020. With the recent passing of Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court Ralph Gants, the Commission felt that it was appropriate to postpone that hearing until Monday, October 5, 2020, at 10 a.m.

The hearing will still be public and will be subject to the requirements of Commission Rule 11E.

Because of ongoing safety concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, this hearing will be held remotely using the "Zoom" videoconference platform. Accordingly, Judge Sushchyk's statement/appearance before the Commission will take place through the "Zoom" platform and will be recorded on video and/or audio. No parties other than the stenographer and the Commission will be permitted to record this hearing. This hearing will also be transcribed by a stenographer from Doris Wong. The Commission is in receipt of your and Judge Sushchyk's email addresses to facilitate your participation in the hearing.

By way of reminder, pursuant to Commission Rule 11D, the purpose of the September 21, 2020 hearing will be for Judge Sushchyk to be heard regarding "[the Commission's] recommendation for discipline" to the Supreme Judicial Court, based

upon the Hearing Officer's findings of misconduct against him. The Commission will not entertain or permit Judge Sushchyk to make statements that exceed that purpose, particularly any statements revealing information or evidence that the Hearing Officer ruled inadmissible during the formal hearing.

Sincerely,

/HN/ Howard V. Neff, III Executive Director

cc: Hon. Julie J. Bernard, Chair



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September 15, 2020

BY EMAIL (dan.carey@careylegal.net)

Mr. Dan Carey, Esq. 76 Masonic Street Northampton, MA 01060

RE: Complaint Number 2019-27/SJC OE-0143

Dear Mr. Carey:

I am contacting you to follow-up on my letter of August 17, 2020, notifying you of Ms. Deines' right to file a written request to be heard before the Commission regarding its recommendation for discipline.

The Commission received Ms. Deines' request to be heard, and then originally scheduled the Commission Rule 11E hearing for her to be heard regarding the Commission's recommendation for discipline for 10 a.m. on September 21, 2020. Such hearings are public and are subject to the requirements of Commission Rule 11E.

In light of the recent passing of Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court Ralph Gants, the Commission felt that it was appropriate to reschedule that hearing for 10 a.m. on Monday, October 5, 2020.

Because of the still ongoing safety concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, this hearing will be held remotely using the "Zoom" videoconference platform. Accordingly, Judge Sushchyk's statement/appearance before the Commission will take place through the "Zoom" platform and will be recorded on video and/or audio. This hearing will also be transcribed by a stenographer from Doris Wong. No parties other than the stenographer and the Commission will be permitted to record this hearing.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Thank you.		
	Sincerely,	
	/HN/	
	Howard V. Neff, III	

Executive Director