

THIRD DISTRICT COURT OF APPEAL OF FLORIDA

Sharon Dresser v. Hal J. Webb

Dresser v. Webb · No. No. 3D24-0056 · Decided November 5, 2025

SUMMARY

The Florida Third District Court of Appeal affirmed the trial court's judgment in favor of Hal J. Webb and related appellees. The per curiam opinion relied on principles concerning ratification of settlements, fraud claims based on adversary statements, summary-judgment findings, defamation privileges and standards, evidentiary balancing, and punitive damages.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Third District Court of Appeal of Florida
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Thomas Logue Emass; Miller; Lobree
JURISDICTION	Florida Third District Court of Appeal
DECIDED	November 5, 2025
DOCKET	No. 3D24-0056
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Appeal from a judgment of the Circuit Court for Miami-Dade County.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The opinion cites the standards applicable to the sufficiency of clear and convincing evidence and legal determinations concerning defamation, opinion, privilege, and evidentiary admissibility, but does not expressly state a single overall standard of review.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	published
PARTIES	Sharon Dresser v. Hal J. Webb, Hal J. Webb, P.A., et al.

TOPICS

- defamation
- evidence
- summary judgment
- appellate procedure
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- appellate procedure
- defamation
- evidence
- punitive damages

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the circuit court's judgment should be affirmed in light of the settlement-ratification, fraud, defamation, evidentiary, and punitive-damages issues raised on appeal.

HOLDINGS

1. The circuit court judgment was affirmed.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The court may find as a matter of law that where a party accepts the benefits of a settlement or compromise of his case and he knows or in the exercise of due diligence should have known all the facts concerning that settlement (as in the case at bar), he ratifies that settlement by the acceptance of those benefits whether the settlement in the first instance was unauthorized by him or not and he is thereafter estopped to attack the settlement and the judgment entered thereon.” (1)

“The news media has been given a qualified privilege to accurately report on the information they receive from government officials. This privilege includes the broadcast ‘of the contents of an official document, so long as their account is reasonably accurate and fair’, even if the official documents contain erroneous information.” (2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The opinion is a brief per curiam affirmance and does not set out the underlying facts in detail. The cited authorities indicate that the appeal involved alleged acceptance of settlement benefits, fraud claims based on statements by litigation adversaries, alleged defamatory publications, evidentiary objections, and punitive damages.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Sharon Dresser appealed a circuit court judgment entered in an action involving settlement ratification, alleged fraud, defamation, evidentiary issues, and punitive damages. The Third District Court of Appeal affirmed the judgment per curiam, citing multiple authorities addressing the issues raised.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- Nagymihaly v. Zipes, 353 So. 2d 943, 944 (Fla. 3d DCA 1978)
- Moriber v. Dreiling, 194 So. 3d 369, 373 (Fla. 3d DCA 2016)
- Chevy Chase Sav. and Loan Inc. v. Berkowitz, 601 So. 2d 289, 291 (Fla. 4th DCA 1992)
- Rigmaiden v. NBCUniversal Media, LLC, 307 So. 3d 918, 918 (Fla. 3d DCA 2020)
- Woodard v. Sunbeam Television Corp., 616 So. 2d 501, 502 (Fla. 3d DCA 1993)
- Ortega Trujillo v. Banco Cent. Del Ecuador, 17 F. Supp. 2d 1334, 1338 (S.D. Fla. 1998)
- Vachet v. Cent. Newspapers, Inc., 816 F.2d 313, 316 (7th Cir. 1987)

- Smith v. Taylor County Publ'g Co., Inc., 443 So. 2d 1042, 1044–45 (Fla. 1st DCA 1983)
- Lipsig v. Ramlawi, 760 So. 2d 170, 184 (Fla. 3d DCA 2000)
- Reid v. Est. of Sonder, 63 So. 3d 7, 10 (Fla. 3d DCA 2011)
- Wolfson v. Kirk, 273 So. 2d 774, 776 (Fla. 4th DCA 1973)

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