

SUPREME COURT OF WYOMING

Board of Professional Responsibility, Wyoming State Bar v. Laurence W. Stinson

2016 WY 25 (Wyo. 2016) (Wyo. 2016) · No. D-15-0007 · Decided February 24, 2016

SUMMARY

The Wyoming Supreme Court approved and adopted the Board of Professional Responsibility's recommendation and suspended Laurence W. Stinson from practicing law for nine months beginning March 7, 2016. The order also required payment of disciplinary costs and an administrative fee, restitution to former clients, and compliance with the Wyoming State Bar's disciplinary code. The incorporated report concerned disputes arising from a real estate purchase and planned home construction involving Stinson and former clients.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of Wyoming
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Per Curiam
JURISDICTION	Wyoming
DECIDED	February 24, 2016
DOCKET	D-15-0007
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The Wyoming Supreme Court reviewed the Board of Professional Responsibility's report and recommendation for suspension in an attorney-discipline matter. The respondent did not file exceptions to the report.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The Court independently reviewed the Board's report and recommendation and the record before approving and adopting the recommendation; no more specific standard of review is stated in the order.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Wyoming Supreme Court disciplinary order; precedential value is limited to the disciplinary disposition and adopted findings stated in the order.
PARTIES	Board of Professional Responsibility, Wyoming State Bar v. Laurence W. Stinson

TOPICS

appellate procedure

real estate

construction law

PRACTICE AREAS

legal ethics and attorney discipline

professional responsibility

appellate procedure

real estate

construction law

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the Board of Professional Responsibility's report and recommendation for suspension should be approved and adopted.
2. What discipline and related financial obligations should be imposed for the professional-conduct violations found by the Board.

HOLDINGS

1. The Court approved, confirmed, and adopted the Board of Professional Responsibility's Report and Recommendation for Suspension.
2. Respondent was suspended from the practice of law for nine months beginning March 7, 2016, and was ordered to comply with the Disciplinary Code, reimburse the Wyoming State Bar's costs and administrative fee, and make restitution to John and Robin McClure.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“this Court finds the Report and Recommendation for Suspension should be approved, confirmed, and adopted by the Court and that Respondent, Laurence W. Stinson, should be suspended from the practice of law for a period of nine months.” (¶¶ 1-3)

“Respondent, Laurence W. Stinson shall reimburse the Wyoming State Bar the amount of \$25,247.99, representing the costs incurred in handling this matter, as well as pay an administrative fee of \$500.00” (¶ 5)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Laurence W. Stinson, a Wyoming attorney, purchased a residential lot from former clients John and Robin McClure and later caused a wholly owned entity, New Delhi Trading Co., LLC, to sue the McClures over alleged representations concerning the cost of constructing a home on the lot. The underlying lawsuit included allegations of fraud, breach of contract, rescission, and harassment, but was later dismissed without prejudice for lack of prosecution after a court denied Stinson's motion to enforce an alleged settlement. The Board found by clear and convincing evidence that Stinson made false statements, disobeyed tribunal obligations, pursued frivolous discovery, burdened the McClures through the litigation, and engaged in dishonesty and conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The Board held a disciplinary hearing from September 21 through September 25, 2015, and filed its Report and Recommendation for Suspension on December 9, 2015. The Board found several violations of the Wyoming Rules of Professional Conduct arising from Respondent's filing and maintenance of litigation against former clients and recommended suspension. After reviewing the report, affidavit of costs, Respondent's letter stating that he would not file exceptions, and the record, the Supreme Court approved, confirmed, and adopted the recommendation.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Wyoming Sawmills v. Morris

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