

BEFORE THE JUDICIAL QUALIFICATIONS COMMISSION

STATE OF GEORGIA

In re: Inquiry Concerning
Judge Don Taliaferro

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Complaint No. 2018-276

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AND FILED

JAN 20 2021

Jan C. Hillton
SUPREME COURT OF GEORGIA

Report of Disposition Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 15-1-21(k)(1) and Rule 11(A) of
the Rules of the Judicial Qualifications Commission

This matter originated before the Judicial Qualifications Commission (hereinafter, "JQC") Investigative Panel with a complaint concerning allegations of judicial misconduct on the part of Spalding County Magistrate Judge Don Taliaferro. The Investigative Panel commenced an investigation into the allegations of judicial misconduct, including:

1. Whether Judge Taliaferro attempted to engage in an improper relationship with a female litigant that appeared before him in Spalding County Magistrate Court in a dispossessory matter, and thus violated Rules 1.2(A) and 1.2(B) of the Code of Judicial Conduct;
2. Whether Judge Taliaferro exploited the prestige of his office to further his private interests involving the above-referenced female litigant in violation of Rule 1.3 of the Code of Judicial Conduct; and

3. Whether Judge Taliaferro subsequently presided over a bond hearing in an unrelated matter involving the above-referenced female litigant without disclosing his prior connection to the female litigant to the parties involved in the proceeding, and thus violated Rules 1.1, 1.2(A), 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, and 2.11 of the Code of Judicial Conduct.

During the pendency of the above-styled matter, Taliaferro resigned from his position as a Spalding County Magistrate Court Judge. The JQC Investigative Panel and Taliaferro have mutually agreed upon a disposition of Complaint 2018-276. The disposition and agreement between the JQC Investigative Panel and Taliaferro, in which Taliaferro has agreed not to seek judicial office in the future in light of the JQC investigation, is set forth in the Consent Agreement dated the 20th day of January, 2021, which is attached to this filing (see Exhibit 1).

This Report of Disposition is submitted for filing in the public records of the Supreme Court of Georgia pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 15-1-21(k)(1) and JQC Rule 11 (A).

Respectfully submitted this 20th day of January, 2021.

s:\CHARLES BORING
Charles P. Boring, Director
Judicial Qualifications Commission
1995 North Park Place SE, Suite 570
Atlanta, GA 30339
cboring@gajqc.com
Georgia Bar Number: 065131

EXHIBIT 1

BEFORE THE JUDICIAL QUALIFICATIONS COMMISSION

STATE OF GEORGIA

In re: Inquiry Concerning
Judge Don Taliaferro

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Complaint No. 2018-276

CONSENT AGREEMENT

Pursuant to the Rules of the Judicial Qualifications Commission (hereinafter, "JQC"), the JQC Investigative Panel and Magistrate Judge Don Taliaferro hereby resolve the above-styled matter as follows:

1. Judge Taliaferro has announced that he will voluntarily resign from his position as Magistrate Judge of Spalding County to return to private practice. The resignation is effective December 31, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. (See attached Exhibit A). Governor Brian Kemp accepted the resignation on December 11, 2020 (See attached Exhibit B).
2. Judge Taliaferro will not seek, request, or accept an elected or appointed judicial office in the future. Judge Taliaferro will also not seek appointment as a senior judge on any court. This agreement is effective immediately and carries forward permanently.
3. After the signing of this Consent Agreement, the Commission will file this Agreement with the Supreme Court of Georgia, along with the *Report to*

the Supreme Court of Georgia pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 15-1-21(k)(1) and JQC Rule 11 (A). This Consent Agreement resolves any complaints or charges in the above-styled matter as provided herein.

Respectfully submitted this 20th day of January, 2021.



Charles P. Boring, Director
Judicial Qualifications Commission
1995 North Park Place SE, Suite 570
Atlanta, GA 30339
cboring@gajqc.com
Georgia Bar Number: 065131

Consented and agree to by:



Judge Don Taliaferro
Magistrate Court of Spalding County



Christine L. Mast (Attorney for Judge Taliaferro)
303 Peachtree Street, NE
Suite 4000
Atlanta, GA 30308

EXHIBIT A

Judge Don Taliaferro

132 East Solomon Street

Griffin, GA 30223

November 22, 2020

Honorable Brian Kemp
Governor of the State of Georgia
203 Capitol Plaza, SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30224

Re: Resignation from Judgeship

Dear Governor Kemp:

I am formally tendering my resignation from my judgeship of the Magistrate Court of Spalding County, Georgia. I have enjoyed serving in this capacity for the past six (6) years and I want to thank the people of Spalding County for their help and cooperation in this matter. My resignation will be effective December 31, 2020.

Sincerely,



Judge Don Taliaferro

EXHIBIT B



STATE OF GEORGIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
ATLANTA 30334-0900

Brian P. Kemp
GOVERNOR

December 11, 2020

The Honorable Don Taliaferro
Magistrate Judge
Spalding County
132 East Solomon Street
Griffin, Georgia 30223

Dear Judge Taliaferro:

I am in receipt of your letter regarding your resignation as Magistrate Judge of Spalding County, effective December 31, 2020. Your resignation is hereby accepted.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B. Kemp".

Brian P. Kemp

BPK:rbw

cc: The Honorable Brad Raffensperger, Secretary of State
The Honorable Rita Cavanaugh, Chief Magistrate Judge, Spalding County
The Honorable Jan Hunt, Judge, Probate Court of Spalding County

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Pursuant to Judicial Qualifications Commission Rule 13, the Director certifies that he has this day served the following:

Report of Disposition

by placing a true and correct copy of the same in the United States mail in an envelope properly addressed with adequate postage thereon to ensure delivery upon the following:

Christine L. Mast
303 Peachtree Street, NE
Suite 4000
Atlanta, GA 30308

This 20th day of January, 2021.

s:\CHARLES BORING
Charles P. Boring, Director
Judicial Qualifications Commission
1995 North Park Place SE, Suite 570
Atlanta, GA 30339
cboring@gajqc.com
Georgia Bar Number: 065131