

**FILED**

APR 7 2009

BEFORE THE JUDICIAL STANDARDS COMMISSION

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

  
JUDICIAL STANDARDS  
COMMISSION

IN RE: )  
INQUIRY CONCERNING A JUDGE, ) STATEMENT OF CHARGES  
NO. 09-013, 09-018 & 09-029 )  
WILLIAM I. BELK, Respondent )

TO: WILLIAM I. BELK, a Judge of the General Court of Justice of the State of North Carolina.

The North Carolina Judicial Standards Commission (Commission) is a body duly organized under the laws of North Carolina and is authorized to recommend to the Supreme Court of North Carolina (Court) the discipline of judges and justices of the General Court of Justice pursuant to the Constitution of North Carolina, Article IV, Section 17, and the procedures prescribed by the North Carolina General Assembly in the North Carolina General Statutes, Chapter 7A, Article 30.

The Commission has concluded that disciplinary proceedings should be instituted against you based on evidence developed by the formal investigation in this inquiry. The formal investigation was ordered based on the Judicial Standards Commissions's own motion and upon written complaints filed by Lisa C. Bell and C. Murphy Archibald.

You have the right to file a written, verified answer to the charges against you within twenty (20) days after service of this STATEMENT OF CHARGES. If you choose to file an answer with the Commission, an original and ten (10) copies are required. The Commission's address is Post Office Box 1122, Raleigh, North Carolina 27602.

COUNSEL ALLEGES, upon information and belief, and proposes to offer evidence before the Commission to establish the following:

1. William I. Belk (Respondent) was at all times referred to herein and is now a judge of the General Court of Justice, District Court Division, Judicial District 26, and as

such is subject to the Canons of the North Carolina Code of Judicial Conduct, the laws of the State of North Carolina, and the provisions of the oath of office for a district court judge set forth in the North Carolina General Statutes, Chapter 11.

2. Respondent continuously served as a director of Sonic Automotive, Inc. from January 1, 2009 through April 7, 2009.

3. Respondent continuously served as a director emeritus of Monroe Hardware Company from January 1, 2009 through April 7, 2009.

4. Respondent engaged in conduct inappropriate to his judicial office when on February 6, 2009 he met with Chief District Court Judge Lisa C. Bell, following receipt of her denial of Respondent's request to be relieved of his courtroom responsibilities so he could attend a Sonic Automotive, Inc. board of directors meeting scheduled for February 11, 2009. During the meeting with Judge Bell, Respondent became upset, loudly yelled and conducted himself in a threatening and abusive manner towards Judge Bell. Respondent accused Judge Bell and the Commission of leaking information to the press. Respondent's called Judge Bell a "media hound" and "political hack". Referring to media reports and the Commission's investigation, Respondent told Judge Bell "this is all your fault", described her actions as "shameful", and told Judge Bell "you leave me the hell alone". Respondent stated there was suspicion about Judge Bell being appointed Chief Judge so she could "screw him over". Respondent's comments were made during the course of normal working hours under circumstances where other court personnel could hear.

5. The actions of Respondent are in violation of Canons 1, 2A, 3A(3) and 5C(2) of the North Carolina Code of Judicial Conduct. Respondent's actions constitute willful misconduct in office and conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice that brings the judicial office into disrepute in violation of N.C.G.S. §7A-376(b).

WHEREFORE, Counsel prays that the Commission make an appropriate recommendation for discipline to the Court as provided by law and as the facts and evidence warrant.

This the 7<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2009.

Nancy A. Vecchia  
Nancy A. Vecchia, Counsel  
Judicial Standards Commission  
Post Office Box 1122  
Raleigh, NC 27602

VERIFICATION

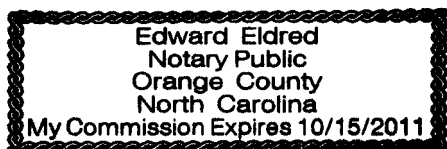
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF WAKE

Nancy A. Vecchia, Counsel for the North Carolina Judicial Standards Commission, personally appeared before me and, being duly sworn, stated that she had read the foregoing STATEMENT OF CHARGES and that the matters and things alleged therein are true except as to those matters and things alleged therein on information and belief, and as to those matters she believes them to be true, and said Nancy A. Vecchia signed said STATEMENT OF CHARGES in my presence.

This the 7 day of April, 2009.

[Signature]

Notary Public  
My Commission Expires: 10-15-2011



CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned certifies that the foregoing Statement of Charges in Inquiry Concerning a Judge, No. 09-013,09-018 and 09-029, was served on the respondent, William I.. Belk, by personally delivering copies to the respondent on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2009.

This the 13<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2009.

Signature: K. Perry

Print Name: K. Perry

Title: Special Agent  
N. C. State Bureau of Investigation