

VIRGINIA:

**BEFORE THE SECOND DISTRICT SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR**

**IN THE MATTER OF
PAUL GRANVILLE WATSON, IV**

VSB Docket No. 06-022-3164

SUBCOMMITTEE DETERMINATION
(PUBLIC REPRIMAND WITH TERMS)

On April 11, 2007 a meeting in this matter was held before a duly convened Second District Subcommittee consisting of Bretta Zimmer Lewis, Attorney at Law, Mr. David M. Jones, lay member, and Megan Furlich Burns, Attorney at Law, Chair.

Pursuant to Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13.G.4. of the Rules of the Virginia Supreme Court, the Second District Subcommittee of the Virginia State Bar hereby serves upon the Respondent the following Public Reprimand with Terms, which was reached by an Agreed Disposition between Respondent Paul Granville Watson, IV, pro se, and the Virginia State Bar by its Assistant Bar Counsel Paul D. Georgiadis:

I. FINDINGS OF FACT

1. At all times relevant hereto, Paul Granville Watson, IV ("Respondent"), has been an attorney licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
2. On or about August 12, 2005, the Accomack County Circuit Court appointed Respondent to represent Glen Eckstrom in a delayed appeal from the Virginia Court of Appeals to the Virginia Supreme Court. Respondent was the third attorney appointed to handle Eckstrom's appeals, as two prior attorneys committed procedural defaults in Eckstrom's appeals which resulted in Eckstrom winning two prior writs for habeas corpus.
3. On or about August 30, 2005, Respondent filed a notice of appeal for Eckstrom in the trial court and not in the Virginia Court of Appeals. Respondent did not thereafter file a petition for appeal.
4. On February 15, 2006, the Virginia Court of Appeals dismissed the Eckstrom appeal on two bases: 1) Respondent filed the appeal in the trial court and not in the Court of Appeals and 2) Respondent failed to file a petition for appeal.

5. After receiving the Court's order of dismissal, Respondent attempted to file a Petition for Rehearing per Rule 5A:33 on March 1, 2006. Rule 5A:33a mandates filing the petition via e-mail. As Respondent misaddressed the e-mail transmitting the Petition for Rehearing, the e-mail was returned to Respondent on March 1, 2006 as "Returned mail", and marked "permanent fatal errors." Thereafter, Respondent did not re-file the Petition.
6. Notwithstanding Respondent's appointment as Eckstrom's counsel on August 12, 2005, Respondent did not communicate with Eckstrom until June 25, 2006, after Eckstrom filed this instant complaint with the Virginia State Bar and only in response to Eckstrom's letter to Respondent dated June 4, 2006 requesting information on the status of his appeal.
7. On October 11, 2006, Eckstrom wrote to Respondent requesting that Respondent file a delayed appeal per Va. Code Sec. 19.2-321.2. Notwithstanding said request, Respondent took no further action in the appeal.

II. NATURE OF MISCONDUCT

Such conduct by Paul Granville Watson, IV constitutes misconduct in violation of the following provisions of the Rules of Professional Conduct:

RULE 1.1 Competence

A lawyer shall provide competent representation to a client. Competent representation requires the legal knowledge, skill, thoroughness and preparation reasonably necessary for the representation.

RULE 1.3 Diligence

- (a) A lawyer shall act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing a client.

RULE 1.4 Communication

- (a) A lawyer shall keep a client reasonably informed about the status of a matter and promptly comply with reasonable requests for information.

III. PUBLIC REPRIMAND WITH TERMS

Accordingly, it is the decision of the subcommittee to offer the Respondent an opportunity to comply with certain terms and conditions, compliance with which will be a predicate for the

disposition of a PUBLIC Reprimand with Terms of this complaint. The terms and conditions are:

- (a) The Respondent shall complete two (2) hours of continuing legal education (CLE) in the subject of legal ethics; and
- (b) The Respondent shall complete two (2) hours of continuing legal education (CLE) in the subject of criminal appellate practice.

None of the aforesaid CLE hours shall be submitted to MCLE for application toward Respondent's Mandatory Continuing Legal Education annual requirement in the Commonwealth of Virginia or in any other jurisdiction where Respondent is admitted to practice law. Respondent shall certify his compliance with said CLE terms by delivering on or before October 31, 2007 a fully and properly executed Virginia MCLE Board Certification of Attendance Form(s) to Paul D. Georgiadis, Assistant Bar Counsel, Virginia State Bar, 707 E. Main Street, Suite 1500, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

If the terms and conditions are not met by October 31, 2007, the Respondent agrees that the district committee shall impose a Certification to the Virginia State Bar Disciplinary Board for Sanction Determination, as mandated by the Rules of Court, Part Six, Section IV, Subparagraph 13.G.5.

Pursuant to Paragraph 13.B.8.c. of the Rules of Court, the Clerk of the Disciplinary System shall assess costs.

SECOND DISTRICT SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR

By 
Megan Elizabeth Furlich Burns
Chair

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that on the 14th day of June 2007, I caused to be mailed by Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, a true and correct copy of the Subcommittee Determination, (Public Reprimand with Terms) to Paul Granville Watson, IV, Esquire, Respondent, at P.O. Box 600 Eastville, VA 23347, Respondent's last address of record with the Virginia State Bar.



Paul D. Georgiadis
Assistant Bar Counsel