

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND DISCIPLINE

By

R. Paul Sharood, Administrative Director
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Reprinted from *Bench & Bar of Minnesota* (March 1974)

Ed. Note: In his initial column, we welcome R. Paul Sharood, former Association President and new Administrative Director of the State Board of Professional Responsibility, succeeding former Director, Richey B. Reavill, on February 1, 1974:

PRESENT RECOGNITION

As a part of its Rules adopted December 16, 1970, the Supreme Court created the State Board of Professional Responsibility, and vested in it the duty to administer, subject to overall control by the Court, disciplinary procedures regulating the professional conduct of attorneys in Minnesota.

The Board consists of a Chairman and eighteen members, of whom three are lay persons. All are appointed by the Court for a term of three years. No one may serve for more than two consecutive terms. For the purpose of hearing complaints of misconduct, the Board is divided into three panels of six members each together with the Chairman. Meetings of the entire Board, with the Administrative Director and the Assistant Director in attendance, are held with consistent regularity. In addition, the Board from time to time issues Opinions bearing on professional conduct.

On February 1, 1974, Dr. Philip C. Helland, Burnsville, became the third lay member of the Board. Dr. Helland is Chancellor, Minnesota State Junior Colleges, and has wide recognition in the field of education. He joins John R. Finnegan, Executive Editor, St. Paul Pioneer Press and Dispatch, and civic leader; and Mrs. O. J. (Irene) Janski, Richfield, a member of the National Board of League of Women Voters, who also has state and community credits too numerous to mention here.

The attorney members are:

Kenneth M. Anderson, Chairman, Minneapolis

Norman D. Arvesen, Fergus Falls

Sheldon S. Larson, Winthrop

Thomas H. Carey, Virginia

Gerald E. Magnuson, Minneapolis

Gerald T. Carroll, Jr., Minneapolis

Harding A. Orren, Minneapolis

David C. Donnelly, St. Paul

Maynard E. Pirsig, Minneapolis

Conrad M. Fredin, Duluth

Allen I. Saeks, Minneapolis

Paul R. Hamerston, Duluth

William C. Schacht, Rochester

One lawyer, after representing an attorney before a panel of the Board, wrote:

“From the time of its inception and the opinions issued by the State Board of Professional Responsibility, I, like many attorneys, had the impression it was in the nature of a ‘Star Chamber Proceeding’. However, having now appeared before your body as an advocate, I wish to commend not only you but your entire committee of the courtesies extended, not only to myself but to my client as well during the entire hearing. In addition, I personally feel you have a good representation of a cross-section of the Bar Association. In the future, when I hear attorneys at Bar Association gatherings and committee meetings criticizing the monthly opinions issued by your Board, I shall be one of the first to come to your defense.”

Board members are deserving of the gratitude of lawyers, the bench and the public for their devotion to duty and for services rendered.

FUTURE RECOGNITION

In a subsequent issue of *Bench & Bar*, and after I have had an opportunity to meet with as many of the District Ethics Committees as possible, I will comment upon the activities of these unrecognized members of our profession whose only reward is a knowledge of a job well done.

FINAL RECOGNITION

The familiar cliché that “You win some and you lose some” is applicable here.

Leonard A. Erickson, Board member from Crookston, completed his term on January 31, 1974. Notwithstanding the distance to travel, or weather conditions involved, Leonard attended every Board meeting and every hearing of a panel of which he was a member. His presence and good counsel will be sorely missed.

Richey B. Reavill retired as Administrative Director on February 1. I was fortunate to have the benefit of his advice and counsel during the month of February. More than anyone else, he established guidelines to implement the Rules under which the Board and the office of the Administrative Director function. Tenacious in his efforts to eradicate the bad apples in our profession, he had compassion for tarnished among us with alcoholic and family problems. His motivation also included a spirited defense of the lawyer whom he believed to have been accused, without foundation, of professional misconduct. His will be a tough act for me to follow.