

Kennebec, ss.

Board of Overseers of the Bar
Grievance Commission
File No. 03-191

BOARD OF OVERSEERS OF THE BAR)
)
Petitioner)
v.)
JENNIFER R. RAYMOND, ESQ.)
of Boston, Massachusetts)
Me. Bar #8540)
Respondent)

**REPORT OF FINDINGS
OF PANEL E OF THE
GRIEVANCE COMMISSION**

On December 1, 2003, pursuant to due notice, Panel E of the Grievance Commission conducted a disciplinary hearing open to the public according to Maine Bar Rule 7.1 (e)(2), to determine whether there were grounds to issue a reprimand or if probable cause existed to file an information concerning alleged misconduct by the Respondent, Jennifer R. Raymond, Esq. (Raymond), as described in a Petition dated and filed by the Board of Overseers of the Bar (the Board) on October 9, 2003. Assistant Bar Counsel, Geoffrey S. Welsh, Esq., represented the Board, and Raymond was *pro se*, both being present at the hearing.

The complainants, Lloyd and Melanie Gerow (the Gerows) did not attend the hearing. They had, however, been notified and understood that the parties had stipulated to the following facts and agreed upon disposition of this matter by a reprimand, which the Panel now so finds and adopts:

1. While an associate at her former law firm, Raymond began representing Lloyd and Melanie Gerow (the Gerows) in a real estate dispute involving a sign for a golf course, which had been placed on the Gerows' property without their knowledge or

consent. The Gerows wanted the sign removed, and they retained Raymond for that purpose.

2. Raymond neglected her legal work in the matter doing little, if anything, for the Gerows. She also misrepresented to them her lack of progress and work on their case, *inter alia*, by falsely telling them that she had filed a lawsuit for them and that a judge soon was going to sign an order authorizing them to remove the disputed sign. This included directing the Gerows to meet her at the District Court in Waterville where she purportedly was going to personally deliver to them the court order finalizing the litigation (fictitious).

3. The Gerows appeared at the District Court in Waterville expecting to meet Raymond, but she failed to appear. Raymond also did not timely deliver the Gerows' file to their eventual replacement counsel.

4. By neglecting the Gerows' case and misrepresenting its status to them, including the court's signing a fictitious order, Raymond violated M. Bar R. 3.1(a); 3.2(f)(3); 3.6(a) and 3.6(e)(2)(iv).

5. Raymond has practiced law for approximately six years, and she has no prior disciplinary record.

CONCLUSION

Considering the above facts stipulated to by the parties, the Panel finds that Raymond was not diligent in handling the real estate sign dispute for the Gerows. Her failure to do the work for which she was hired, her misguided efforts to conceal her neglect from her clients and her failure to timely turn over the file to successor counsel were clearly wrong and improper, which Raymond now so acknowledges.

In view of the foregoing misconduct, the Panel concludes, as Raymond admitted during the hearing, that the appropriate disposition of this complaint is that Raymond be, and she hereby is, reprimanded for her violations of the Maine Bar Rules as established in the findings of fact discussed in this report. In reaching this conclusion, the Panel recognizes that Raymond has no disciplinary record.

Dated this 2nd day of December, 2003

Panel E of the Grievance Commission

Stephen G. Morrell, Esq., Chair

Charles W. Smith, Jr., Esq.

Harriet R. Tobin