



State of South Carolina
The Family Court of the Ninth Judicial Circuit

Spiros S. Ferderigos
Judge

Charleston County Judicial Center
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November 10, 2025

Judicial Merit Selection Commission
104 Gressette Building, 1101 Pendleton Street
P.O. Box 142
Columbia, South Carolina 29202

Re: Response to the Complaint of Lee Carlton Walker, et al. against the re-election of Spiros S. Ferderigos

To whom it may concern:

I am in receipt of the complaint filed against my candidacy by Mr. Lee Carlton Walker and his parents. Please accept this letter as a response to the allegations therein. In an effort to respond to each allegation of Mr. Walker, I am organizing this response in outline form to address any relevant issue and each allegation of wrongdoing.

- I. Despite Mr. Walker now alleging that the Undersigned (Spiros S. Ferderigos) is not qualified to be re-elected as a Family Court Judge because of my handling of a Motion for Temporary Relief held on January 20, 2021 in Mr. Walker's family court matter; Mr. Walker asserted at his final trial on November 27, 2023 that the Undersigned is a proper and qualified jurist, specifically requesting that the Undersigned replace Judge Martin as the trial judge so that Mr. Walker can have an unbiased and proper final trial. See transcript from the final trial attached hereto.

Mr. Walker's Complaint alleges that the Undersigned should be found not qualified by this Honorable Commission due to my handling of a Motion for Temporary Relief heard on January 20, 2021. However, approximately three years later after the Motion for Temporary Relief, Mr. Walker admits in open court that the Undersigned is a proper and qualified jurist; so much so that he specifically requests me by name to preside over his final trial. If Mr. Walker truly believes that my handling of the Motion for Temporary Relief disqualifies me from serving as a judge, Mr. Walker would not have requested me by name in open court to preside over his final trial.

- II. Response to Mr. Walker's "Summary of Judicial Misconduct"

Prior to responding to each and every allegation of Mr. Walker in his Complaint, the Undersigned would like to take this moment to address the Motion for Temporary Relief held on January 20, 2021 as a whole. The Undersigned hopes that upon this Honorable Commission reviewing the transcript of the Motion for Temporary Relief, that the commission agrees that the Undersigned not only complied with the minimal requirements of the Judicial Cannons and Rules of Court; but that the Undersigned exercised best practices in performing judicial duties by insuring the Rules of Court (including the Rules of Family Court) were strictly followed, and that all parties were afforded the opportunity to be heard pursuant to the rule of law and in a well dignified manner.

For instance, despite the hearing proceeding during the Covid-19 pandemic when hearings were conducted by Web-Ex and written submissions were being isolated for periods of time prior to being placed in the court's file; the Undersigned made sure to do the following to preserve the integrity of the court and insure that every party had a fair and proper Motion for Temporary Relief Hearing: (1) The court individually addressed each attorney (both parties were represented at the time) and meticulously confirmed with counsel that the court received and had in its possession each submission filed for the hearing, (2) The court asked each attorney if they had any procedural matters that needed to be addressed by counsel prior to oral argument commencing [there were no procedural matters by either party], (3) Counsel was given the opportunity to present oral argument without interruption, (4) The court asked follow-up questions and counsel was given an opportunity to fully respond, and lastly (5) The court took the matter under advisement to review and consider all proper submissions presented prior to issuing a ruling. The court took the matter under advisement on January 20, 2021, and issued its written instructions on January 22, 2021 after reviewing the submissions.

Mr. Walker alleges that the Undersigned's handling of the Motion for Temporary Relief caused an "erode [of] public confidence in the Family Court and violate both Canon 1 (Integrity) and Canon 3 (Diligence and Impartiality) of the Judicial Code of Conduct." The Undersigned responds as follows:

a. "Convening hearings without reviewing the full record."

There are no requirements, be it Judicial Cannons or otherwise, that require a judge to "review the full record" prior to convening a Motion for Temporary Relief Hearing. To the contrary, Rule 21 of the Rules of Family Court governing Motions for Temporary Relief at the time of Mr. Walker's hearing specifically did not require either party to provide its evidence prior to the call of the hearing. What is important to note is that the Undersigned considered all submissions properly before the court prior to issuing its ruling. As set forth in the transcript of the hearing submitted by Mr. Walker, the Undersigned specifically states: "I'm going to read everything. I'm going to take this under advisement. I have a whole stack of papers to read, I'll read every single document." Again, immediately prior to concluding the hearing, the Undersigned states "Thank y'all very much. This concludes the hearing. Of course, I'm taking the matter under advisement so I can read all the files. Thank you very much." As stated on the record, the Undersigned did take the matter under advisement, read all of the submissions properly before the court over a two-day period, and then issued its ruling.

- b. “Accepting unsworn and false statements from the Guardian ad Litem and her counsel.”

In reviewing the exhibits submitted by Mr. Walker in his Complaint before this Honorable Commission, the Undersigned does not see an exhibit where the Undersigned “accepted” an “unsworn statement” from the Guardian *ad Litem*. The only exhibit from the Guardian *ad Litem* that the Undersigned sees in Mr. Walker’s Complaint before this Honorable Commission is a sworn affidavit by the Guardian *ad Litem* filed October 30, 2020. If this Honorable Commission sees any such “unsworn statement” by the Guardian *ad Litem*, the Undersigned would be happy to address the same.

- c. “Ignoring sworn affidavits filed by myself and witnesses.”

The Undersigned did not ignore Mr. Walker’s sworn affidavits or his other submissions. To the contrary, the Undersigned took the matter under advisement specifically to review and consider all of the submissions properly before the court. This is further reflected in the transcript from the Motion for Temporary Relief submitted by Mr. Walker, where the Undersigned informs the parties that “I’m going to read everything. I’m going to take this under advisement. I have a whole stack of papers to read, I’ll read every single document.” Again, immediately prior to concluding the hearing, the Undersigned states “Thank y’all very much. This concludes the hearing. Of course, I’m taking the matter under advisement so I can read all the files. Thank you very much.”

- d. “Failing to verify documentary evidence (notably the 54 absences under mother’s care).”

It appears that Mr. Walker is alleging that the Undersigned violated the Judicial Cannons by not doing an independent verification of the school absences regarding the child. A judge doing his/her own investigation would be a violation of the Judicial Cannons and not appropriate. Accordingly, the Undersigned did not independently verify anything presented as it would not be proper to do so. Both parties had counsel, and both parties had the opportunity to submit whatever documentation they desired for the court’s consideration so long as it was done in a manner permissible by law.

- e. “Allowing a temporary order to function as a permanent deprivation for nearly three years.”

The Undersigned did not “allow a temporary order to function as a permanent order,” nor would the Undersigned have the ability to do so. By its very definition, a temporary order is temporary and not permanent. Nothing in the temporary order prohibited Mr. Walker from filing a subsequent Motion for Temporary Relief. Mr. Walker is further aware of this fact, and the South Carolina Court of Appeals informed him of the same when they denied his appeal of the temporary order. Specifically, the South Carolina Court of Appeals informed Mr. Walker in its decision that “A temporary order of the family court is without prejudice to the rights of the parties ... Temporary orders are, by definition, temporary – they neither decide any issue with finality nor affect a substantial right ...” See Court of Appeals order in this matter attached hereto.

f. “Refusing to hear Rule 59 or Rule 60 motions despite timely filing.”

Mr. Walker incorrectly alleges that the Undersigned refused to hear a Rule 59 or Rule 60 motion regarding his Motion for Temporary Relief. This may stem from a misunderstanding of the Rules of Court by Mr. Walker. Rule 77 (b), SCRCP specifically allows the court to consider a motion, in chambers, without the necessity of a hearing. Pursuant to Rule 77 (b), SCRCP, the Undersigned considered Mr. Walker’s motions and supporting documentation and denied the same. The Undersigned further specifically issued an order for each motion, with one order being filed February 24, 2021 and the other March 1, 2021.

g. “Permitting false insinuations about my honesty and transparency to go uncorrected.”

In this allegation, Mr. Walker alleges that it is a violation of the Judicial Canons for a judge to not “correct” what Mr. Walker alleges are false insinuations about his honesty and transparency at a Motion for Temporary Relief. The Undersigned submits that a judge is not a witness in a case nor an advocate for either party to “correct” allegations made against a party during a Motion for Temporary Relief or in a Temporary Order. Furthermore, Mr. Walker assumes in his allegation that the Undersigned found him to be honest and transparent. No such finding was made, nor is any such finding required to be made in an order from a Motion for Temporary Relief.

h. “Relying on counsel’s misrepresentations ... rather than verified evidence.”

The Undersigned did not rely on any counsel’s representations. The Undersigned allowing oral argument by counsel at a Motion for Temporary Relief is a courtesy and not required by Rule 21, SCRFC. As set forth in Rule 21, SCRFC, “Evidence received by the court at temporary hearings shall be confined to pleadings, affidavits, and financial declarations unless good cause is shown to the court why additional evidence or testimony may be necessary.” The Undersigned strictly complied with the Rules of Court, and issued a ruling based upon the properly filed submissions before the court. Furthermore, each party was afforded the opportunity to make a request for a testimonial hearing or additional evidence when asked by the Undersigned if there were any procedural matters that needed to be addressed, and counsel said there were no procedural matters for the court to consider.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to respond to the Complaint filed by Mr. Walker and his parents regarding my judicial candidacy. As always, I am available to answer any and all questions from this Honorable Commission.

Sincerely,



Spiros S. Ferderigos



FILED

The South Carolina Court of Appeals

2022 DEC 28 PM 12: 01

JENNY ABBOTT KITCHINGS
CLERK

V. CLAIRE ALLEN
CHIEF DEPUTY CLERK

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JULIE J. ARMSTRONG
CLERK OF COURT

JA

December 22, 2022

The Honorable Julie J. Armstrong
100 Broad St Ste 106
Charleston SC 29401-2210

REMITTITUR

Re: Lee Carlton Walker v. Sylvia Ashley McAdams
Lower Court Case No. 2019DR1001147
Appellate Case No. 2021-000542

Dear Clerk of Court:

The above referenced matter is hereby remitted to the lower court or tribunal. A copy of the judgment of this Court is enclosed.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "V. Claire Allen".

CLERK

Enclosure

cc: Joseph Clay Hopkins, Esquire
Gil Gatch, Esquire
Ervin Lindsay Blanks, Esquire

**THIS OPINION HAS NO PRECEDENTIAL VALUE. IT SHOULD NOT BE
CITED OR RELIED ON AS PRECEDENT IN ANY PROCEEDING
EXCEPT AS PROVIDED BY RULE 268(d)(2), SCACR.**

**THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
In The Court of Appeals**

Lee Carlton Walker, Appellant,

v.

Sylvia Ashley McAdams, Respondent.

Appellate Case No. 2021-000542

Appeal From Charleston County
Michèle Patrão Forsythe, Family Court Judge

Unpublished Opinion No. 2022-UP-424
Submitted November 18, 2022 – Filed November 30, 2022

APPEAL DISMISSED

Gil Gatch, of Gil Gatch Law, of Summerville, for
Appellant.

Joseph Clay Hopkins, of Charleston, for Respondent.

Ervin Lindsay Blanks, of E. Lindsay Blanks, PA, of
North Charleston, for the Guardian ad Litem.

PER CURIAM: Lee Carlton Walker appeals temporary orders of the family court, arguing (1) the orders are immediately appealable, (2) the family court's order restricting him from publishing information related to the ongoing litigation

was overbroad and impermissibly infringed on his right to free speech, (3) the family court lacked a sufficient factual basis to order him to remove from the internet all materials relating to his minor child, (4) the family court exceeded its jurisdiction by ordering him remove from the internet all materials related to his minor child, (5) the family court lacked a sufficient factual basis to reallocate responsibility for the fees owed to his minor child's therapist, (6) the family court lacked a sufficient factual basis to require him to pay 75% of the fees owed to his minor child's mental health counselor, (7) the family court lacked a sufficient factual basis to reallocate responsibility for the fees owed to the attorney for his minor child's guardian ad litem, (8) the family court violated his right to due process by denying his motion for reinstatement of custody of his minor child without a hearing, (9) the family court erred by denying his petition for supersedeas of its February 22, 2021 order, and (10) the family court lacked a sufficient factual basis to deny his motion to reinstate his custody of his minor child.

Because the underlying orders on appeal are not immediately appealable, we dismiss the appeal pursuant to Rule 220(b), SCACR, and the following authorities: *Tillman v. Tillman*, 420 S.C. 246, 248, 801 S.E.2d 757, 759 (Ct. App. 2017) ("Generally only final judgments are [immediately] appealable."); *id.* at 249, 801 S.E.2d at 759 ("Some exceptions to the final judgment rule are set forth in section 14-3-330 of the South Carolina Code (2017), which provides for the appealability of certain interlocutory orders."); *Terry v. Terry*, 400 S.C. 453, 456, 734 S.E.2d 646, 648 (2012) ("A temporary order of the family court is without prejudice to the rights of the parties."); *id.* at 456-57, 734 S.E.2d at 648 ("[Temporary] orders are, by definition, temporary—they neither decide any issue with finality nor affect a substantial right . . .").

APPEAL DISMISSED.¹

KONDUROS, HEWITT, and VINSON, JJ., concur

¹ We decide this case without oral argument pursuant to Rule 215, SCACR.

1 STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA) IN THE FAMILY COURT
COUNTY OF CHARLESTON) 2019-DR-10-1147
2)
LEE CARLTON WALKER,)
3)
PLAINTIFF,) VOLUME I OF IV
4)
vs.) TRANSCRIPT OF RECORD
5)
SYLVIA ASHLEY McADAMS,)
6)
DEFENDANT.)
7 _____)

8
Monday, November 27, 2023
9 Charleston, South Carolina

10
11 B E F O R E:

12 The Honorable Daniel E. Martin, Jr.

13
14 A P P E A R A N C E S:

15 Lauren L. Martel, Esquire
Attorney for Plaintiff

16 William E. Hopkins, Jr., Esquire
Attorney for Defendant

17 E. Lindsay Blanks, Esquire
18 Attorney for Guardian ad Litem

19 Sharon Lovette
Guardian ad Litem
20

21
22
23 Maria Dempsey, RPR
Official Court Reporter
24 Charleston County Family Court
Ninth Judicial Circuit
25 Charleston, South Carolina

1 was said, well, why don't you get your counselor to find a
2 therapeutic reunifier because one thing that -- was that maybe
3 they could work something out. We've been trying to do that for
4 two months. Nobody responds to me. So when I do my Rule 11
5 affirmations, I pretty much can clearly state that it's not
6 productive. I reach out, I ask for things, I get a no. And I
7 don't even get an understanding of why it's a no. And Wanda
8 Lucas, who's been a stalwart in this, and is a sweet person,
9 doesn't get return phone calls, no follow-up. We don't want to
10 have to continue this. This is just going to push us farther
11 down the line for his reunification.

12 So obviously, we believe that the potential prejudicial
13 effect of not being -- having an impartial five-day trial
14 outweighs trying to at least make sure that we can get all the
15 evidence in, and that the Court will not be biased towards
16 Mr. Walker. I think the Court, based on just the questioning of
17 him just recently, that was a bit adversarial. Out of the gate,
18 you were looking for him to be a liar, and he's not. He's a
19 father who tried to represent himself for a while because he
20 doesn't have the money, and the fees are outrageous in this case.
21 Three hundred thousand plus for the guardian's lawyer bill, and
22 50,000 for the guardian, and there's no final report for a year.
23 It's unacceptable to go on a five-day trial like that. I've
24 never seen anything like it.

25 So I do believe, Your Honor, that this is a situation

1 where we very respectfully and very humbly ask you to step aside
2 from this case. And if there's no one in Charleston, maybe we
3 need to move the venue, but there I -- I don't think -- I think
4 there probably would be someone in Charleston. I mean, I don't
5 know about Judge Richter?

6 MR. WALKER: Or Ferderigos.

7 MS. MARTEL: But we're asking humbly that you recuse
8 yourself today, and that we actively cooperate in rescheduling.
9 Some of these motions and rules show to cause can be scheduled
10 before a final hearing too, that way it won't be such a backlog.
11 And if the attorneys could speak to each other civilly, we could
12 Bates stamp evidence in advance. We could communicate on what
13 comes in before a trial, and have a trial that flows much more
14 smoothly, which is such a good thing for the judge as well too,
15 to have the exhibits, as much as we can agree on things. For
16 example witnesses, you know, we're both subpoenaing the same
17 witness. If we could communicate about those things and have a
18 trial go through, it may not even take five days if we
19 efficiently use the Court's time. But to get to that point, we
20 are just asking, Your Honor, release control of this case and
21 recuse yourself. And I don't think I need to say any more,
22 unless you have any more questions.

23 THE COURT: Thank you, Ms. Martel. And I do appreciate you
24 giving the Court the opportunity to allow someone to hear this
25 case. And you're right, there probably would be many judges who