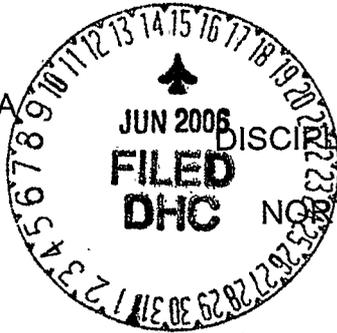


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NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY



BEFORE THE
DISCIPLINARY HEARING COMMISSION
OF THE
NORTH CAROLINA STATE BAR
06 DHC 19

THE NORTH CAROLINA STATE BAR,)
Plaintiff)
v.)
DOUGLAS L. SUTTON, Attorney,)
Defendant)

CONSENT ORDER
TRANSFERRING DEFENDANT
TO DISABILITY INACTIVE
STATUS

This matter was considered by a Hearing Committee of the Disciplinary Hearing Commission composed of F. Lane Williamson, Chair, Michael A. Grace, and Marguerite P. Watts. Margaret Cloutier represented plaintiff. Defendant appeared pro se. Defendant has agreed to waive a formal hearing in the above referenced matter. The parties stipulate and agree to the findings of fact and conclusions of law recited in this consent order and to the conditions imposed. Defendant also stipulates that he waives his right to appeal this consent order or challenge in any way the sufficiency of the findings, conclusions of law or conditions ordered by consenting to the entry of this order. Defendant further waives any insufficiency in service of process and the complaint.

Based on the consent of the parties, the Hearing Committee hereby finds by clear, cogent and convincing evidence the following

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Plaintiff, the North Carolina State Bar (hereinafter "State Bar"), is a body duly organized under the laws of North Carolina and is the proper party to bring this proceeding under the authority granted it in Chapter 84 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, and the Rules and Regulations of the North Carolina State Bar promulgated thereunder.

2. Defendant, Douglas L. Sutton (hereinafter "Defendant or Sutton"), was admitted to the North Carolina State Bar on March 23, 1990 and is, and was at all times referred to herein, an Attorney at Law licensed to practice in North Carolina, subject to the rules, regulations, and Revised Rules of Professional Conduct of the North Carolina State Bar and the laws of the State of North Carolina.

3. During the times relevant herein, Defendant actively engaged in the practice of law in the State of North Carolina and maintained a law office in Chapel Hill, Orange County, North Carolina.

4. Until approximately late 2003, Defendant maintained an active law practice in which he primarily handled residential real estate closings.

5. Since at least late 2003, Defendant has not been able to maintain a viable law practice as evidenced by the following:

a. Defendant has not obtained policies of title insurance for multiple transactions closed in the several years preceding late 2003;

b. Defendant has not disbursed funds held in his trust account for such policies despite requests, encouragement, and directives from the title insurance companies and the North Carolina State Bar;

c. Defendant has made several promises to work with the title insurance companies and disburse funds in his trust account but has not followed through;

d. Defendant has not actively practiced law since approximately late 2003; and

e. Defendant lacks the energy and enthusiasm to maintain a law practice and/or finalize the transactions pending since 2003 and earlier.

6. Defendant suffers from major depression that interferes with his ability to practice law as described above. Despite receiving treatment for depression and other mental health issues since 2000, Defendant has not consistently followed through with treatment recommendations and as a result, or for other reasons, the treatment he has received to date has been ineffective as it relates to his ability to effectively practice law.

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Committee enters the following

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

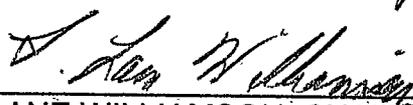
1. All parties are properly before the Hearing Committee, and the Committee has jurisdiction over defendant and the subject matter of this proceeding.

2. Defendant is disabled within the meaning of 27 N.C.A.C. 1B §.0103(19), and Defendant should be transferred to disability inactive status pursuant to 27 N.C.A.C. 1B §.0118.

ORDER

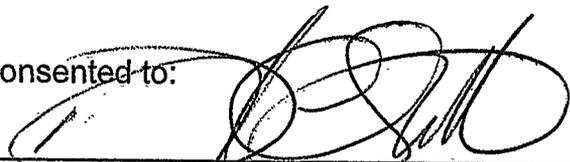
1. Defendant is hereby transferred to disability inactive status.
2. Defendant shall refrain from practicing law in North Carolina until reinstated to active status pursuant to 27 N.C.A.C. 1B §.0125(c).
3. Defendant shall be taxed with the costs of this action.

Signed by the undersigned Chair with the full knowledge and consent of the other members of the Hearing Committee, this 8th day of June, 2006.



F. LANE WILLIAMSON, CHAIR
HEARING COMMITTEE

Consented to:



DOUGLAS L. SUTTON, Defendant



MARGARET CLOUTIER, Attorney for Plaintiff