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OF THE

SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY

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March 10, 2010

Mark Neary, Clerk
Supreme Court of New Jersey
P.O. Box 970
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0962

Re: In the Matter of Felicia B. Russell
Docket No. DRB 09-366
District Docket No. XIV-2008-0374E

Dear Mr. Neary:

The Disciplinary Review Board reviewed the motion for discipline by consent (reprimand) filed by the Office of Attorney Ethics ("OAE"), pursuant to R. 1:20-10(b). Following a review of the record, the Board determined to grant the motion. In the Board's view, a reprimand is the appropriate discipline for respondent's stipulated violation of RPC 8.4(c).

Specifically, in connection with the refinance of a mortgage loan by her then law partner, Ronald Sama, respondent notarized the signature of Ronald's wife, Amy Sama, without having witnessed the signing of the document. Although Amy Sama claimed, in her divorce action, that she had been unaware of the refinance and that her signature had been forged, the court dismissed the forgery claim. Also, because Amy was in respondent's office on the day of the refinance, respondent believed that Amy had signed the document.

An admonition is the typical form of discipline for the improper execution of a jurat, when an attorney reasonably believes that the document has been signed by the legitimate

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party. See, e.g., In the Matter of William J. Beqley, DRB 09-279 (December 1, 2009), In the Matter of Richard C. Heubel, DRB 09-187 (September 24, 2009), and In the Matter of Martin G. Margolis, DRB 02-166 (July 22, 2002). Because, however, respondent received an admonition in 2009, the Board agreed that a reprimand is the appropriate degree of discipline in this case.

Enclosed are the following documents:

1. Notice of motion for discipline by consent, dated December 11, 2009.
2. Stipulation of discipline by consent, dated December 10, 2009.
3. Affidavit of consent, dated November 30, 2009.
4. Ethics history, dated March 2, 2010.

Very truly yours,


Julianne K. DeCore
Chief Counsel

JKD/sj

encls.

cc: Louis Pashman, Chair, Disciplinary Review Board
(w/o encls.)

Charles Centinaro, Director, Office of Attorney Ethics
(w/o encls.)

Christina B. Kennedy, Deputy Ethics Counsel, Office of
Attorney Ethics (w/o encls.)

Felicia B. Russell, Respondent (w/o encls.)

Amy Jeanne Sama, Grievant