

CENTER *for* JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY, INC.

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March 15, 2022

TO: Attorney Grievance Committee for the First Judicial Department (AGC-1)
Chair Robert J. Anello, Esq.
Chair Abigail T. Reardon, Esq.

FROM: Elena Ruth Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)

RE: (1) The identity of the unspecified “Chair or Vice-Chair of the Committee” who determined the January 27, 2022 reconsideration request in “Matter of Letitia A. James, Esq. Docket No. 2021.0843” and February 23, 2022 reconsideration request in “Matter of Barbara Underwood, Esq. Docket No. 2021-0488” – and the basis for the determinations “that the file should remain closed”;
(2) The current roster of AGC-1’s 42 members.

In response to [my March 9, 2022 letter to you](#),¹ alerting you, **for a third time**, to your duty with regard to AGC-1’s dysfunction and corruption, I received from AGC-1 Deputy Chief Attorney Angela Christmas two materially-identical March 11, 2022 letters: one, [pertaining to my complaint against Attorney General James \(Docket No. 2021.0843\)](#) and the second, [pertaining to my complaint against Solicitor General Underwood \(Docket No. 2021.0488\)](#). Neither indicate you as cc’s – and BOTH are identically INDEFENSIBLE, throughout.

With regard to my two reconsideration requests, whose dates are identically mis-stated by Deputy Chief Attorney Christmas’ two letters, her second paragraph advises:

“...Please note that the entire file and your reconsideration request were then reviewed by the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Committee, who determined that the file should remain closed. You were notified of the Committee’s determination not to reconsider your complaint by letter dated March 2, 2022.” (underlining added).

In other words, the so-called “Committee’s determination” was the determination of a single person – “the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Committee”.

¹ To assist you, this letter is hyperlinked to the referred-to documents, also posted and accessible from CJA’s webpage for the February 11, 2021 complaint at AGC-1 against Attorney General James and Solicitor General Underwood, which is here: <https://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/searching-nys/attorney-discipline/feb-11-21-complaint-1st-dept.htm>.

You are the Committee's two chairs. Did one of you determine both reconsideration requests – or did each of you determine one request? If neither, was it Vice-Chair Ricardo Oquendo, Esq. who determined both? Certainly, you did not permit determination by Vice-Chair Milton Williams, Jr., Esq., whose absolute disqualification – for interest – was identified by footnote 8 of [my January 27, 2022 reconsideration request](#) and then quoted, in full, by [my February 23, 2022 reconsideration request](#) (at p. 8). Or did you?

Please advise – and specify the basis upon which you or the vice-chair(s) “determined the file should remain closed”, inasmuch as my March 9, 2022 letter demonstrated (at pp. 2-3) that “Chief Attorney Dopico’s ‘brief description’ of the ‘basis for the determination’ of my two reconsideration requests is completely fraudulent”.

Finally, with respect to Deputy Chief Attorney Christmas’ final third paragraph:

“Please note that there is no procedure after denial of reconsideration for further action by the Committee. Your recent email does not contain any new allegations which would warrant reopening an investigation against the attorney. Therefore, the Committee cannot be of further assistance in this matter”,

it repeats the fraud, exposed by my March 9, 2022 letter, that “the Committee” – by its members – was involved in the disposition of my complaints against Attorney General James and Solicitor General Underwood – and that “investigation” had been undertaken, which, to “warrant reopening” would require “new allegations”.

As a roster of the Committee’s current 42 members is not posted on [AGC-1’s website](#)² – and no such listing appears on the AGC-1 letterhead that Chief Attorney Dopico and Deputy Chief Attorney Christmas used for my complaints³ – please furnish me with the current roster, without delay – or have AGC-1 staff do so.

Finally, I received a [March 11, 2022 letter of Appellate Division, First Department Deputy Clerk Margaret Sowah](#), entitled “Re: Complaint against Chief Attorney Jorge Dopico et al.”, to which, apparently, no complaint number has been assigned – and to which you are not indicated cc’s. In full, the letter reads:

² By contrast, [AGC-3’s website](#) has a prominent side-panel link for a roster of its members and [AGC-4’s website](#) posts a roster for each of its three Committees on its webpage.

³ If not now, then in the past, AGC-1 had letterhead listing its members. Illustrative are AGC-1 letters dated [December 11, 2000](#), [March 21, 2001](#), and [April 3, 2001](#) pertaining to a November 14, 2020 complaint I filed and an AGC-1 letter dated [May 19, 2009](#) pertaining to two complaints filed in 2005 by someone else. These were part of [the EVIDENCE I furnished the Commission on Statewide Attorney Discipline at its August 11, 2015 hearing, in support of my testimony](#) that New York’s “attorney disciplinary system cannot survive an evidentiary presentation”.

“Your complaint against Chief Attorney, Jorge Dopico, Esq., and attorney staff of the Attorney Grievance Committee regarding the handling of your complaints against Barbara Underwood, Esq., Docket No. 2021.0488, and Letitia James, Esq., Docket No. 2021.0843, has been referred to this office. You will receive a formal response after a full review of your concerns.”

Obviously, Deputy Chief Attorney Christmas is among the complained-against “attorney staff” – and this should have sufficed for her to have recognized that it was inappropriate for her to sign the March 11, 2022 letters, quite apart from their fraud and deceit.

In any event, “full review” will validate, *readily*, the truth of my January 27, 2022, February 23, 2022, and March 9, 2022 letters, of this, now fourth, letter, and of the duty of each of the Committee’s 42 members with respect to [my underlying open-and-shut, fully-documented February 11, 2021 complaint against Attorney General James and Solicitor General Underwood.](#)

Again, TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE. Please, therefore, respond, by e-mail, by the end of the day Thursday, March 17, 2022.

I again reiterate that I am available to answer questions, including under oath – and ask that you deem the foregoing as sworn by me as true under the penalties of perjury.

Thank you.

s/ELENA RUTH SASSOWER

cc: Appellate Division, First Department Deputy Clerk Margaret Sowah
Unified Court System Inspector General Sherrill Spatz