

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF DISCIPLINARY APPEALS
APPOINTED BY
THE SUPREME COURT OF TEXAS**

IN THE MATTER OF	§	
PIPER A. ROUNTREE	§	CAUSE NO. 39905
STATE BAR CARD NO. 17323050	§	

INTERLOCUTORY ORDER OF SUSPENSION

On the 13th day of July 2007, the above-styled and numbered disciplinary action was called for hearing. Petitioner, Commission for Lawyer Discipline of the State Bar of Texas, appeared by and through the Assistant Disciplinary Counsel and announced ready. Respondent, Piper A. Rountree, although duly cited to appear and having been given notice of the hearing, failed to answer or appear and wholly made default. All issues of fact, as well as all questions of law, were submitted to this Board for determination. Having considered the pleadings on file, having received evidence, and having heard the argument of counsel, the Board finds and orders as follows:

Findings of Fact:

- (1) Respondent, Piper A. Rountree, State Bar Card Number 17323050, is licensed in the State of Texas, but is administratively suspended from the practice of law for failure to comply with Minimum Continuing Legal Education requirements.
- (2) On or about February 26, 2005, a Sentencing Order was entered in the Circuit Court of Henrico County in Case No. CR04-5364-00 styled *Commonwealth of Virginia v. Piper Ann Rountree*, finding the Respondent guilty of First Degree Murder/F in violation of § 18.2-32 of the Code of Virginia and also finding the Respondent guilty of Use of a Firearm during the Commission of a Felony/F in violation of § 18.2-53.1 of the Code of Virginia in Case No. CR04-5365-00.
- (3) In Case No. CR04-5364-00F, the Respondent was sentenced to incarceration with the Virginia Department of Corrections for the term of life. In Case No. CR04-5365-00F, the Respondent was sentenced to incarceration with the Virginia Department of Corrections for the term of three (3) years. The Respondent was

further ordered to pay costs of \$3,545.00.

- (4) Respondent, Piper A. Rountree, is the same person as the Piper Ann Rountree who is the subject of the Sentencing Order described above.
- (5) Respondent has appealed the criminal convictions.
- (6) Respondent's criminal sentence is not fully probated.
- (7) Respondent was served with the Petition for Compulsory Discipline on May 7, 2007 by personal service, and the affidavit of service was filed with the Board on May 18, 2007.

Conclusions of Law. Based upon the foregoing facts, the Board concludes that:

- (1) The Board has jurisdiction to hear and determine this matter. Rule 7.08(G), Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure ("TRDP").
- (2) Respondent has been convicted of Intentional Crimes, as the term "Intentional Crime" is defined by TRDP 1.06(T) and of Serious Crimes, as the term "Serious Crime" is defined by TRDP 1.06(Z) for purposes of TRDP Part VIII.
- (3) Having been convicted of Intentional and Serious crimes, Respondent, Piper A. Rountree, should be suspended as an attorney licensed to practice law in Texas during the appeal of her convictions. TRDP 8.04.
- (4) In the event that either conviction of Respondent, Piper A. Rountree, becomes final, Respondent, Piper A. Rountree, should be disbarred. TRDP 8.05.

It is, accordingly, **ORDERED, ADJUDGED, and DECREED** that Respondent, Piper A. Rountree, State Bar Card No.17323050, is hereby **SUSPENDED** from the practice of law in the State of Texas, effective immediately on signing of this order and continuing hereafter until further order of this Board.

It is further **ORDERED** that, in the event that either of Respondent's criminal convictions is affirmed and becomes final, she shall be **DISBARRED**.

It is further **ORDERED, ADJUDGED and DECREED** that, during the period of this

suspension, Respondent, Piper A. Rountree is hereby prohibited, effective immediately, from practicing law in Texas, holding herself out as an attorney at law, performing any legal service for others, accepting any fee directly or indirectly for legal services not completed prior to the date of this Order, appearing as counsel in any proceeding in any Texas court or before any Texas administrative body, or holding herself out to others or using her name, in any manner, in conjunction with the words “attorney,” “counselor,” or “lawyer.”

It is further **ORDERED** that, not later than thirty (30) days from the date of this Order, Respondent, Piper A. Rountree shall notify, in writing, each and every justice of the peace, judge, magistrate, and chief justice of each and every court in which Respondent, Piper A. Rountree, has any legal matter pending, if any, of her suspension, of the style and cause number of the pending matter(s), and of the name, address, and telephone number of the client(s) Respondent is representing in that court. Respondent is also **ORDERED** to mail copies of all such notifications to the Office of the Chief Disciplinary Counsel, State Bar of Texas, P.O. Box 12487, Capitol Station, Austin, Texas 78711.

It is further **ORDERED** that Respondent, Piper A. Rountree, shall immediately notify each of her current clients, if any, in writing, of her suspension. In addition to such notification, Respondent is **ORDERED** to return all files, papers, unearned fees paid in advance, and all other monies and properties which are in her possession but which belong to current or former clients, if any, to those respective clients or former clients within thirty (30) days after the date of this Order. Respondent is further **ORDERED** to file with this Board, within the same thirty (30) days, an affidavit stating either (a) that all current clients have been notified of her suspension and that all files, papers, unearned fees paid in advance, and all other monies and properties belonging to clients

and former clients have been returned as ordered herein or (b) that Respondent has no current clients, files, or papers, and that any unearned fees paid in advance or other monies or properties belonging to clients have previously been returned to the appropriate client. If Respondent should be unable to return any file, papers, money or other property to any client or former client, Respondent's affidavit shall state with particularity the efforts made by Respondent with respect to each particular client and the cause of her inability to return to said client any file, paper, money or other property. Respondent is also **ORDERED** to mail a copy of said affidavit and copies of all notification letters to clients, to the Office of the Chief Disciplinary Counsel, State Bar of Texas, P.O. Box 12487, Capitol Station, Austin, Texas 78711.

It is further **ORDERED** that Respondent, Piper A. Rountree, immediately surrender her Texas law license and permanent State Bar Card to the Office of the Chief Disciplinary Counsel, State Bar of Texas, P.O. Box 12487, Capitol Station, Austin, Texas 78711, for transmittal to the Clerk of the Supreme Court of Texas.

It is further **ORDERED** that a certified copy of the Petition for Compulsory Discipline on file herein, along with a copy of this Order, be sent to the Chief Disciplinary Counsel of the State Bar of Texas, P.O. Box 12487, Austin, Texas 78711.

This Order is interlocutory pending the further orders of this Board at the conclusion of Respondent's appeal of her criminal convictions. In the event that both convictions of Respondent, Piper A. Rountree, are reversed, this Board, in response to Respondent or her attorney filing an appropriate motion, supported by affidavits or certified copies of court documents showing that the convictions have been reversed, shall terminate the suspension pursuant to TRDP 8.05. In the event that either conviction of Respondent, Piper A. Rountree, becomes final, this Board, on the filing by

the Chief Disciplinary Counsel of an appropriate motion, supported by affidavits or certified copies of court documents showing that the conviction has become final, shall enter a final judgment of disbarment pursuant to TRDP 8.05.

Signed this 13th day of July, 2007.

Karen L. Watkins

CHAIR PRESIDING