

SWORN ETHICS COMPLAINT AND AFFIDAVIT

Monroe County Board of Commissioners
Against: Commissioner John Ambrose

I. COMPLAINANT

This complaint is submitted by the Monroe County Board of Commissioners pursuant to Article V, Sections 2-82 through 2-89 of the Monroe County Code of Ordinances.

II. RESPONDENT

John Ambrose, duly elected member of the Monroe County Board of Commissioners.

III. JURISDICTION

This complaint is filed pursuant to Article V of the Monroe County Code of Ethics, which governs the conduct of elected officials, including members of the Board of Commissioners. The allegations herein, if proven, constitute violations within the disciplinary jurisdiction of the County.

IV. APPLICABLE ETHICAL PROVISIONS

This complaint alleges violations of the following provisions, including but not limited to:

- **Section 2-85(a)(8):** Never engage in other conduct which is unbecoming to an official or which constitutes a breach of public trust.
- **Section 2-83:** Requirement that covered officials observe the highest standards of behavior and recognize that the public interest must be their primary concern.
- **Section 2-85(a)(2):** Never discriminate by the dispensing of special favors or privileges to anyone.
- **Section 2-85(a)(11):** Not use one's position to secure special privileges or engage in conduct inconsistent with official duties.

V. FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

A. Pattern of Inappropriate Conduct

Commissioner John Ambrose has engaged in a repeated and ongoing pattern of inappropriate, offensive, and unprofessional comments while acting in his official capacity as a county commissioner. These incidents have occurred both inside and outside of formal commission meetings, including interactions with county employees and statements made during public meetings of the Board of Commissioners.

This conduct reflects a continuing course of behavior inconsistent with the ethical obligations imposed upon elected officials.

B. Racially Inappropriate Comments Directed at County Employees

On multiple occasions, Commissioner Ambrose made racially insensitive and inappropriate comments to county employees, including remarks referencing race, ethnicity, or racial stereotypes in a manner that was:

- Offensive and demeaning;
- Unrelated to legitimate county business;
- Inappropriate for a supervisory or governing official.

Supplemental Incident – Verbatim Quotation

On **Tuesday, January 6, 2026**, while acting in his official capacity and present in a county workplace, Commissioner Ambrose engaged in a conversation with a newly hired county employee. During this interaction, Commissioner Ambrose made the following statements, verbatim, in the presence of others:

“Henry County has turned,”

followed by,

“I have nothing against them; we all should own one or two.”

At the time, Commissioner Ambrose pointed to the black outfit worn by the employee. These statements were unsolicited, unrelated to county business, and made in a professional setting involving county personnel.

Nature of Conduct:

The statements reasonably appeared to reference race or cultural identity, singling out the employee based on appearance. Regardless of Commissioner Ambrose's asserted intent, the statements were:

- Inappropriate for a workplace governed by nondiscrimination and professionalism standards;
- Unprofessional coming from an elected official interacting with county staff;
- Unrelated to any legitimate governmental purpose;
- Made under color of office and in the presence of a new employee, amplifying their impact.

Workplace Impact:

The comments caused discomfort and created an awkward and unsettling work environment. A reasonable person in the same position would find such remarks inappropriate when made by a county commissioner during official interactions with staff.

Ethical Implications:

This incident constitutes conduct unbecoming a public official and a breach of public trust, in violation of Section 2-85(a)(8), and implicates the County's ethical standards requiring professionalism, nondiscrimination, and respect toward employees.

C. January 8, 2026 – Alleged Violent and Racially Charged Statement Reported by County Employees (Second-Hand Account)

On Thursday, January 8, 2026, two separate county employees independently reported the **same account** of an incident allegedly involving Commissioner Ambrose. Both employees stated that the incident occurred **within the last year**, though not recently, and that they had not previously reported it.

According to both employees, Commissioner Ambrose **allegedly stated** that he wanted to rent the county conference center and include the gazebo outside **for the purpose of holding a lynching**, and that **the first person he wanted to lynch was Larry Evans**, a former Monroe County Commissioner who served Monroe County for many years.

The employees did not coordinate with one another prior to reporting the incident. Both expressed **fear for their personal well-being** and requested that their identities not be disclosed. Due to the seriousness of the allegation, the consistency of the reports, and concern for employee safety, the complainant is submitting this allegation on their behalf.

D. Nature and Impact of the Alleged Conduct

The alleged reference to lynching invokes language universally understood as **violent, racially charged, and historically associated with racial terror**. When attributed to a sitting county commissioner, such language—whether made seriously or jokingly—would reasonably be perceived as threatening, intimidating, and wholly incompatible with public service.

Employees reported that the alleged statement caused fear and concern and contributed to a perception that the workplace was unsafe and that county leadership tolerated or engaged in violent rhetoric.

Ethical Implications:

This incident constitutes conduct unbecoming a public official and a breach of public trust, in violation of Section 2-85(a)(8), and implicates the County's ethical standards requiring professionalism, nondiscrimination, and respect toward employees.

C. Inappropriate Comments Toward Female Employees and Members of the Public

Commissioner Ambrose has made inappropriate comments directed toward female employees and female members of the public, including remarks regarding appearance, demeanor, or gender-based characteristics. These comments:

- Were made in professional settings, including commission meetings and interactions related to county business;
- Were unrelated to the substance of county governance;
- Were perceived as unwelcome, inappropriate, and unprofessional.

D. Inappropriate Conduct During Public Commission Meetings

Commissioner Ambrose has made inappropriate and disparaging remarks during official meetings of the Board of Commissioners, directed toward or referencing members of the public. These comments were:

- Made while the Board was conducting official business;
 - Delivered in meetings open to the public and part of the official record;
 - Inconsistent with the decorum, neutrality, and professionalism expected of a presiding official.
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E. Impact on Public Trust and County Operations

The cumulative effect of Commissioner Ambrose's conduct has:

- Undermined the dignity and decorum of official commission meetings;
 - Negatively affected employee morale and confidence in leadership;
 - Created reasonable concern regarding discrimination and unequal treatment;
 - Eroded public trust in the Monroe County Board of Commissioners.
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F. Official Capacity and Authority

At all relevant times, Commissioner Ambrose:

- Was acting as a duly elected county commissioner;
 - Was exercising the authority and visibility of his office;
 - Knew or should have known that his words and conduct would be attributed to the County and the Board as a whole.
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VI. VIOLATIONS

Based on the foregoing facts, Commissioner John Ambrose has violated:

- **Section 2-85(a)(8)** – conduct unbecoming an official and conduct constituting a breach of public trust;
 - **Sections 2-85(a)(2) and 2-85(a)(11)** – engaging in discriminatory and unprofessional conduct inconsistent with official duties;
 - **Section 2-83** – failing to observe the highest standards of behavior and prioritizing public trust.
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VII. REQUEST FOR REVIEW AND RELIEF

The Monroe County Board of Commissioners respectfully requests that:

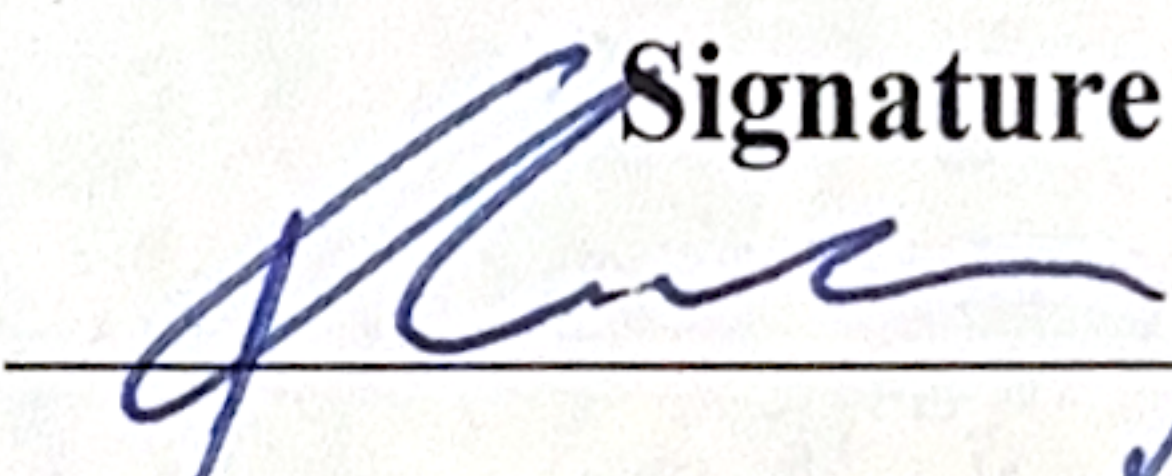
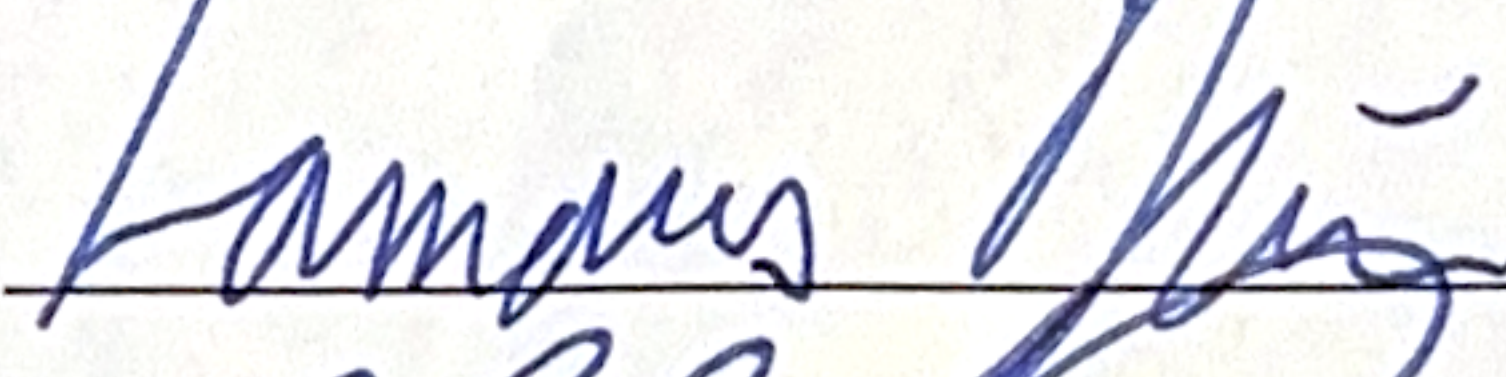
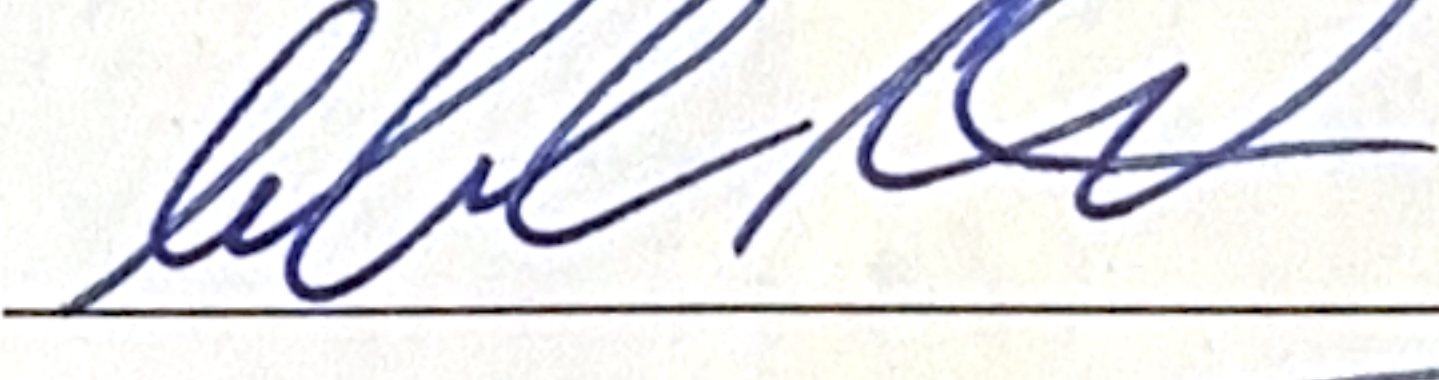
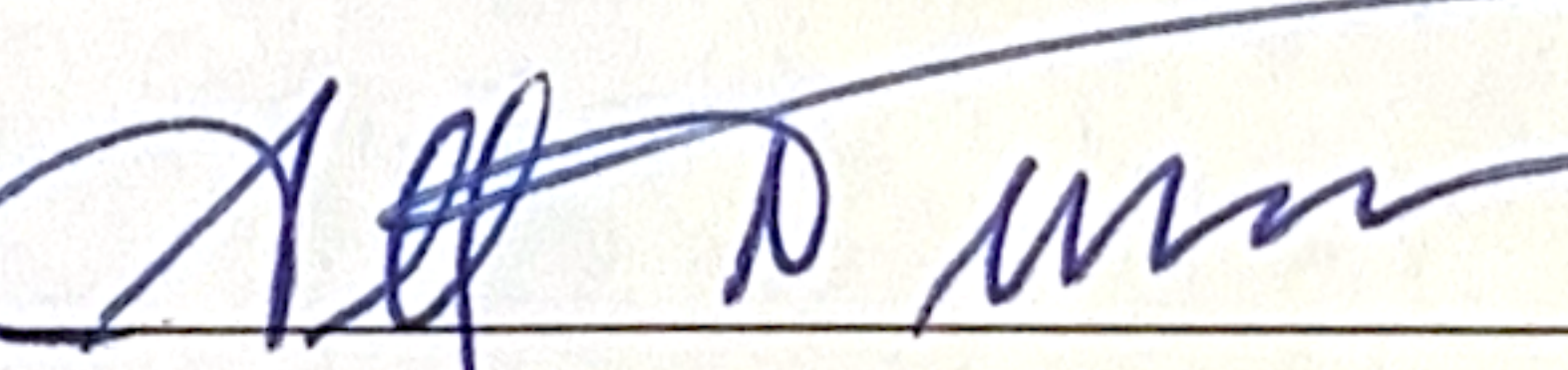
1. This complaint be accepted as a proper, sworn ethics complaint;
2. An independent sufficiency determination be made pursuant to Section 2-86(k);
3. If sufficient, an independent review board be empaneled;
4. A public hearing be conducted in accordance with Article V; and
5. Upon a finding of violation, appropriate penalties be imposed as authorized under Section 2-89, including public censure or other lawful remedies.

VIII. AFFIDAVIT OF TRUTH

We, the undersigned, as duly authorized representatives of the Monroe County Board of Commissioners, being sworn, state under oath:

1. We are authorized to submit this complaint on behalf of the Monroe County Board of Commissioners.
2. The statements contained herein are true and accurate to the best of our knowledge, information, and belief.
3. The factual allegations set forth above are supported by firsthand observations, employee reports, and other documented evidence as appropriate.
4. We understand that providing false statements in this sworn complaint may subject us to penalties for perjury under Georgia law.

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BOARD

Name	Title	Signature	Date
Alan Gibbs	Commissioner / Chair		1-20-2026
Lamarcus Davis	Commissioner District 1		1-16-2026
Eddie Rowland	Commissioner District 2		1-16-2026
Al Turner	Commissioner District 4		01-16-26

NOTARY PUBLIC

Name: Suzanne Schultek
Commission Expires: 8/17/27
Signature & Seal: _____

