

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
ON STANDARDS OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT  
OPINION NO. 4 - 2019**

RE: Propriety of a part-time municipal court judge serving on the Board of Directors for the local Farm Bureau.

FACTS

A part-time municipal judge, who is also a local farmer, has been asked to fill a vacant seat on the Board of Directors for the local Farm Bureau. The Farm Bureau is located in a different county than the municipality in which the judge serves. The duties include attending six meetings a year, during which decisions are made regarding the policies of the County Farm Bureau Federation. There is no compensation for this position.

CONCLUSION

A part-time municipal judge may serve on the Board of Directors for the Farm Bureau in a neighboring county.

OPINION

A judge may serve as an officer, director, trustee or non-legal advisor of an organization or governmental agency devoted to the improvement of the law, the legal system or the administration of justice or of an educational, religious, charitable, fraternal or civic organization not conducted for profit....” Canon 4C(3) (emphasis added). The Board of the Farm Bureau is a civic organization which meets six times year to make decisions regarding the policies of the County Farm Bureau Federation. The limited meetings will not interfere with the judge’s diligent administration of his judicial duties as required by Canon 2. Furthermore, because the county in which the Farm Bureau is located is different than the county in which the judge’s municipal court is located, there is little danger that the Farm Bureau or its members will appear before the judge

necessitating frequent recusals. Thus, there is no prohibition against the judge from accepting a seat on the Board of Directors.

S/ Letitia H. Verdin  
LETITIA H. VERDIN, CHAIR

S/ Usha Jefferies Bridges  
USHA JEFFERIES BRIDGES

S/ Keith M. Babcock  
KEITH M. BABCOCK

January 25, 2019.