

IN RE APPLICATION OF WAMMES.

[Cite as *In re Application of Wammes*, 154 Ohio St.3d 133, 2018-Ohio-3906.]

Attorneys—Character and Fitness—Application to register as a candidate for admission to the practice of law—Delinquent-child adjudication—Pending application to take the bar exam approved—Applicant may apply to take the February 2019 bar exam.

(No. 2018-0494—Submitted May 22, 2018—Decided September 27, 2018.)

ON REPORT by the Board of Commissioners on Character and Fitness of the
Supreme Court, No. 697.

Per Curiam.

{¶ 1} Applicant, Brison Deverick Wammes, of Cincinnati, Ohio, applied in November 2016 to register as a candidate for admission to the practice of law in Ohio and to take the July 2018 bar examination. He was expected to graduate from the Salmon P. Chase College of Law at Northern Kentucky University in May 2018.

{¶ 2} Two members of the Cincinnati Bar Association admissions committee interviewed Wammes in September 2017, and the committee issued a provisional report recommending that his character and fitness be approved. Because Wammes had been adjudicated a delinquent child for conduct that would be a felony if committed by an adult, his application was submitted to the Board of Commissioners on Character and Fitness for review in accordance with Gov.Bar R. I(11)(D)(5)(a) and I(12).

{¶ 3} A three-member panel appointed by the board conducted a hearing on January 18, 2018. At the hearing, Wammes testified that in the fall of 2007, when he was 15 years old, he struck a peer after the peer had expressed interest in Wammes's girlfriend. The peer suffered a broken jaw. Wammes testified that

SUPREME COURT OF OHIO

when he saw the young man bleeding from the mouth, he immediately felt remorse and apologized. Wammes called his parents to confess what he had done. He also spoke to the victim's mother on the phone and apologized. Based on this incident, Wammes was adjudicated a delinquent child. He performed community service, completed an anger-management assessment, and served only one year of a three-year period of probation before he was released.

{¶ 4} An applicant to the Ohio bar must prove by clear and convincing evidence that he or she “possesses the requisite character, fitness, and moral qualifications for admission to the practice of law.” Gov.Bar R. I(11)(D)(1). The applicant's record of conduct must justify “the trust of clients, adversaries, courts, and others with respect to the professional duties owed to them.” Gov.Bar R. I(11)(D)(3). In considering whether Wammes had satisfied his burden, the panel noted that he (1) did not forfeit any rights or privileges as a result of the adjudication, (2) has learned never to respond with violence and to think before acting, and (3) has demonstrated that he is no longer the immature teenager he was more than ten years ago. *See* Gov.Bar R. I(11)(D)(3)(a), (4)(a) through (j), and (5)(a). Therefore, the panel determined that Wammes had met his burden of proving his character, fitness, and moral qualifications for admission to the practice of law and recommended that we approve his registration application. The board unanimously adopted the panel's report and recommendation, and there are no objections. Having thoroughly reviewed the record and applicable rules, we agree that Wammes has established that he possesses the requisite character, fitness, and moral qualifications for admission to the practice of law in Ohio.

{¶ 5} Accordingly, we adopt the board's report and approve Wammes's pending application and permit him to sit for the February 2019 bar exam, provided that he satisfies the remaining registration requirements.

Judgment accordingly.

January Term, 2018

O'CONNOR, C.J., and O'DONNELL, KENNEDY, FRENCH, FISCHER, DEWINE,
and DEGENARO, JJ., concur.

Brison Deverick Wammes, pro se.

Raymond W. Lembke, for the Cincinnati Bar Association.
