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COURT OF QUEEN'S BENCH FOR SASKATCHEWAN
IN BANKRUPTCY AND INSOLVENCY

JUDICIAL CENTRE REGINA

PLAINTIFF CANADIAN MORTGAGE SERVICING CORPORATION

DEFENDANT KORF PROPERTIES LTD.

IN THE MATTER OF THE RECEIVERSHIP OF
KORF PROPERTIES LTD.

BRIEF OF LAW ON BEHALF OF THE PLAINTIFF, CANADIAN MORTGAGE SERVICING CORPORATION

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BRIEF OF LAW ON BEHALF OF THE PLAINTIFF, CANADIAN MORTGAGE SERVICING CORPORATION

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This Brief of Law is submitted on behalf of the Plaintiff, Canadian Mortgage Servicing Corporation ("**CMSC**"), in support of its application for an Order pursuant to section 243 of the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act*, RSC 1985, c B-3 (the "**BIA**"), section 64(8) of *The Personal Property Security Act, 1993*, SS 1993, c P-6.2 (the "**PPSA**") and section 65(1) of *The Queen's Bench Act, 1998*, SS 1998, c Q-1.01 (the "**QB Act**") appointing MNP Ltd. of Regina, Saskatchewan as Receiver, without security, of all of the assets, undertakings and properties of the Defendant, Korf Properties Ltd. ("**KPL**"), including all proceeds thereof (the "**Property**").

2. In accordance with the practice of using template orders in Saskatchewan receivership proceedings, CMSC has filed a redlined version of the Saskatchewan Template Receivership Order which identifies the manner in which the draft Receivership Order being requested varies from the template receivership order that has been approved by the Insolvency Panel of the Court of Queen's Bench for Saskatchewan.

II. FACTS

3. The facts relied upon by CMSC in support of this application are those set in the Affidavit of Marianne Dobslaw sworn on March 9, 20120 (the "**Dobslaw Affidavit**").

4. Unless otherwise defined herein, capitalized terms in this Brief of Law shall have the respective meanings ascribed to them in the Dobslaw Affidavit.

5. CMSC relies on all of the materials filed in support of this application which are referenced in the Notice of Application returnable on March 17, 2020.

III. ISSUES

6. CMSC respectfully submits that this application raises the following issue for determination by this Honourable Court, namely: Is it just or convenient for the Court to grant an Order appointing a receiver of KPL upon the terms contained in the draft Receivership Order?

IV. ARGUMENT

A. Legislation

7. CMSC brings this application primarily pursuant to section 243(1) of the BIA. This section grants the Court the jurisdiction and authority, on application by a secured creditor, to appoint a receiver of the property of an insolvent person if it is "just or convenient to do so". The section reads as follows:

> 243(1) Subject to subsection (1.1), on application by a secured creditor, a court may appoint a receiver to do any or all of the following if it considers it to be just or convenient to do so:
>
> (a) take possession of all or substantially all of the inventory, accounts receivable or other property of an insolvent person or bankrupt that was acquired for or used in relation to a business carried on by the insolvent person or bankrupt;
>
> (b) exercise any control that the court considers advisable over that property and over the insolvent person's or bankrupt's business; and
>
> (c) take any other action that the court considers advisable.
>
> (1.1) In the case of an insolvent person in respect of whose property a notice is to be sent under subsection 244(1), the court may not appoint a receiver under subsection (1) before the expiry of 10 days after the day on which the secured creditors sends the notice unless
>
> (a) the insolvent person consents to an earlier enforcement under section 244(2); or
>
> (b) the court considers it appropriate to appoint a receiver before then.

B. Indebtedness of KPL to CMSC

8. By means of a mortgage granted by KPL in favour of Atrium Mortgage Investment Corporation ("**Atrium**") originally dated December 1, 2014 and extended on February 23, 2017 to January 15, 2018 (the "**Mortgage**"), Atrium advanced to KPL financing in the original principal amount of $18,500,000.00 (the "**Loan**").

9. In order to secure the repayment by KPL to Atrium of the amounts advanced by Atrium to KPL pursuant to the Mortgage, as well as the repayment of other amounts owing by KPL to Atrium pursuant to the Loan (collectively, the "**Indebtedness**"), KPL granted to Atrium the following security in the assets of KPL, namely:

a. KPL granted the Mortgage to and in favour of Atrium of all right, title and interest of KPL in or to twelve (12) properties owned by KPL (collectively, the "**Properties**") and more particularly described as follows:

   i. seventy-three (73) multi-family units contained within five (5) low rise apartment buildings located in the City of Estevan, Saskatchewan;

   ii. approximately 58,200 square feet of industrial warehouse space located within five (5) buildings located in the City of Estevan, Saskatchewan;

   iii. approximately six (6) acres of serviced heavy industrial zoned land located in the City of Estevan, Saskatchewan;

   iv. one light industrial building comprising approximately 33,000 square feet on a 3.5 acre property outside the City of Regina located in the Rural Municipality of Sherwood No. 159, Saskatchewan (the "**RM of Sherwood**"); and

   v. one industrial building comprising approximately 17,600 square feet on a 20 acre property located in the County of Vermillion River, Alberta (the "**County of Vermillion River**");

b. a General Assignment of Leases and Rents dated December 1, 2014 (the "**Assignment of Leases and Rents**"), whereby KPL assigned to Atrium as security for the Indebtedness all of interests of KPL in certain leases and rents pertaining to the Properties;

c. a Security Agreement dated December 1, 2014 (the "**Security Agreement**"), whereby KPL assigned to Atrium an interest in all property described therein;

d. an Assignment of Insurance dated December 1, 2014 (the "**Assignment of Insurance**") executed by KPL in favour of Atrium; and

e. an Assignment and Postponement of Shareholder Loans made effective on December 1, 2014 (the "**Assignment and Postponement**") by Kordel Korf, Do All Industries Ltd., P & O Assets Ltd., P & O Assets XEG Ltd., Korf Aviation Ltd., Sightcutting and Forming Ltd., Korf Farms Ltd., Korf Holdings Ltd., Do All Industries USA Ltd., South East Electric Ltd., Korf Developments Ltd., Korf Family Trust, Korf Family Trust II and Metigoshe Recreational Holdings Ltd. in favour of Atrium as security for the Loan.

10. The Mortgage, the Assignment of Leases and Rents, the Security Agreement, the Assignment of Insurance and the Assignment and Postponement are hereinafter collectively described as the "**Security**".

11. By means of a Mortgage and Security Assignment Agreement made effective as of February 26, 2020, Atrium irrevocably assigned and transferred to and in favour of CMSC all right, title and interest of Atrium in or to the Loan, the Indebtedness and the Security.

C. <u>KPL is Insolvent</u>

12. KPL has ceased to meet its liabilities as they become due, and is an "insolvent person" as defined in section 2 of the BIA. In particular:

    a. the Indebtedness has matured and has become due and payable by KPL to CMSC in its entirety and KPL has defaulted in its obligation to repay the Indebtedness to CMSC;

    b. KPL has defaulted in its obligations under the Loan by failing to make the required monthly interest payments on the Loan which were due to be paid by KPL to CMSC (and formally, Atrium) on each of:

        i. August 15, September 15, October 15, November 15 and December 15 of 2017;

        ii. the fifteenth (15th) day of each month in 2018;

        iii. the fifteenth (15th) day of each month in 2019; and

        iv. January 15 and February 15 of 2020.

    c. KPL has failed to pay its municipal taxes to the City of Estevan, Rural Municipality of Sherwood in Saskatchewan and the County of Vermillion in Alberta;

    d. KPL has allowed significant deferred maintenance issues to develop in regards to the Properties thereby causing the Properties to deteriorate and jeopardizing the Properties and putting the Security at risk;

e. KPL has failed, neglected or become unable to pay for insurance coverage on the Properties, thereby jeopardizing the Properties and putting the Security at risk; and

f. KPL has become insolvent and has ceased to meet its liabilities generally as they become due.

D. It is Just and Convenient to Appoint a Receiver

The Governing Case Authorities

13. Section 243 of the BIA provides that a receiver may be appointed if it is "just or convenient" to do so. There are numerous factors which a court may consider in determining whether or not it is just or convenient to appoint a receiver. The following cases are instructive.

14. In *Bank of Montreal v Carnival National Leasing Ltd.*,[1] Bank of Montreal ("**BMO**") applied to appoint a receiver pursuant to section 243(1) of the BIA. Carnival was indebted to BMO for approximately $17 million and BMO held a general security agreement over the assets of Carnival, pursuant to which it had the right to appoint a private or court-appointed receiver. The Ontario Superior Court of Justice (Commercial List), citing the earlier decision of *Bank of Nova Scotia v Freure Village on Clair Creek*,[2] listed the following factors as being relevant to the court's determination:

a. the court must have regard to the nature of the property and the rights and interests of all parties in relation thereto;

b. the fact that the moving party has a right under its security to appoint a receiver is an important factor to consider but so, in such circumstances, is the question of whether or not an appointment by the court is necessary to enable the receiver to carry out its work and duties more efficiently; and

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[1] *Bank of Montreal v Carnival National Leasing Ltd.*, 2011 ONSC 1007, 74 CBR (5th) 300 (OntSCJ) [*Carnival*]. [TAB A]

[2] *Bank of Nova Scotia v Freure Village on Clair Creek*, 40 CBR (3d) 274 (OntCJ GenDiv) [*Freure Village*]. [TAB B]

c. it is not essential that the moving party, a secured creditor, establish that it will suffer irreparable harm if a receiver is not appointed.[3]

15. In *Kasten Energy Inc. v Shamrock Oil & Gas Ltd.*,[4] a decision of the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench, the court listed the following additional non-exhaustive list of factors that may be considered in making a determination of whether it is just or convenient to appoint a receiver:

a. whether irreparable harm might be caused if no order were made, although it is not essential for a creditor to establish irreparable harm if a receiver is not appointed, particularly where the appointment of a receiver is authorized by the security documentation;

b. the risk to the security holder taking into consideration the size of the debtor's equity in the assets and the need for protection or safeguarding of the assets while litigation takes place;

c. the apprehended or actual waste of the debtor's assets;

d. the preservation and protection of the property pending judicial resolution;

e. the balance of convenience to the parties;

f. the fact that the creditor has the right to appoint a receiver under the documentation providing for the loan;

g. the enforcement of rights under a security instrument where the security-holder encounters or expects to encounter difficulty with the debtor and others;

h. the principle that the appointment of a receiver is extraordinary relief which should be granted cautiously and sparingly;

i. the effect of the order upon the parties;

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[3] *Carnival* at para 24.

[4] *Kasten Energy Inc. v Shamrock Oil & Gas Ltd.*, 2013 ABQB 63, 20 PPSAC (3d) 128 [*Kasten*]. [TAB C]

j. the conduct of the parties;

k. the length of time that a receiver may be in place;

l. the cost to the parties;

m. the likelihood of maximizing return to the parties; and

n. the goal of facilitating the duties of the receiver.[5]

16. The foregoing list of factors has also been cited and relied upon by the Supreme Court of British Columbia[6] and by this Court in *Affinity Credit Union 2013 v. Vortex Drilling Ltd.*[7] and *Pillar Capital Corp. v. Harmon International Industries Inc.*[8]

Application of the Case Authorities

17. Applying the relevant factors to the facts of this case, CMSC submits that it is both just and convenient to appoint a receiver of KPL in light of the facts and matters set forth below.

Failure of KPL to Rectify Default

18. As a result of the events of default described above and as more particularly described in the Dobslaw Affidavit, by letter dated December 1, 2017 (the "**December 1 2017 Letter**"), CMSC wrote to counsel for KPL and demanded that KPL and make payment in full of the Indebtedness (plus additional interest accrued from and after November 17, 2017 at the per diem rate of $4,004.70 and legal fees incurred to the date of payment) on or before January 2, 2018.

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[5] *Kasten* at para 13, citing Frank Bennett, *Bennett on Receiverships*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Thompson Canada Ltd, 1995) at 130.

[6] See e.g. *Maple Trade Finance Inc. v CY Oriental Holdings Ltd.*, 2009 BCSC 1527, 60 CBR (5th) 142 at para 25 [*Maple Trade*]. [TAB D]

[7] 2017 SKQB 228, 2017 CarswellSask 399(Q.B).

[8] 2020 SKQB 19, 2020 CarswellSask 34(Q.B.)

19. As KPL failed to pay the Indebtedness on or before January 2, 2018, Atrium prepared receivership materials seeking an Order of the Court appointing a receiver to manage the rents and profits of the Properties and to provide professional property management services to manage the Property (the "**Receivership Materials**") and that Atrium provided the Draft Receivership Materials to counsel for KPL on January 26, 2018.

20. Upon receipt of the Receivership Materials, KPL acknowledged that the Indebtedness was entirely due and payable by KPL to Atrium and requested that Atrium forbear from enforcement of the Security. Atrium agreed to KPL's request and entered into a forbearance agreement with KPL dated April 1, 2018 (the "**Forbearance Agreement**").

21. The Forbearance Agreement required KPL to enter into property management contracts with experienced property managers to manage, repair, maintain, market and/or lease the Properties (the "**Property Managers**") and required KPL to cooperate with the Property Managers to allow them to improve management of the Properties.

22. The Forbearance Agreement was amended and extended pursuant to Amending Agreements dated September 1, 2018 and April 1, 2019.

23. The Forbearance Agreement (included amendments thereto) expired on December 31, 2019.

24. By letter dated February 13, 2020, Atrium once again demanded that KPL repay the Indebtedness owing to Atrium by KPL, which Indebtedness (as at January 31, 2020) amounted to $23,103,873.95 (the "**Indebtedness**"), plus interest on that amount accruing from and after that date (at a per diem rate of $4,843.18), as well as additional legal fees incurred by Atrium from and after that date in regard to the Security and in regard to recovery of the Indebtedness.

25. CMSC has determined that KPL is insolvent and that KPL has committed acts of bankruptcy by ceasing to meet its liabilities generally as they come due. Further, CMSC is gravely concerned that its security in the Properties is in jeopardy as a result of:

    a. the continually accumulating municipal property tax arrears owing against the Properties;

b. the significant deferred maintenance issues associated with the Properties;

c. the disengaged, weak and absentee ownership of the Properties exhibited by KPL;

d. the failure, inability or unwillingness of KPL to engage with the Property Managers and to take an active role in administration, stewardship and preservation of the Properties; and

e. the inability of KPL to place and maintain insurance on the Properties (as a result of which the Properties are at risk).

CMSC Has the Right to Appoint a Receiver

26. An order appointing a receiver is not an extraordinary remedy where a secured creditor is exercising the right to enforce its security.[9] Courts have consistently held that, where a security document confers upon a secured creditor the right to apply to a court to appoint a receiver, that fact weighs heavily in support of granting the order.[10] In other words, it is both just and convenient for the court to enforce the express terms of the contract between the parties.

CMSC will Suffer Irreparable Harm if a Receiver is Not Appointed

27. The jurisprudence is clear that a secured creditor need not establish that irreparable harm may be caused if no order were made.[11] However, where such harm would likely ensue, it is an important factor for the Court's consideration. In this case, CMSC is likely to suffer irreparable harm if a receiver is not appointed.

28. As described above, the Security and the interests of CMSC are in jeopardy while the Properties remain under the control of KPL, such that an Order appointing a Receiver is essential for the protection of the Security and the interests of all stakeholders (including CMSC).

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[9] *Carnival* at paras 25-26.

[10] See e.g. *Maple Trade* at para 26.

[11] See e.g. *Carnival*.

The Overall Balance of Convenience Favours Granting the Order

29. In *Callidus Capital Corp. v. CarCap Inc.*,[12] the Ontario Superior Court of Justice considered the interests of all concerned to determine, on a balance of convenience, whether the appointment of a receiver was warranted. The court observed the following (at paragraph 46):

> What is the likely effect on the parties of appointing a receiver? From Callidus' point of view, it will allow it to protect its security, and dispose of it in an organized and court-supervised fashion. It proposes to sell the businesses as a going concern, in order to maximize value for all stakeholders. The respondents concede that a possible restructuring plan might be to liquidate, in which case the hope would also be a going concern sale. In this regard, I see no difference in outcome if a receiver is appointed.

30. The court determined that the balance of convenience (in conjunction with the other determinative factors) warranted the appointment of a receiver. In particular:

a. the appointing creditor had legitimate concerns about the businesses continuing as a going concern while the respondents attempted to restructure, given that the respondents had stopped purchasing vehicles for lease, had no money to do so and, as a result, the value of the security was declining;

b. recent activity observed with the debtors' bank accounts suggested that the debtors were out of financial control and operating outside of the normal course of business;

c. the debtors had been given every opportunity to remedy their defaults, but had failed to do so;

d. the debtors had failed to honour the terms of a forbearance agreement;

e. the appointing creditor had lost faith in the management of the debtors, and the value of the security would continue to erode under such management's direction;

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[12] 2012 ONSC 163 [TAB E].

f. the debtors' past conduct gave cause for concern if there was no receiver who could manage the businesses and arrange for an orderly sale under the court's supervision; and

g. the court was required to put an end to the continued erosion of the security to protect all stakeholders.[13]

31. Due to the similar indicia described herein, CMSC has completely lost all trust and confidence in the willingness and ability of KPL to repay the amounts owing by KPL to CMSC or to manage and protect the assets of KPL and the Security in such assets held by CMSC. CMSC has also completely lost confidence in the ability of KPL to restructure its business and financial affairs.

32. The appointment of a receiver of KPL will preserve the assets of KPL for the benefit of all of its stakeholders (including CMSC) through a court-supervised process. KPL, on the other hand, would suffer little or no prejudice by the appointment of a receiver (given its current inability to meet its obligations generally as they become due or otherwise carry on business).

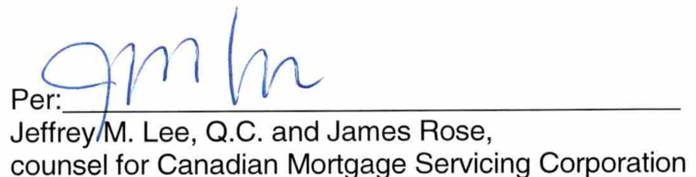
33. Having regard to all of the relevant factors, CMSC submits that it is both just and convenient for an Order to be granted appointing a receiver of the property of CMSC.

V. RELIEF REQUESTED

34. For all of the foregoing reasons, Canadian Mortgage Servicing Corporation respectfully requests that this Honourable Court grant an Order appointing MNP Ltd as receiver of Korf Properties Ltd. in accordance with the terms of the draft Receivership Order.

ALL OF WHICH IS RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED this 10th day of March, 2020.

MLT AIKINS LLP



Per:____________________
Jeffrey M. Lee, Q.C. and James Rose,
counsel for Canadian Mortgage Servicing Corporation

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[13] *Ibid.* at paras. 47-54.

VI. TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

JURISPRUDENCE	TAB
Bank of Montreal v Carnival National Leasing Ltd., 2011 ONSC 1007, 74 CBR (5th) 300 (OntSCJ)	A
Bank of Nova Scotia v Freure Village on Clair Creek, 40 CBR (3d) 274 (OntCJ GenDiv)	B
Kasten Energy Inc. v Shamrock Oil & Gas Ltd., 2013 ABQB 63, 20 PPSAC (3d) 128	C
Maple Trade Finance Inc. v CY Oriental Holdings Ltd., 2009 BCSC 1527, 60 CBR (5th) 142	D
Callidus Capital Corp. v. CarCap Inc., 2012 ONSC 163	E
Affinity Credit Union 2013 v. Vortex Drilling Ltd., 2017 SKQB 228, 2017 CarswellSask 399(Q.B.)	F
Pillar Capital Corp. v. Harmon International Industries Inc., 2020 SKQB 19, 2020 CarswellSask 34 (Q.B.)	G

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File No:	0053731-00014

2011 ONSC 1007
Ontario Superior Court of Justice

Bank of Montreal v. Carnival National Leasing Ltd.

2011 CarswellOnt 896, 2011 ONSC 1007, [2011] O.J. No. 671, 198 A.C.W.S. (3d) 79, 74 C.B.R. (5th) 300

Bank of Montreal (Applicant) and Carnival National Leasing Limited and Carnival Automobiles Limited (Respondents)

Newbould J.

Heard: February 11, 2011
Judgment: February 15, 2011
Docket: CV-10-9029-00CL

Counsel: John J. Chapman, Arthi Sambasivan for Applicants
Fred Tayar, Colby Linthwaite for Respondents
Rachelle F. Mancur for Royal Bank of Canada

Subject: Corporate and Commercial; Insolvency

Related Abridgment Classifications
For all relevant Canadian Abridgment Classifications refer to highest level of case via History.

Debtors and creditors

VII Receivers
  VII.3 Appointment
    VII.3.b Application for appointment
      VII.3.b.iii Grounds
        VII.3.b.iii.C Conduct of parties

Headnote

Debtors and creditors --- Receivers — Appointment — Application for appointment — Grounds

Debtor was in business of leasing motor vehicles — Debtor was indebted to creditor bank; vehicles guaranteed indebtedness to $1.5 million — Creditor held security over assets of debtor including general security agreement under which it had right to appoint receiver of debtor or to apply to court for appointment of receiver — Under terms of wholesale leasing facility, total advances for used vehicle financing were not to exceed 30 percent of approved lease portfolio credit line — Creditor's account manager was informed that used car lease portfolio was 60 percent of leases financed by creditor, well in excess of 30 percent condition of loan — Creditor delivered demands for payment — Creditor applied for appointment of receiver — Application granted — Debtor relied on decision in which judge was critical of actions of bank in overstating its case and making unsupportable allegations of fraud — In case at bar there was no basis to refuse order sought because of alleged misconduct on part of creditor or its counsel — If anything, shoe was on other foot as factum filed on behalf of debtor was replete with allegations of false assertions on behalf of creditor, none of which were established — Cited case was relied upon in which it was held that where security instrument permits appointment of private receiver, extraordinary nature of

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remedy sought is less essential to inquiry — It was preferable to have court appointed receiver rather than privately appointed one as debtor stated that if private appointment was made it would litigate its right to do so.

Table of Authorities

Cases considered by *Newbould J.*:

Anderson v. Hunking (2010), 2010 CarswellOnt 5191, 2010 ONSC 4008 (Ont. S.C.J.) — referred to

Bank of Nova Scotia v. D.G. Jewelry Inc. (2002), 2002 CarswellOnt 3443, 38 C.B.R. (4th) 7 (Ont. S.C.J.) — considered

Bank of Nova Scotia v. Freure Village on Clair Creek (1996), 1996 CarswellOnt 2328, 40 C.B.R. (3d) 274 (Ont. Gen. Div. [Commercial List]) — followed

Kavcar Investments Ltd. v. Aetna Financial Services Ltd. (1989), 70 O.R. (2d) 225, 77 C.B.R. (N.S.) 1, 35 O.A.C. 305, 62 D.L.R. (4th) 277, 1989 CarswellOnt 191 (Ont. C.A.) — referred to

Royal Bank v. Boussoulas (2010), 2010 ONSC 4650, 2010 CarswellOnt 6332 (Ont. S.C.J.) — considered

Royal Bank v. Chongsim Investments Ltd. (1997), 1997 CarswellOnt 988, 28 O.T.C. 102, 32 O.R. (3d) 565, 46 C.B.R. (3d) 267 (Ont. Gen. Div.) — distinguished

Ryder Truck Rental Canada Ltd. v. 568907 Ontario Ltd. (1987), 1987 CarswellOnt 383, 16 C.P.C. (2d) 130 (Ont. H.C.) — considered

Swiss Bank Corp. (Canada) v. Odyssey Industries Inc. (1995), 30 C.B.R. (3d) 49, 1995 CarswellOnt 39 (Ont. Gen. Div. [Commercial List]) — considered

Toronto Dominion Bank v. Pritchard (1997), 154 D.L.R. (4th) 141, 104 O.A.C. 373, 1997 CarswellOnt 4277 (Ont. Div. Ct.) — considered

1468121 Ontario Ltd. v. 663789 Ontario Ltd. (2008), 2008 CarswellOnt 7601 (Ont. S.C.J.) — not followed

Statutes considered:

Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. B-3

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s. 243 — referred to

s. 243(1) — considered

Courts of Justice Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. C.43
s. 101 — considered

APPLICATION by creditor for appointment of private receiver of debtor.

***Newbould J.*:**

1 Bank of Montreal ("BMO") applies for the appointment of PriceWaterhouse Coopers Inc. as national receiver of the respondents Carnival National Leasing Limited ("Carnival") and Carnival Automobiles Limited ("Automobiles") under sections 243 (1) of the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act* and 101 of the *Courts of Justice Act*.

2 Carnival is in the business of leasing new and used passenger cars, trucks, vans and equipment vehicles. It has approximately 1300 vehicles in its fleet. Carnival is indebted to BMO for approximately $17 million pursuant to demand loan facilities. Automobiles guaranteed the indebtedness of Carnival to BMO limited to $1.5 million. David Hirsh is the president and sole director of Carnival and has guaranteed its indebtedness to BMO limited to $700,000. BMO holds security over the assets of Carnival and Automobiles, including a general security agreement under which it has the right to appoint a receiver of the debtors or to apply to court for the appointment of a receiver. On November 30, 2010 BMO delivered demands for payment to Carnival, Automobiles and Mr. Hirsh.

3 The respondents contend that no receiver should be appointed. In my view BMO is entitled to appoint PWC as a receiver of the respondents and it is so ordered for the reasons that follow.

Events leading to demand for payment

4 The respondents quarrel with the actions of BMO leading to the demands for payment and assert that as a result a receiver should not be appointed.

5 BMO has been Carnival's banker for 21 years. Loans were made annually on terms contained in a term sheet. Each year BMO did an annual review of the account, after which a new term sheet for the following year was signed. The last term sheet was signed on January 29, 2010 and was for the 2010 calendar year. The last annual review, completed on October 27, 2010, recommended a renewal of the credits with various changes being proposed, including a risk rating upgrade from 45 to 40 and a reduction in the demand wholesale leasing facility from $21.9 million to $20 million That review, however, was not sent to senior management for approval and no agreement was made extending the credit facilities to Carnival for the 2011 calendar year.

6 The 2010 term sheet provided for two major lines of credit. The larger facility was a demand wholesale leasing facility with a limit of $21.9 million, under which Carnival submitted vehicle leases to BMO. If a lease was approved BMO advanced up to 100% of the cost of the vehicle and in return received security over the vehicle. The second facility was a general overdraft facility described as a demand operating loan with a limit of $1.15 million. The term sheet provided that all lines of credit were made on a demand loan basis and that BMO reserved the right to cancel the lines of credit "at any time at its sole discretion".

7 Under the terms of the wholesale leasing facility, total advances for used vehicle financing were not to exceed 30% of the approved lease portfolio credit line. That apparently had been a term of the facility for many years. The annual review of

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October 27, 2010 stated that for the past year, the concentration of used leases was 27.8%. In the previous annual review in 2009, the figure for used lease concentration was 11.6%. Mr. Findlay of the BMO special accounts management unit (SAMU) said on cross-examination that while he could not say as a fact where those percentages came from, the routine for annual reviews was for the person preparing the annual review to obtain such figures from the support staff of the bank's automotive centre.

8 Shortly after the 2010 annual review had been completed, and before it was sent to higher levels of the bank for approval, Mr. Lavery, the account manager at BMO for Carnival, received information from someone at BMO, the identity of whom I do not believe is in the record, informing him that the used car lease portfolio was approximately 60% of the leases financed by BMO, well in excess of the 30% condition of the loan. That led Mr. Lavery to call Mr. Findlay of SAMU. On November 17, 2010 BMO engaged PWC to review the operations of Carnival. On November 26, 2010 BMO's solicitors delivered to Carnival a letter which stated, amongst other things, that BMO would not finance any future leases until PWC's review engagement was completed, that BMO would no longer allow any overdraft on Carnival's operating line and that the bank reserved its right to demand payment of any indebtedness at any time in the future.

9 On November 29, 2010 PWC provided its initial report to BMO. It contained a number of matters of concern to BMO, including itemizing a number of breaches of the lending agreements that Carnival had with BMO. On November 30, 2010 BMO's solicitors delivered to Carnival a letter itemizing a number of breaches of the loan agreements, one of which was that advances for used vehicle financing were in excess of 30% of the approved lease portfolio credit line. Demand for payment under the lines of credit totalling $17,736,838.45 was made. Following the demand, PWC continued its engagement and discovered a number of irregularities in the Carnival business, some of which are contained in the affidavit of Mr. Findlay.

10 It turns out that the 30% limit for used vehicle leases had not been met for some time. Carnival provided to BMO's automotive centre copies of the individual leases and bills of sale which showed the model year of the car to to be financed and this information was in the BMO automotive centre computer records. Reports on BMO's website as at December 31, 2008 demonstrated 45% of Carnival's BMO financed leases were for used vehicles. At December 31, 2009 it was 73% and as at October 31, 2001 it was 60%. The evidence of Mr. Findlay on cross-examination was that while that information was on the computer system, it was not known by the account management responsible for the Carnival credits. He acknowledged that if the account management went to the computer system they would have seen that information but if they did not they would not have known of it. There is no evidence that Mr. Lavery or others in the account management of BMO responsible for the Carnival credit were aware before late October, 2010 of the true percentage of the used car lease portfolio.

11 Mr. Hirsh said on cross-examination that he assumed somebody in control at the bank knew the percentage of used vehicle leases. Although the loan terms he signed each year contained the 30% condition, he never suggested that the percentage should be changed to a higher figure. One can argue that Mr. Hirsh should have told his account manager at BMO that the condition he was agreeing to was not being met. Of course if he had done so he could well have faced a likely loss of credit needed to run his business. The loan terms included a requirement that Carnival provide an annual detailed analysis of the entire lease portfolio, including a breakdown of the lease concentrations. Had those been provided, it would appear that the percentage of used vehicle leases would have been reported by Carnival. While the record does not indicate whether such reports were provided, I think it can be assumed that if they had been, Mr. Hirsh would have provided that information in his affidavit.

12 Since November 26, 2010, BMO has not financed any further vehicles under the demand wholesale line of credit. Pending the application to appoint a receiver, BMO has continued to extend the $1.15 million operating facility, in spite of its demand. Under the terms of the demand wholesale line of credit, Carnival is obliged after selling vehicles financed by BMO to pay down the wholesale leasing line within 30 days by transferring the money received from its operating line account to the wholesale leasing line. It has not always done so and PWC estimates the amount involved to be $814,000. The operating facility is now in overdraft as a result of the demand for payment.

Issues

(a) Right to enforce payment

13 On a demand loan, a debtor must be allowed a reasonable time to raise the necessary funds to satisfy the demand.

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Reasonable time will generally be of a short duration, not more than a few days and not encompassing anything approaching 30 days. See *Kavcar Investments Ltd. v. Aetna Financial Services Ltd.* (1989), 70 O.R. (2d) 225 (Ont. C.A.) per McKinley J.A. See also *Toronto Dominion Bank v. Pritchard*, [1997] O.J. No. 4622 (Ont. Div. Ct.) per Farley J.:

> 5. It is clear therefore that the reasonable time to repay after demand is a very finite time measured in days, not weeks, and it is not "open ended" beyond this by the difficulties that a borrower may have in seeking replacement financing, be it bridge or permanent.

14 Under the loan agreements, the credits were on demand and as well BMO had the right to cancel the credits at any time at its sole discretion. It is now over 70 days since demand for payment was made.

15 I do not see the issue of BMO management not being aware of the percentage of used car leases as affecting BMO's rights under its loan agreements, even assuming it was all BMO's fault, which I am not at all sure is the case. There is no evidence that BMO in any way intentionally waived its 30% loan condition, nor is it the case that it was only a breach of the 30% condition that led to the demand for payment being delivered to Carnival. There were a number of other concerns that BMO had. In any event, there was no requirement before demand or termination of the credits that BMO had to have justification to demand payment. To the contrary, the agreement provided that BMO had the right to terminate the credits at any time at its sole discretion.

16 In argument, Mr. Tayar said that Carnival needs just a little more time to obtain financing to pay out the BMO loans. From a legal point of view Carnival has been provided more time than is required. From a practical point of view, it is very unlikely that Carnival will be able in any reasonably foreseeable period of time to pay out BMO.

17 The car leasing business for businesses such as Carnival has been very difficult for a number of years, as acknowledged by Mr. Hirsh. Competitors such as Ford, GM and Chrysler began offering very low interest rates for new vehicles that Carnival could not provide. The economy led to more customers missing payments. There were lower sales generally. Carnival's leased assets fell from $49 million in 2006 to $35 million in 2009. Carnival had a profit of $1.2 million in 2006 but in the years 2007 through 2009 had a cumulative net loss of $244,000. While its business was shrinking, Carnival's accounts receivable grew significantly, from $1.5 million in 2006 to $2.8 million in 2009, indicating, as Mr. Hirsh acknowledged on cross-examination, that customers owed more than in the past for lease payments because of difficult economic times.

18 Carnival also borrowed from RBC to finance its lease portfolio. Some leases were financed with BMO and some with RBC. In the mid-2000s, the size of Carnival's loan facility with BMO and RBC was about even. In 2008 RBC stopped lending to Carnival on new leases and since then Carnival has been paying down its RBC loans. Today Carnival owes RBC approximately $5.6 million. Thus Carnival owes the two banks approximately $22.6 million.

19 In an affidavit sworn February 8, 2011, Mr. Hirsh disclosed that he has had discussions with TD Bank and has an indication of a loan of approximately $11.5 million. A deal sheet has yet to be provided to TD's credit department for approval, but is expected to be considered by the end of February. If approved, it is contemplated that funds could be advanced sometime in April. Mr. Hirsh states that the TD guidelines allow TD to advance (i) on new vehicles $6.5 million on leases currently financed by BMO and $1.9 million on leases currently financed by RBC and (ii) on used vehicles, $2 million on leases currently financed by BMO and $392,000 on leases currently financed by RBC. A further $2 million would be available on non-bank financed leases. Thus if a TD loan were granted, at most the amount that would be available to pay down BMO would be $10.5 million and it might be less if, as is likely, there are not $6.5 million worth of new car leases currently being financed by BMO.

20 Mr. Hirsh further states in his affidavit that he believes he will be able to pay off the balance of BMO loans through a combination of TD financing new Carnival leases and the payout of existing leases and/or sales of Carnival vehicles. No time estimate is given for this and one can only conclude that it would not be soon.

21 In these circumstances, assuming that it is permissible to consider the chances of refinancing in considering what a reasonable time would be to permit enforcement of security after a demand for payment, I do not consider the chances of

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refinancing in this case to prevent BMO from acting on its security.

22 BMO had the right under its loan agreements to stop financing new vehicle leases and to demand payment of the outstanding loans. No new term sheet was signed for 2011. Since the demand for payment, it has provided far more time than required in order to enforce its security. In my view, BMO is entitled to payment of the outstanding loans and to enforce its security including, if it wished to do so, to privately appoint a receiver of the assets of Carnival and Automobile or serve notices to the large number of lessees of the assignment of the leases and require payment directly to BMO.

(b) Court appointed receiver

23 Under section 243 of the *BIA* and section 101 of the *Courts of Justice Act*, a court may appoint a receiver if it is "just and convenient" to do so.

24 In *Bank of Nova Scotia v. Freure Village on Clair Creek* (1996), 40 C.B.R. (3d) 274 (Ont. Gen. Div. [Commercial List]), Blair J. (as he then was) dealt with a similar situation in which the bank held security that permitted the appointment of a private receiver or an application to court to have a court appointed receiver. He summarized the legal principles involved as follows:

> 10 The Court has the power to appoint a receiver or receiver and manager where it is "just or convenient" to do so: the Courts of Justice Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. 43, s. 101. In deciding whether or not to do so, it must have regard to all of the circumstances but in particular the nature of the property and the rights and interests of all parties in relation thereto. The fact that the moving party has a right under its security to appoint a receiver is an important factor to be considered but so, in such circumstances, is the question of whether or not an appointment by the Court is necessary to enable the receiver-manager to carry out its work and duties more efficiently; see generally *Third Generation Realty Ltd. v. Twigg* (1991) 6 C.P.C. (3d) 366 at pages 372-374; *Confederation Trust Co. v. Dentbram Developments Ltd.* (1992), 9 C.P.C. (3d) 399; *Royal Trust Corp. of Canada v. D.Q. Plaza Holdings Ltd.* (1984), 54 C.B.R. (N.S.) 18 at page 21. It is not essential that the moving party, a secured creditor, establish that it will suffer irreparable harm if a receiver-manager is not appointed: *Swiss Bank Corp. (Canada) v. Odyssey Industries Inc.* (1995), 30 C.B.R. (3d) 49.

25 It is argued on behalf of Carnival that the appointment of a receiver is an extraordinary remedy to be granted sparingly and that as it amounts to execution before judgment, there must be strong evidence that the plaintiff's right to judgment must be exercised sparingly. The cases that support this proposition, however, are not applicable as they do not deal with a secured creditor with the right to enforce its security.

26 *Ryder Truck Rental Canada Ltd. v. 568907 Ontario Ltd.* (1987), 16 C.P.C. (2d) 130 (Ont. H.C.) is relied on by Carnival as supporting its position. That case however dealt with a disputed claim to payments said to be owing and a claim for damages. The plaintiff had no security that permitted the appointment of a receiver and requested a court appointed receiver until trial. Salhany L.J.S.C. likened the situation to a plaintiff seeking execution before judgment and considered that the test to support the appointment of a receiver was no less stringent than the test to support a Mareva injunction. With respect, that is not the law of Ontario so far as enforcing security is concerned. The same situation pertained in *Anderson v. Hunking*, 2010 ONSC 4008 (Ont. S.C.J.) cited by Mr. Tayar. I have serious doubts whether *1468121 Ontario Ltd. v. 663789 Ontario Ltd.*, 2008 CarswellOnt 7601 (Ont. S.C.J.) cited by Mr. Tayar was correctly decided and would not follow it.

27 In *Bank of Nova Scotia v. Freure Village on Clair Creek*, Blair J. dealt with an argument similar to the one advanced by Carnival and stated that the extraordinary nature of the remedy sought was less essential where the security provided for a private or court appointed receiver and the issue was essentially whether it was preferable to have a court appointed receiver rather than a private appointment. He stated:

> 11. The Defendants and the opposing creditor argue that the Bank can perfectly effectively exercise its private remedies and that the Court should not intervene by giving the extraordinary remedy of appointing a receiver when it has not yet done so and there is no evidence its interest will not be well protected if it did. They also argue that a Court appointed

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> receiver will be more costly than a privately appointed one, eroding their interests in the property.
>
> 12. While I accept the general notion that the appointment of a receiver is an extraordinary remedy, it seems to me that where the security instrument permits the appointment of a private receiver - and even contemplates, as this one does, the secured creditor seeking a court appointed receiver - and where the circumstances of default justify the appointment of a private receiver, the "extraordinary" nature of the remedy sought is less essential to the inquiry. Rather, the "just or convenient" question becomes one of the Court determining, in the exercise of its discretion, whether it is more in the interests of all concerned to have the receiver appointed by the Court or not. This, of course, involves an examination of all the circumstances which I have outlined earlier in this endorsement, including the potential costs, the relationship between the debtor and the creditors, the likelihood of maximizing the return on and preserving the subject property and the best way of facilitating the work and duties of the receiver-manager

28 In *Swiss Bank Corp. (Canada) v. Odyssey Industries Inc.* (1995), 30 C.B.R. (3d) 49 (Ont. Gen. Div. [Commercial List]), in which the bank held security that permitted the appointment of a private or court ordered receiver, Ground J. made similar observations:

> 28. The first submission of counsel for Odyssey and Weston is that there is no risk of irreparable harm to Swiss Bank if a receiver is not appointed as certificates of pending litigation have been filed against the real estate properties involved, and there is an existing order restraining the disposition of other assets. I know of no authority for the proposition that a creditor must establish irreparable harm if the appointment of a receiver is not granted by the court. In fact, the authorities seem to support the proposition that irreparable harm need not be demonstrated. (see *Bank of Montreal v. Appcon* (1981), 33 O.R. (2d) 97).

29 See also *Bank of Nova Scotia v. D.G. Jewelry Inc.* (2002), 38 C.B.R. (4th) 7 (Ont. S.C.J.) in which Ground J. rejected the notion that it is necessary where there is security that permits the appointment of a private or court ordered receiver to establish that the property is threatened with danger, and said that the test was whether a court ordered receiver could more effectively carry out its duties than it could if privately appointed. He stated:

> I do not think that, in order to appoint an Interim Receiver pursuant to Section 47 of the BIA, I must be satisfied that there is an actual and immediate danger of a dissipation of assets. The decision of Nova Scotia Registrar Smith in *Royal Bank v. Zutphen Brothers*, [1993] N.S.J. No. 640, is not, in my view, the law of Ontario.
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> . . .
>
> On the main issue of the test to be applied by the court in determining whether to appoint a Receiver, I do not think the Ontario courts have followed the Saskatchewan authorities cited by Mr. Tayar which require a finding that the legal remedies available to the party seeking the appointment are defective or that the appointment is necessary to preserve the property from some danger which threatens it, neither of which could be established in the case before this court. The test, which I think this court should apply, is whether the appointment of a court - appointed Receiver will enable that Receiver to more effectively and efficiently carry out its duties and obligations than it could do if privately appointed.

30 This is not a case like *Royal Bank v. Chongsim Investments Ltd.* (1997), 32 O.R. (3d) 565 (Ont. Gen. Div.) in which Epstein J. (as she then was) dismissed a motion to appoint a receiver. While the loan was a demand loan and the bank's security permitted the appointment of a receiver, the parties had agreed that the loan would not be demanded absent default, and Epstein J. held that the bank, acting in bad faith, had set out to do whatever was necessary to create a default. Thus she held it was not equitable to grant the relief sought. That case is not applicable to the facts of this case.

31 Carnival relies on a decision in *Royal Bank v. Boussoulas*, [2010] O.J. No. 3611 (Ont. S.C.J.), in which Stinson J. was highly critical of the actions of the bank and its counsel in overstating its case and making unsupportable allegations of fraud in its motion affidavit material and facta filed before him and previously before Cumming J. He thus declined to continue a

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Mareva injunction earlier ordered by Cumming J. or appoint an interim receiver over the defendant's assets. There is no question but that a court can decline to order equitable relief in the face of misconduct on the part of a party seeking equitable relief.

32 In my view, there is no basis to refuse the order sought because of alleged misconduct on the part of BMO or its counsel. To the contrary, if anything, the shoe is on the other foot. The factum filed on behalf of Carnival is replete with allegations of false assertions on behalf of BMO, none of which have been established.

33 Carnival says the first affidavit of Mr. Findlay was false when it said that the bank first discovered the high concentration of used cars in late October, 2010, because it says the concentration was on the bank's website. This ignores the fact that the account management personnel responsible for the Carnival account did not know of the high concentration of used car leases in excess of the 30% limit, as testified to by Mr. Findlay and evident from the loan reviews for the past two years prepared by account management which stated that the used car concentration was 27.8 and 11.6 %. Although the BMO internal auditors had conducted quarterly audits, the unchallenged evidence of Mr. Findlay is that the purpose of each audit was to review whether each individual lease has been properly papered and handled. The audit did not look at the Carnival portfolio as a whole or to see what percentage of leases were for new or used vehicles.

34 It is argued that BMO has tried to mislead the Court by suggesting that payments received by Carnival after a leased vehicle was sold were to be held in trust for BMO. There is nothing in this allegation. Mr. Findlay referred in his affidavit to the term "sold out of trust", or SOT, a term apparently widely used in the automobile industry, to refer to the situation in which a borrower such as Carnival fails to remit to its lender the proceeds of sale of a financed vehicle. Mr. Findlay did not say that there was any type of legal trust, nor did he imply it. He identified what he said were SOTs, as did PWC in its report, and while he said on cross-examination that he understood that all proceeds from sales of vehicles were paid into Carnival's account at BMO, Carnival had not paid down its loans with these proceeds as it was required to do under the loan terms, but rather had kept the money in its operating account available for its operating purposes. The fact that some of Mr. Findlay's calculations of amounts involved differ from the calculations of PWC after it was sent in to investigate the situation hardly makes the case that BMO set out to mislead the Court by a fabrication and by use of falsified numbers, as was alleged in Mr. Tayar's factum.

35 In his first affidavit Mr. Findlay referred to a concern of BMO as set out in the initial report that Mr. Hirsh was using the Carnival operating line to pay personal mortgages on his home. On cross-examination he said he understood that the money from the mortgages was put into the Carnival account as an injection of capital and he agreed that the payment of interest on the mortgages from Carnival's account was not an improper use of its resources. This is somewhat different from the statement of concern in his affidavit, but I do not see it as terribly important and as Mr. Findlay was in special account management and not managing the account, it is quite possible that the difference was due to learning more and changing his mind. I do not conclude that he set out to mislead the Court.

36 In my view, it would be preferable to have a court appointed receiver rather than a privately appointed one. Mr. Tayar said that if a private appointment were made, Carnival would litigate its right to do so. This would not at all be helpful when it is recognized that there are some 1300 vehicles under lease and any dispute as to whom lease payments were to be paid could quickly dry up or lessen the payments made. There are already a number of leases in default, and people might opportunistically decide not to pay if there were a dispute as to who was in control. The prospect of more litigation was a consideration that led Blair J. to ordering the appointment of a receiver in *Bank of Nova Scotia v. Freure Village on Clair Creek*.

37 While there may be increased costs over a private receivership, it would appear that this may well be at the expense of BMO and RBC, the other secured creditor. RBC supports the appointment of a receiver by the Court. Carnival has accounts receivable of some $4.4 million. As at November 25, approximately $3 million was more than 120 days old. The book value of the leases of $30 million is therefore questionable, and the repayment of $22.6 owing to BMO and RBC is not assured. Further, a court appointed receiver would have borrowing powers, which might be required as Cardinal has not so far been able to obtain new operating credit lines.

38 In the circumstances the order sought by BMO is granted in the form contained in tab 3 of the application record.

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Application granted.

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Most Negative Treatment: Distinguished
Most Recent Distinguished: M & K Construction Ltd. v. Kingdom Covenant International | 2015 ONSC 2241, 2015 CarswellOnt 5609, 252 A.C.W.S. (3d) 642 | (Ont. S.C.J., Apr 20, 2015)

1996 CarswellOnt 2328
Ontario Court of Justice (General Division — Commercial List)

Bank of Nova Scotia v. Freure Village on Clair Creek

1996 CarswellOnt 2328, [1996] O.J. No. 5088, 40 C.B.R. (3d) 274

Bank of Nova Scotia v. Freure Village on Clair Creek et al

Blair J.

Judgment: May 31, 1996
Docket: none given

Counsel: *John J. Chapman* and *John R. Varley*, for Bank of Nova Scotia.
J. Gregory Murdoch, for Freure Group (all defendants).
John Lancaster, for Boehmers, a Division of St. Lawrence Cement.
Robb English, for Toronto-Dominion Bank.
William T. Houston, for Canada Trust

Subject: Corporate and Commercial; Insolvency

Related Abridgment Classifications
For all relevant Canadian Abridgment Classifications refer to highest level of case via History.

Debtors and creditors

VII Receivers
  VII.3 Appointment
    VII.3.b Application for appointment
      VII.3.b.i General principles

Headnote

Receivers --- Appointment — Application for appointment — General

Receivers — Appointment — Application for appointment — Under s. 101 of Courts of Justice Act court to consider whether "just and convenient" to appoint receiver or receiver-manager — Fact that creditor has right under security to appoint receiver being important factor to be considered — Court appointment possibly allowing privately appointed receiver to carry out duties more efficiently — Courts of Justice Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. C.43.

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The debtor companies owed a bank in excess of $13,200,000 on four mortgages relating to five properties. Three of the mortgages had matured but had not been repaid. The fourth had not yet matured, but was in default. The bank applied for summary judgment on the covenants on the mortgages and for the appointment of a receiver-manager for the five properties. The debtor companies argued that the bank had agreed to forbear for six months to a year and, therefore, the moneys were not due and owing at the commencement of the proceedings. They also argued that the bank could effectively exercise its private remedies and that the court should not intervene to grant the extraordinary remedy of appointing a receiver when the bank had not yet done so.

Held:

The motions were granted.

The debtor companies' arguments with respect to the motion for summary judgment were without merit. The principal of the companies admitted that he was well aware that the bank had not waived its rights under its security or to enforce its security. There was no triable issue.

Under s. 101 of the *Courts of Justice Act* (Ont.), the court has the power to appoint a receiver or receiver-manager when it is "just and convenient" to do so. The fact that a creditor has a right under its security to appoint a receiver is an important factor to be considered. Also to be considered is whether a court appointment is necessary to enable the privately appointed receiver-manager to carry out its duties more efficiently. A creditor need not prove that it will suffer irreparable harm if no appointment is made. Where the creditor seeking the appointment has the right under its security to appoint a receiver-manager itself, the remedy is less "extraordinary" in nature. Determining whether the appointment is "just and convenient" becomes a question of whether it is more in the interests of the parties to have the court appoint the receiver. In the case at bar, it was appropriate to appoint a receiver-manager. The debtor companies had been attempting to refinance for a year and a half without success. Further, the parties could not agree on the best approach for marketing the properties. A court-appointed receiver with a mandate to develop a marketing plan could resolve that impasse, whereas a privately appointed receiver could not likely do so without further litigation. Given, however, that there seemed to be a possibility of a refinancing agreement in the near future, the appointment was postponed for three weeks.

Table of Authorities

Cases considered:

Confederation Trust Co. v. Dentbram Developments Ltd. (1992), 9 C.P.C. (3d) 399 (Ont. Gen. Div.) — *referred to*

Irving Ungerman Ltd. v. Galanis (1991), 4 O.R. (3d) 545, 20 R.P.R. (2d) 49 (note), 83 D.L.R. (4th) 734, 1 C.P.C. (3d) 248, (sub nom. *Ungerman (Irving) Ltd. v. Galanis)* 50 O.A.C. 176 (C.A.) — *referred to*

Pizza Pizza Ltd. v. Gillespie (1990), 75 O.R. (2d) 225, 45 C.P.C. (2d) 168, 33 C.P.R. (3d) 515 (Gen. Div.) — *referred to*

Royal Trust Corp. of Canada v. DQ Plaza Holdings Ltd. (1984), 54 C.B.R. (N.S.) 18, 36 Sask. R. 84 (Q.B.) — *referred*

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to

Swiss Bank Corp. (Canada) v. Odyssey Industries Inc. (1995), 30 C.B.R. (3d) 49 (Ont. Gen. Div. [Commercial List]) — *referred to*

Third Generation Realty Ltd. v. Twigg Holdings Ltd. (1991), 6 C.P.C. (3d) 366 (Ont. Gen. Div.) — *referred to*

Statutes considered:

Courts of Justice Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. C.43

s. 101*referred to*

Rules considered:

Ontario, Rules of Civil Procedure

r. 20.01*referred to*

r. 20.04*referred to*

MOTION for summary judgment on covenant on mortgages; MOTION for appointment of receiver-manager.

***Blair J.*:**

1 There are two companion motions here, namely:

(i) the within motion by the Bank for summary judgment on the covenants on mortgages granted by “Freure Management” and “Freure Village” to the Bank, which mortgages have been guaranteed by Freure Investments; and

(ii) the motion for appointment by the Court of a receiver-manager over five different properties which are the subject matter of the mortgages (four of which properties are apartment/townhouse complexes totalling 286 units and one of which is an as yet undeveloped property).

2 This endorsement pertains to both motions.

The Motion for Summary Judgment

3 Three of the mortgages have matured and have not been repaid. The fourth has not yet matured but, along with the first three, is in default as a result of the failure to pay tax arrears. The total tax arrears outstanding are in excess of $850,000. The Bank is owed in excess of $13,200,000. There is no question that the mortgages are in default. Nor is it contested that the

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monies are presently due and owing. The Defendants argue, however, that the Bank had agreed to forebear or to stand-still for six months to a year in May, 1995 and therefore submit the monies were not due and owing at the time demand was made and proceedings commenced.

4 There is simply no merit to this defence on the evidence and there is no issue with respect to it which survives the "good hard look at the evidence" which the authorities require the Court to take and which requires a trial for its disposition: see Rule 20.01 and Rule 20.04, *Pizza Pizza Ltd. v. Gillespie* (1990), 75 O.R. (2d) 225 (Gen. Div.); *Irving Ungerman Ltd. v. Galanis* (1993) 4 O.R. (3d) 545 (C.A.).

5 On his cross-examination, Mr. Freure admitted:

(i) that he knew the Bank had not entered into any agreement whereby it had waived its rights under its security or to enforce its security; and

(ii) that he realized the Bank was entitled to make demand, that the individual debtors in the Freure Group owed the money, that they did not have the money to pay and the $13,200,000 indebtedness was "due and owing" (see cross-examination questions 46-54, 88-96, 233-243).

6 As to the guarantees of Freure Investments, an argument was put forward that the Bank changed its position with regard to the accumulation of tax arrears without notice to the guarantor, and accordingly that a triable issues exists in that regard.

7 No such triable issue exists. The guarantee provisions of the mortgage itself permit the Bank to negotiate changes in the security with the principal debtor. Moreover, the principal of the principal debtor and the principal of the guarantor - Mr. Freure - are the same. Finally, the evidence which is relied upon for the change in the Bank's position - an internal Bank memo from the local branch to the credit committee of the Bank in Toronto - is not proof of any such agreement with the debtor or change; it is merely a recitation of various position proposals and a recommendation to the credit committee, which was not followed.

8 Accordingly, summary judgment is granted as sought in accordance with the draft judgment filed today and on which I have placed my fiat. The cost portion of the judgment will bear interest at the *Courts of Justice Act* rate.

Receiver/Manager

9 The more difficult issue for determination is whether or not the Court should appoint a receiver/manager.

10 It is conceded, in effect, that if the loans are in default and not saved from immediate payment by the alleged forbearance agreement - which they are, and are not, respectively - the Bank is entitled to move under its security and appoint a receiver-manager privately. Indeed this is the route which the Defendants - supported by the subsequent creditor on one of the properties (Boehmers, on the Glencairn property) - urge must be taken. The other major creditors, TD Bank and Canada Trust, who are owed approximately $20,000,000 between them, take no position on the motion.

11 The Court has the power to appoint a receiver or receiver and manager where it is "just or convenient" to do so: the *Courts of Justice Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. 43, s. 101. In deciding whether or not to do so, it must have regard to all of the circumstances but in particular the nature of the property and the rights and interests of all parties in relation thereto. The fact that the moving party has a right under its security to appoint a receiver is an important factor to be considered but so, in such circumstances, is the question of whether or not an appointment by the Court is necessary to enable the receiver-manager to carry out its work and duties more efficiently; see generally *Third Generation Realty Ltd. v. Twigg* (1991) 6 C.P.C. (3d) 366 (Ont. Gen. Div.) at pages 372-374; *Confederation Trust Co. v. Dentbram Developments Ltd.* (1992), 9 C.P.C. (3d) 399 (Ont. Gen. Div.); *Royal Trust Corp. of Canada v. D.Q. Plaza Holdings Ltd.* (1984), 54 C.B.R. (N.S.) 18 (Sask. Q.B.) at page 21. It is not essential that the moving party, a secured creditor, establish that it will suffer irreparable harm if a receiver-manager is not appointed: *Swiss Bank Corp. (Canada) v. Odyssey Industries Inc.* (1995), 30 C.B.R. (3d) 49 (Ont. Gen. Div. [Commercial List]).

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12 The Defendants and the opposing creditor argue that the Bank can perfectly effectively exercise its private remedies and that the Court should not intervene by giving the extraordinary remedy of appointing a receiver when it has not yet done so and there is no evidence its interest will not be well protected if it did. They also argue that a Court appointed receiver will be more costly than a privately appointed one, eroding their interests in the property.

13 While I accept the general notion that the appointment of a receiver is an extraordinary remedy, it seems to me that where the security instrument permits the appointment of a private receiver - and even contemplates, as this one does, the secured creditor seeking a court appointed receiver - and where the circumstances of default justify the appointment of a private receiver, the "extraordinary" nature of the remedy sought is less essential to the inquiry. Rather, the "just or convenient" question becomes one of the Court determining, in the exercise of its discretion, whether it is more in the interests of all concerned to have the receiver appointed by the Court or not. This, of course, involves an examination of all the circumstances which I have outlined earlier in this endorsement, including the potential costs, the relationship between the debtor and the creditors, the likelihood of maximizing the return on and preserving the subject property and the best way of facilitating the work and duties of the receiver-manager.

14 Here I am satisfied on balance it is just and convenient for the order sought to be made. The Defendants have been attempting to refinance the properties for 1 1/2 years without success, although a letter from Mutual Trust dated yesterday suggests (again) the possibility of a refinancing in the near future. The Bank and the debtors are deadlocked and I infer from the history and evidence that the Bank's attempts to enforce its security privately will only lead to more litigation. Indeed, the debtor's solicitors themselves refer to the prospect of "costly, protracted and unproductive" litigation in a letter dated March 21st of this year, should the Bank seek to pursue its remedies. More significantly, the parties cannot agree on the proper approach to be taken to marketing the properties which everyone agrees must be sold. Should it be on a unit by unit conversion condominium basis (as the debtor proposes) or on an en bloc basis as the Bank would prefer? A Court appointed receiver with a mandate to develop a marketing plan can resolve that impasse, subject to the Court's approval, whereas a privately appointed receiver in all likelihood could not, at least without further litigious skirmishing. In the end, I am satisfied the interests of the debtors themselves, along with those of the creditors (and the tenants, who will be caught in the middle) and the orderly disposition of the property are all better served by the appointment of the receiver-manager as requested.

15 I am prepared, in the circumstances, however, to render the debtors one last chance to rescue the situation, if they can bring the potential Mutual Trust refinancing to fruition. I postpone the effectiveness of the order appointing Doane Raymond as receiver-manager for a period of three weeks from this date. If a refinancing arrangement which is satisfactory to the Bank and which is firm and concrete can be arranged by that time, I may be spoken to at a 9:30 appointment on Monday, June 24, 1996 with regard to a further postponement. The order will relate back to today's date, if taken out.

16 Should the Bank be advised to appoint Doane Raymond as a private receiver/manager under its mortgages in the interim, it may do so.

17 Counsel may attend at an earlier 9:30 appointment if necessary to speak to the form of the order.

Motions granted.

End of Document

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2013 ABQB 63
Alberta Court of Queen's Bench

Kasten Energy Inc. v. Shamrock Oil & Gas Ltd.

2013 CarswellAlta 153, 2013 ABQB 63, [2013] A.W.L.D. 1334, [2013] A.W.L.D. 1378, 20 P.P.S.A.C. (3d) 128, 225 A.C.W.S. (3d) 1018, 555 A.R. 305, 76 Alta. L.R. (5th) 407, 99 C.B.R. (5th) 178

Kasten Energy Inc. Applicant and Shamrock Oil & Gas Ltd. Respondent

Donald Lee J.

Heard: November 29, 2012
Judgment: January 24, 2013
Docket: Edmonton 1203-15035

Counsel: Terrence M. Warner for Applicant
Brian W. Summers for Respondent

Subject: Corporate and Commercial; Natural Resources; Property; Insolvency

Related Abridgment Classifications
For all relevant Canadian Abridgment Classifications refer to highest level of case via History.

Debtors and creditors

VII Receivers
VII.3 Appointment
VII.3.a General principles

Natural resources

III Oil and gas
III.5 Oil and gas leases
III.5.h Transfer of title

Headnote

Debtors and creditors --- Receivers — Appointment — General principles

Company K was involved in business of exploring and developing oil and gas — Company S had petroleum and natural gas lease used to develop oil well — K was successor in interest to company P — S entered into contract with P, which required P to construct road to S's well site — Following services provided under contract, S became indebted to P in principal amount of $567,267.76, plus interest at rate of 24 percent per annum — By Debt Assignment Agreement, P assigned S's outstanding debt, along with underlying security, to K — K brought application seeking order for appointment of receiver and manager of S's assets and undertaking — Application granted — Appointment of receiver and manager was just for circumstances of case — S's oil and gas lease was proprietary interest and was transferable and fell within power and authority of court-appointed receiver.

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Natural resources --- Oil and gas — Oil and gas leases — Transfer of title

Company K was involved in business of exploring and developing oil and gas — Company S had petroleum and natural gas lease used to develop oil well — K was successor in interest to company P — S entered into contract with P, which required P to construct road to S's well site — Following services provided under contract, S became indebted to P in principal amount of $567,267.76, plus interest at rate of 24 percent per annum — By Debt Assignment Agreement, P assigned S's outstanding debt, along with underlying security, to K — K brought application seeking order for appointment of receiver and manager of S's assets and undertaking — Application granted — Appointment of receiver and manager was just for circumstances of case — S's oil and gas lease was proprietary interest and was transferable and fell within power and authority of court-appointed receiver.

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Generally — referred to

APPLICATION seeking order for appointment of receiver and manager of company's assets and undertaking.

***Donald Lee J.*:**

Introduction

1 This is an application by Kasten Energy Inc. ("Kasten" or "Applicant") against Shamrock Oil & Gas Ltd. ("Shamrock" or "Respondent") seeking an Order of this Court, as a secured creditor, for the appointment of a Receiver and Manager of the Respondent's assets and undertaking.

Facts

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2 Kasten is incorporated in Alberta as body corporate involved in the business of exploring and developing oil and gas; and a successor in interest to Premier CAT Service Ltd. ("Premier CAT").

3 Shamrock is incorporated in Alberta and has a petroleum and natural gas lease used to develop an oil well located at 2-02-90-13-W5 in the Sawn Lake region of Red Earth, Alberta ("Sawn Lake Well").

4 The Respondent, Shamrock entered into a contract with Premier CAT on or about June 1, 2010 which required Premier CAT to construct a road to Shamrock's well site. Following services provided under the contract, Shamrock became indebted to Premier CAT in the principal sum of $567,267.76. The debt was payable 60 days from the date of invoice at the interest rate of 24% per annum.

5 On or about July 22, 2010, a General Security Agreement ("GSA") was granted by Shamrock to Premier CAT for a security interest in all present and after acquired personal property of Shamrock as security for repayment of the outstanding debt.

6 By a Debt Assignment Agreement dated January 20, 2011 ("Debt Assignment"), Premier CAT assigned Shamrock's outstanding debt, along with the underlying security, to Kasten. The registration of the GSA at the Personal Property Registry was amended on February 4, 2011 to delete Premier CAT and substitute Kasten as the secured creditor. As a result, Shamrock became indebted to Kasten, the successor in interest to Premier CAT.

7 As of July 30, 2012, the outstanding indebtedness of Shamrock to Kasten was $777,216.26 based on the amount owed to Premier CAT at the date of the Debt Assignment, plus accrued interest at the agreed rate of 24% per annum.

8 On or about October 31, 2011, Shamrock issued a Notice of Intention to Make a Proposal pursuant to the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act*, RSC 1985, c B-3, s 50.4 [*BIA*]. Later, on November 25, 2011, Shamrock submitted a *BIA*, Part III, Division 1 Proposal addressed to all its secured and unsecured creditors. Under the Proposal, Stout Energy Inc. ("Stout"), a grandparent company to Shamrock would retain BDO Canada Limited as proposal trustee; and Stout would operate the Sawn Lake Well under a joint operating agreement with Shamrock. This agreement contemplated that after recovery of Stout's capital investment, 80% of the net revenue generated from operations would be paid to secured creditors until full payment while unsecured creditors would receive 20% until full payment.

9 At a meeting of Shamrock's creditors convened by the trustee on December 15, 2011, Kasten, a secured creditor voted against the proposal but all the unsecured creditors voted in favour of the proposal. Subsequently, on January 31, 2012, Shamrock made an application to the Court of Queen's Bench for an approval of the Proposal. Kasten opposed the application before Master Breitkreuz, the presiding Registrar. Ultimately, the Proposal was approved by the Court.

10 On February 25, 2012, a Demand for Payment was issued to Shamrock on Kasten's instruction, along with a Notice of Intention to Enforce a Security, pursuant to the *BIA*, s 244. The total amount of indebtedness as at this demand date was $760,059.18. As of October 9, 2012, the indebtedness had climbed to $799,595.06 taking into account the sum of $45,130.58 which was the only cheque that Kasten received from Shamrock since the Court approved the Proposal.

Issue

11 The issue before me is whether a Receiver and Manager of Shamrock's assets and undertaking should be appointed.

Law

12 The test for the grant of an Order of this Court appointing a Receiver is set out in the *Judicature Act*, RSA 2000, c J-2, s 13(2) which provides that:

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An order in the nature of a mandamus or injunction may be granted or a receiver appointed by an interlocutory order of the Court in all cases in which it appears to the Court to be just or convenient that the order should be made, and the order may be made either unconditionally or on any terms and conditions the Court thinks just.

Parties' Positions and Analysis

13 Both parties agree that the factors that may be considered in making a determination whether it is just and convenient to appoint a Receiver are listed in a non-exhaustive manner in *Paragon Capital Corp. v. Merchants & Traders Assurance Co.*, 2002 ABQB 430 (Alta. Q.B.) at para 27, (2002), 316 A.R. 128 (Alta. Q.B.) [Paragon Capital], citing from Frank Bennett, *Bennett on Receiverships*, 2nd ed (Toronto: Thompson Canada Ltd, 1995) at 130] to include:

a) whether irreparable harm might be caused if no order were made, although it is not essential for a creditor to establish irreparable harm if a receiver is not appointed, particularly where the appointment of a receiver is authorized by the security documentation;

b) the risk to the security holder taking into consideration the size of the debtor's equity in the assets and the need for protection or safeguarding of the assets while litigation takes place;

c) the nature of the property;

d) the apprehended or actual waste of the debtor's assets;

e) the preservation and protection of the property pending judicial resolution;

f) the balance of convenience to the parties;

g) the fact that the creditor has the right to appoint a receiver under the documentation provided for the loan;

h) the enforcement of rights under a security instrument where the security-holder encounters or expects to encounter difficulty with the debtor and others;

i) the principle that the appointment of a receiver is extraordinary relief which should be granted cautiously and sparingly;

j) the consideration of whether a court appointment is necessary to enable the receiver to carry out its' duties more efficiently;

k) the effect of the order upon the parties;

l) the conduct of the parties;

m) the length of time that a receiver may be in place;

n) the cost to the parties;

o) the likelihood of maximizing return to the parties;

p) the goal of facilitating the duties of the receiver.

See also, *Lindsey Estate v. Strategic Metals Corp.*, 2010 ABQB 242 (Alta. Q.B.) at para 32, aff'd 2010 ABCA 191 (Alta. C.A.); and *Romspen Investment Corp. v. Hargate Properties Inc.*, 2011 ABQB 759 (Alta. Q.B.) at para 20.

Kasten's Submissions

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14 The Applicant submits that the evidence before this Court is that since the Proposal was approved, the expenses on Shamrock's well production have exceeded revenues by a substantial margin such that it's unlikely that Shamrock would be able to pay the outstanding indebtedness in a timely manner. The revenue accruing from the Sawn Lake Well, which is Shamrock's primary asset, has not been directed at paying the debt owed Kasten.

15 Kasten contends that it has the right to appoint a Receiver under the GSA (at para 8.2. It notes that on the basis of the evidence in this case, Shamrock is insolvent and this situation is not improving. The risk of waste under the joint operating agreement is palpably real as Stout is spending substantial amount of money as expenses for well operations while channelling revenues in a selective manner. Kasten submits that irreparable harm may result if a Receiver is not appointed, pending judicial resolution of this matter, to properly manage and preserve the value of the well and its associated lease, as well as to distribute revenues equitably to all interested parties.

16 Kasten argues that the balance of convenience favours the appointment of a Receiver who would be better positioned to distribute revenues equitably to all interested parties and creditors since Shamrock is unable to comply with the payment schedule. Kasten reiterates that nothing demonstrates its good faith in pursuit of its legitimate interest to get paid the debt owed more than the patience it has displayed towards Shamrock for nearly two years.

17 The Applicant notes that Shamrock's argument on the issue of whether the GSA covers the oil and gas in the ground along with the right to extract the minerals distracts from the main issue of whether this Court should appoint a Receiver in the circumstances of this matter. Kasten argues that there is no doubt that a Crown oil-and-gas lease is a contract that contains a profit à prendre, which is an interest in land: *Amoco Canada Resources Ltd. v. Amax Petroleum of Canada Inc.*, 1992 ABCA 93 (Alta. C.A.); at para 10, [1992] 4 W.W.R. 499 (Alta. C.A.). Nevertheless, leases have a dual nature as both a conveyance and a commercial contract; and as such, are subject to normal commercial principles: *Highway Properties Ltd. v. Kelly, Douglas & Co.*, [1971] S.C.R. 562 (S.C.C.), at 576, (1971), [1972] 2 W.W.R. 28 (S.C.C.). The contract is assignable and subject to seizure.

Shamrock's Submissions

18 The Respondent Shamrock submits that Kasten has not demonstrated that irreparable harm may result if this Court refuses to appoint a Receiver. Instead, Stout has injected huge sums of money to improve the revenue potential of the Sawn Lake Well. Shamrock contends that if a Receiver is appointed, Stout may cease funding operations and oil and gas production will cease. Further, Shamrock says that it had also initiated a sale process and does not perceive any risk to Kasten while waiting for the completion of that process.

19 Shamrock argues that by nature, the property involved in this case calls for a continuous operation by Stout and itself that are better equipped in developing and operating oil well than a Receiver, probably unfamiliar with the oil business. It notes that the Sawn Lake Well cannot be moved from its present location and there is no evidence of waste regarding the well. Shamrock apprehends that Kasten's motivation is "not a good faith pursuit of repayment of debt, but rather an attempt to obtain the Sawn Lake Well."

Should a Receiver be Appointed in this Case?

20 The Alberta Court of Appeal notes in *BG International Ltd. v. Canadian Superior Energy Inc.*, 2009 ABCA 127 (Alta. C.A.) at paras 16-17 that a remedial Order to appoint a Receiver "should not be lightly granted" and the chambers judge should: (i) carefully explore whether there are other remedies, short of a receivership, that could serve to protect the interests of the applicant; (ii) carefully balance the rights of both the applicant and the respondent; and (iii) consider the effect of granting the receivership order, and if possible use a remedy short of receivership.

21 The security documentation in the present case authorizes the appointment of a Receiver (GSA, para 8.2). Thus, even if I accept the argument that the Applicant Kasten has not been able to demonstrate irreparable harm, that itself would not be determinative of whether or not a Receiver should be appointed in this matter. It is not essential for a creditor to establish irreparable harm if a receiver is not appointed: *Paragon Capital* at para 27. I am also not persuaded by Shamrock's suggestion that it is probable that Stout may cease funding its operations and this development would result in irreparable

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harm which may be avoided by the Court's refusal to appoint a Receiver. In my view, such a cessation of funding by Stout would likely amount to a breach under the joint operating agreement and Shamrock could accordingly, seek appropriate remedy. This factor or consideration should not stand in the way of an appointment of a Receiver, if it is otherwise just to do so.

22 Shamrock objects to the appointment of a Receiver based on the nature of the property and the probability that a court-appointed Receiver may lack familiarity with oil well development and operation. However, this concern is not insurmountable, given the broad management authority and discretion that a court-appointed Receiver would possess to enable it do everything positively necessary to ensure that the operation of the relevant oil well continues in a productive and efficient manner.

23 In terms of apprehended or actual waste, there is no concrete evidence before this Court one way or the other. However, it is apparent that Shamrock has not made any substantial payments to Kasten from the alleged revenues flowing from the operation and production in the Sawn Lake Well. This situation also ties in to one of the factors that this court should consider, i.e. whether the manner in which Shamrock is making payments to Kasten (as a security-holder) forms a reasonable basis for Kasten to expect that it would encounter difficulty with Shamrock (as the debtor). Kasten contends that it is critical that there is no evidence before this Court to demonstrate the veracity of the claim that the Sawn Lake Well is generating the alleged production; and neither is there any evidence as to where the alleged revenues accruing from the production is being diverted.

24 In my view, the approach which Shamrock has adopted in paying the debts owed to Kasten seems to be a justifiable basis for Kasten's apprehension that it would likely and ultimately encounter difficulties with Shamrock. And based on this ground, it would be inaccurate to characterize Kasten's tenacious pursuit of Shamrock for its indebtedness as an activity motivated by bad faith, as Shamrock alleges.

25 Shamrock states that it had initiated a sale of Sawn Lake Well. At this point however, there is no indication that Shamrock's initiative or endeavour is moving ahead in a positive manner. After the chambers application before me on November 29, 2012, Mr. Nathan Richter (on behalf of Stout) sent a letter dated December 14, 2012 to Kasten (see, attachment to Shamrock's supplemental brief filed Dec. 14, 2012). The letter indicated that four postdated cheques were sent to Kasten as payments of monthly interests until March, 2013 and pending the anticipated sale of Sawn Lake Well in April, 2013. Mr. Richter also confirmed in the letter that no formal bids were received as at the bid deadline date of December 12, 2012.

26 After carefully considering whether there are other remedies, short of a receivership, that could serve to protect the interests of the Applicant in this matter and also carefully balancing the rights and interests of both Kasten and Shamrock, I have come to the conclusion that a remedial Order to appoint a Receiver and Manager is just, convenient and appropriate in the circumstances of the developments and delays in this matter.

Is Shamrock's Oil and Gas Lease Covered by the GSA?

27 Kasten submits that while the GSA is not directly enforceable against the oil and gas under (or in) the ground, once the oil and gas comes out of the ground and captured by Shamrock it becomes subject to the GSA in much the same manner as the production facilities that are clearly covered by the GSA. It agrees that the oil and gas lease contains a *profit à prendre*, but submits that the right of Shamrock to extract oil and gas as granted by the Crown is transferable.

28 Shamrock agrees that a Receiver could only be appointed over its personal property, which includes the oil when it is produced and removed from the ground. However, it contends that the authority of the Receiver does not extend to the lease or the sale of Sawn Lake Well since Kasten has no security over the PNG lease under the GSA and can only receive revenue from the Well. Shamrock takes the position that the oil and gas lease is a *profit à prendre*, which is an interest in land excluded under Alberta's *PPSA*, s 4(f).

29 I note that the Supreme Court of Canada in *Saulnier (Receiver of) v. Saulnier*, 2008 SCC 58, [2008] 3 S.C.R. 166 (S.C.C.) [Saulnier] discussed the term "property" in the context of a commercial fishing licence under the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act*, RSC 1985, c B-3, s 2 [*BIA*] and *Nova Scotia's Personal Property Security Act*, SNS 1995-96, c 13 [*PPSA*].

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The provision of the relevant section of Nova Scotia's *PPSA* is identical to that of *Alberta's Personal Property Security Act*, RSA 2000, c P-7.

30 The Supreme Court in *Saulnier* held that the *BIA* and *PPSA* should be interpreted in a way best suited to enable them accomplish their respective commercial purposes. Binnie, J, writing for the Court, observed that:

> [28] ... [A] fishing licence ... bears some analogy to a common law *profit à prendre* which is undeniably a property right. A *profit à prendre* enables the holder to enter onto the land of another to extract some part of the natural produce, such as crops or game birds ...
>
> [29] Fichaud J.A. in the court below noted numerous cases where it was held that "during the term of a license the license holder has a beneficial interest to the earnings from his license" (para. 37) ... The earnings flow from the catch which is lawfully reduced to possession at the time of the catch, as is the case with a *profit à prendre*.
>
> [30] Some analytical comfort may be drawn in this connection from the observations of R. Megarry and H. W. R. Wade on The Law of Real Property (4th ed. 1975), at p. 779:
>
> A licence may be coupled with some proprietary interest in other property. Thus the right to enter another man's land to hunt and take away the deer killed, or to enter and cut down a tree and take it away, involves two things, namely, a licence to enter the land and the grant of an interest (a profit à prendre) in the deer or tree.
>
> And at p. 822:
>
> A right to "hawk, hunt, fish and fowl" may thus exist as a profit, for this gives the right to take creatures living on the soil which, when killed, are capable of being owned.
>
> [31] The analogy of a commercial fishing licence to the *profit à prendre* has already been noted by the High Court of Australia in ***Harper v. Minister for Sea Fisheries*** (1989), 168 C.L.R. 314 [where] Brennan J. [observed]:
>
> A fee paid to obtain such a privilege is analogous to the price of a profit à prendre; it is a charge for the acquisition of a right akin to property. Such a fee may be distinguished from a fee exacted for a licence merely to do some act which is otherwise prohibited (for example, a fee for a licence to sell liquor) where there is no resource to which a right of access is obtained by payment of the fee. [p. 335]
>
> . . .
>
> [33] In my view these observations are helpful ... there are important points of analogy between the fishing licences issued to the appellant ***Saulnier*** and the form of common law property called a *profit à prendre* ...
>
> [34] My point is simply that the subject matter of the licence (i.e. the right to participate in a fishery that is exclusive to licence holders) coupled with a proprietary interest in the fish caught pursuant to its terms, bears a reasonable analogy to rights traditionally considered at common law to be proprietary in nature. It is thus reasonably within the contemplation of the definition of "property" [which in] this connection the property in question is the fish harvest.
>
> (emphasis added)

31 In my view, the oil and gas lease in this case which grants a right (or licence) to Shamrock to access, drill for and extract the resource or substance from the ground is analogical and identical to a commercial fishing licence which grants the right to harvesting of fish resource as discussed in *Saulnier*. This is in the sense that during the term of the oil and gas lease/licence, Shamrock, the lease holder has a beneficial interest to the earnings from its oil and gas lease: *Saulnier* at para 29. The right to exclusively extract oil and gas by Shamrock, the lease holder coupled with a proprietary interest in the extracted resource pursuant to the terms of the lease/licence, "bears a reasonable analogy to rights traditionally considered at common law to be proprietary in nature": *Saulnier* at para 34.

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32 In the result, I conclude that Shamrock's oil and gas lease is a proprietary interest within the purposive contemplation of Alberta's *Personal Property Security Act*: Saulnier at para 34; *Stout & Co. LLP v. Chez Outdoors Ltd.*, 2009 ABQB 444 (Alta. Q.B.) at para 39, (2009), 9 Alta. L.R. (5th) 366 (Alta. Q.B.) [*Chez Outdoors*]. Shamrock's oil and gas lease is covered by the GSA and Alberta's Personal Property Security Act in the category of "intangibles": *Chez Outdoors* at para 15. That right is transferable and falls within the power and authority of a court-appointed Receiver, subject to the terms of the oil and gas lease as agreed with the Crown.

Scope of the Court-Appointed Receiver's Authority

33 This Court has the authority to make an Order either "unconditionally or on any terms and conditions" it thinks just, including a restriction of the powers of a Receiver and Manager if necessary in the circumstances of the case before it: *Judicature Act*, s 13(2).

34 Kasten seeks a court-appointed Receiver who is a court officer owing a fiduciary duty to all parties, including the debtor: *Philip's Manufacturing Ltd., Re* (1992), 92 D.L.R. (4th) 161 (B.C. C.A.) at para 17, [1992] 5 W.W.R. 549 (B.C. C.A.) (WL). It argues that the court-appointed Receiver would take instructions from the Court and not from Kasten. The Receiver would be bound to act in the best interests of all parties. In a *volte-face*, Kasten seeks in its supplemental brief that this Court should appoint it as a Receiver. There was no reason specifically advanced by Kasten for its new position.

35 Shamrock submits that a Consent Receivership Order should be granted and the Receiver should not be conferred with a power of sale. It wants the Order held in abeyance until April 1, 2013 or when Shamrock/Stout fails to make a payment of interest as scheduled, whichever occurs first, in order to allow for the sale of Sawn Lake Well.

36 The Respondent notes that Kasten now seeks to be appointed as the Receiver and Manager instead of the earlier proposed independent body corporate, MNP Ltd. which had given its consent to act as Receiver and Manager of Shamrock, the debtor.

37 In the absence of any clear objection to the appointment of MNP Ltd., an independent and neutral entity in this matter, an Order will issue to name MNP Ltd. as the court-appointed Receiver and Manager of all the current and future assets, undertakings and properties of Shamrock Oil and Gas Ltd. until Kasten and other creditors (secured and unsecured) are paid in full. The Receiver and Manager will have no power of sale, except as approved by an Order of this Court. However its authority is suspended until April 1, 2013 in order to accommodate any potential sale of Sawn Lake Well by Shamrock. To be clear, if Sawn Lake Well is not sold on or before April 1, 2013, the power and authority of the Receiver and Manager is to become effective immediately on that day.

38 If parties are unable to agree on costs, they should arrange to speak to me within 30 days of the issue of this decision.

Application granted.

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2009 BCSC 1527
British Columbia Supreme Court [In Chambers]

Maple Trade Finance Inc. v. CY Oriental Holdings Ltd.

2009 CarswellBC 2982, 2009 BCSC 1527, [2010] B.C.W.L.D. 224, 182 A.C.W.S. (3d) 624, 60 C.B.R. (5th) 142

Maple Trade Finance Inc. (Plaintiff) And CY Oriental Holdings Ltd. (Defendant)

D.M. Masuhara

Heard: September 21, 2009
Oral reasons: September 21, 2009
Written reasons: Septembet 23, 2009
Docket: Vancouver S095413

Counsel: J.J.L. Hunter, Q.C., B.R.H. Johnston for Plaintiff
P.J. Reardon for Defendant

Subject: Corporate and Commercial; Civil Practice and Procedure; Insolvency

Related Abridgment Classifications
For all relevant Canadian Abridgment Classifications refer to highest level of case via History.

Debtors and creditors

VII Receivers
  VII.3 Appointment
    VII.3.b Application for appointment
      VII.3.b.iii Grounds
        VII.3.b.iii.A Just and convenient

Headnote

Debtors and creditors --- Receivers — Appointment — Application for appointment — Grounds

Creditor provided accounts and receivable financing and debtor was holding company — Creditor and debtor entered into financing agreement — Debtor executed general security agreement in favour of creditor providing that creditor could appoint receiver of collateral in event of default — Debtor defaulted on loan — Creditor brought application for appointment of receiver and manager over debtor's current and future assets undertaking in properties, including all proceeds — Debtor ordered to pay creditor $1,016,019 plus non-default interest, and remaining outstanding balance plus non-default interest over four months in equal instalments — Any default in payment not cured within three days would lead to automatic appointment of receiver — Applicable test was whether it was just and convenient to make order sought — Fact that finance agreement acknowledged right of creditor to make application for receiver was strong factor in support of imposition of receiver — However, debtor proposed to repay significant amount and recent payments made by debtor were not insignificant — Proposal aligned with factor of controlling costs and likelihood of maximizing return to parties — Concern existed with debtor's ability to make good on its payments — Balancing factors, order that would have automatic imposition of receiver upon default addressed concerns.

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Table of Authorities

Cases considered by *D.M. Masuhara*:

Bank of Nova Scotia v. Freure Village on Clair Creek (1996), 1996 CarswellOnt 2328, 40 C.B.R. (3d) 274 (Ont. Gen. Div. [Commercial List]) — followed

Statutes considered:

Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. B-3
s. 244 — referred to

Law and Equity Act, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 253
s. 39 — pursuant to

Rules considered:

Rules of Court, 1990, B.C. Reg. 221/90
R. 47 — pursuant to

APPLICATION by creditor for appointment of receiver and manager over debtor's current and future assets undertaking in properties, including all proceeds.

***D.M. Masuhara*:**

1 This is my ruling with respect to the application of Maple Trade Finance Ltd. made Monday.

2 The plaintiff seeks an order pursuant to s. 39 of the *Law and Equity Act* and Rule 47 for the appointment of the Bowra Group as receiver and manager over all of the defendant's current and future assets undertaking in properties, including all proceeds. The application arises out of the default by the defendant of a loan owed to the plaintiff. The principal of said loan was some $3.5 million. The plaintiff says that as of July 15, 2009, the outstanding balance owed was $5.7 million.

3 The defendant does not dispute that it is in default of the loan. Though it disputes the level of interest that has been accrued. It does not dispute that the amount owing is sizable. However, it is prepared to make payments in the order of some $4 million in six equal monthly installments and to have the interest dealt with as a sole issue. In this regard, the defendant has filed a statement of defence and counterclaim.

4 In terms of background, the plaintiff firm provides accounts and receivable financing to various businesses, including the defendant. The defendant is a holding company whose principal asset is its wholly owned subsidiary, CY Oriental Garments Inc., a private BC company which in turn owns a BBI based company, which in turn owns a Hong Kong company called Huge Best International, which in turn owns two operating companies in China. The operating companies in China are

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in the garment manufacturing business.

5 Until early July 2009, the plaintiff company was listed on the TSX Venture Exchange. In January 2006, the plaintiff and defendant entered into a financing agreement dated January 4, 2006. On June 27, 2006, the defendant executed a general security agreement in favour of the plaintiff granting security over all of the defendant's present and after-acquired property. The finance agreement and the GSA were registered in the BC Personal Property Registry.

6 The GSA provides, *inter alia*, that in the event of default, the following rights:

> 1) the plaintiff may, by instrument in writing, appoint any person as a receiver of all or any part of the collateral;
>
> 2) the plaintiff may from time to time remove or replace a receiver or make application to any court of competent jurisdiction for the appointment of a receiver.

7 In July 2007, the January 2006 agreement was amended and restated by way of a credit letter which confirmed the earlier agreements and further increased the defendant's credit facility with the plaintiff from $5 million to $8 million.

8 In furtherance of the financing agreements, the accounts receivable of Huge Best International were assigned to the defendant, who in turn assigned them to the plaintiff. As well a customer, Ideal Century's accounts receivable was also assigned to the plaintiff and to which Century acknowledged such assignment.

9 The payments to the plaintiff from Ideal went into default. By letter dated March 3rd, 2009, the plaintiff demanded payment in full of the plaintiff's outstanding indebtedness and gave notice to the defendant pursuant to s. 244 of the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act*.

10 In late March, the defendant made a payment of $100,000 to the plaintiff as a gesture of good faith in furtherance of negotiations related to forbearance. In early June 2009, the defendant made a further payment of $270,000 to the plaintiff as part of what it says was an agreement in principle on forbearance. The defendant has strongly denied any such agreement in principle. However, it accepted the monies.

11 The current application was originally scheduled to be heard on August 27, 2009. On August 26, 2009, at the defendant's request, the plaintiff agreed to adjourn the application to September 11th in order to give the defendant more time to attempt to satisfy its indebtedness to the plaintiff.

12 Further communications between the plaintiff and the defendant and their counsel carried on, and a letter dated September 10th, 2009, marked "with prejudice" was delivered. The plaintiff adjourned the within application from September 11th to September 17th in order to fully consider the contents of the "with-prejudice" letter. The plaintiff concluded that the contents of the letter did not set out an acceptable basis for resolving the indebtedness.

13 The matter now is before the court. The applicable test is whether it is just and convenient to make the order sought for a receiver and manager. The authorities relied upon by the applicant state that the court ought not ordinarily interfere with an express covenant agreeing to the appointment of a receiver in the event of default, which is as in the case of the instant application.

14 A further case presented to the court, *Bank of Nova Scotia v. Freure Village on Clair Creek* (1996), 40 C.B.R. (3d) 274 (Ont. Gen. Div. [Commercial List]), the plaintiff has indicated that the test of just inconvenience was said to be met where:

> ... it is more in the interests of all concerned to have the receiver appointed by the court.

15 In this regard, the applicant submits that for the following reasons, it is more in the interests of all concerned that a

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receiver and manager be appointed by the court: that the parties have agreed the plaintiff may seek the appointment of a receiver in the event of a default; that the defendant owes a significant sum of money; there appears not to be a dispute with the fact of the size of the indebtedness; and, that the defendant is in default.

16 The plaintiff noted that there were irregularities within the defendant, including the resignation of its board of directors and its recent delisting from the TSX exchange, which evidences a need to ensure that the defendant's assets are preserved for the plaintiff's benefit; that there are concerns with respect to the financial statements of the defendant; and that the defendant does not indicate what steps are being taken, to address the prospects for early repayment of the defendant's indebtedness.

17 Further, that the plaintiff is reasonably concerned that the prospect of the defendant performing its various obligation is in jeopardy; that the plaintiff has given the defendant reasonable opportunities to resolve the indebtedness, including the already mentioned adjournments; that the efforts to resolve or restructure or refinance the defendant's indebtedness to the plaintiff have to date proved unsuccessful; and that the defendant is essentially a holding company and presumably exercises oversight over the affairs of subsidiary companies, including the operating companies. As such, the defendant's value is likely to be optimized by a receiver manager ensuring the continued operation of the defendant's subsidiaries.

18 The respondent in reply submits the following: that it has made a payment of $100,000, and as well as $270,000, which were after the March 2009 notice; that the negotiations had been initiated by the defendant with the plaintiff for terms of forbearance after the March 2009 notice; that the plaintiff has recourse to legal execution and thus the equitable remedy applied for is not warranted, but notes that the plaintiff has started a:

> ... baseless action in the United States against one of the defendant's customers.

19 In this regard, a sanctions motion is currently before the US court regarding whether the plaintiff's actions there was an abuse of process.

20 Further, it notes that notwithstanding the cease-trade orders and the delisting of the company from the TSX Venture Exchange and the issues regarding its audited financial statements; that the defendant has a fully functioning board of directors; that the ongoing operations of the defendant's subsidiary operating companies have not been impacted by these issues; and specifically that these operating companies are profitable.

21 Further, that it has made a with-prejudice proposal to the plaintiff as mentioned on September the 10th, that the essence of which is that the principal majority shareholder of the defendant, who holds 44 percent of the outstanding shares, would be provided as security. I am assuming that is the 20,715,100 common shares referred to in the affidavit of Mr. Gee.

22 That $4,084,767, which is the principal and non-default interest accrued, will be paid as follows: that the defendant will pay $1,016,019 plus non-default interest to the plaintiff, which it stated in the September 10th letter would be within ten days of that letter; that the balance of some $3 million would be paid in six equal installments every 30 days thereafter with a seven-day curative period, together with interest at the non-default interest rate.

23 Further, during the course of the hearing, Ms. Carteri advised that the defendant would agree that it would consent to an order that would lead to the immediate appointment of a receiver upon default of any of the said payments.

24 The position of the defendant is also that there is no evidence of jeopardy to the plaintiff's security.

25 There are a number of factors that figure in the determination of whether it is appropriate to appoint a receiver. In *Bennett on Receivership, 2d ed.* (Toronto: Carswell, 1999), at p. 130, a list of such factors is set out as follows:

> a) whether irreparable harm might be caused if no order were made, although it is not essential for a creditor to establish irreparable harm if a receiver is not appointed, particularly where the appointment of a receiver is

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authorized by the security documentation;

b) the risk to the security holder taking into consideration the size of the debtor's equity in the assets and the need for protection or safeguarding of the assets while litigation takes place;

c) the nature of the property;

d) the apprehended or actual waste of the debtor's assets;

e) the preservation and protection of the property pending judicial resolution;

f) the balance of convenience to the parties;

g) the fact that the creditor has the right to appoint a receiver under the documentation provided for the loan;

h) the enforcement of rights under a security instrument where the security-holder encounters or expects to encounter difficulty with the debtor and others;

i) the principle that the appointment of a receiver is extraordinary relief which should be granted cautiously and sparingly;

j) the consideration of whether a court appointment is necessary to enable the receiver to carry out its' duties more efficiently;

k) the effect of the order upon the parties;

l) the conduct of the parties;

m) the length of time that a receiver may be in place;

n) the cost to the parties;

o) the likelihood of maximizing return to the parties;

p) the goal of facilitating the duties of the receiver.

26 The fact that the finance agreement acknowledged the right of the plaintiff to make application for a receiver is a strong factor in support of the imposition of a receiver.

27 However, on the other hand, there is a proposal by the defendant to repay a significant amount which was further expanded during the hearing by defendant's counsel. This lends support to the defendant's position. I note as well, the more recent payments made by the defendant to the plaintiff are not insignificant, as well as Mr. Gee's statement that since the summer of 2006, the amounts advanced by the plaintiff are in the order of $7.6 million and that repayments through August 2009 have been in the order of $5,238,766. I recognize that interest has been accruing on the principal.

28 The proposal as explored and discussed during the course of the hearing would align with the factor of controlling the costs to the parties at this point. It would also, align with the likelihood of maximizing return to the parties.

29 If the company's condition as to its viability was accepted, this would deal in part with the plaintiff's concern regarding jeopardy. The difficulty is the confidence that one can have in the defendant's ability to make good on its payments. Mr. Hunter, stated the concern really is not as much to do with the promise, but more to do with performance. I would agree.

30 However, balancing the factors, an order that would have the automatic imposition of a receiver, upon default in any payment required by the defendant, would address the concerns at this point. I think the balance of convenience can further be achieved through a further modification of the defendant's proposal to reflect the concerns over the lack of financial

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information to support the contention regarding the financial strength of the operating companies.

31 To that extent, the payments will be made in this manner: the defendant is to pay the plaintiff on or before the 28th of September, 2009, the sum of $1,016,019 plus non-default interest.

32 MR. REARDON: Sorry, My Lord, because I'm not familiar, would you mind repeating that number.

33 THE COURT: Okay. $1,016,019.

34 MR. REARDON: Yes, thank you.

35 THE COURT: $1,016,019 plus non-default interest. The defendant is to pay the plaintiff, over four months, the remaining outstanding balance plus non-default interest in equal installments.

36 The defendant will also provide financial statements related to its company and operations, including its wholly owned subsidiaries. Mr. Chen's shares will be delivered as security to the plaintiff.

37 There will be a term that any default in payment, not cured within three days, as opposed to the seven days suggested by defence counsel, will lead to the automatic appointment of a receiver on the terms as sought in the application.

38 There will also be a term that the defendant, will not permit the disposition of any of its property, including wholly owned subsidiaries, except in the ordinary course of business; and that Mr. Chen and Mr. Gee. are to make monthly representations confirming adherence to this term.

39 Further, any material adverse change in circumstances in the condition of the defendant or its wholly owned subsidiaries are to be reported immediately to the plaintiff, at which time the plaintiff has leave to bring a further application for the immediate appointment of a receiver.

40 That concludes my ruling.

Order accordingly.

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CITATION: Callidus v. Carcap, 2012 ONSC 163
COURT FILE NO.: CV-11-00009498-OOCL
DATE: 20120105

2012 ONSC 163 (CanLII)

SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE - ONTARIO
(COMMERCIAL LIST)

RE: CALLIDUS CAPITAL CORPORATION, Applicant/Respondent by cross-application

A N D:

CARCAP INC. and CAR EQUITY LOANS CORP., Respondents/Applicants by cross-application

APPLICATION UNDER Section 243(1) of the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act,* R.S.C. 1985, c. B-3 and Section 101 of the *Courts of Justice Act,* R.S.O. 1990 c. C.43

AND RE: KAPTOR FINANCIAL INC. and CARCAP AUTO FINANCING, Applicants by cross-application

AND:

CALLIDUS CAPITAL CORPORATION, Respondent by cross-application

BEFORE: MESBUR J.

COUNSEL: Harvey G. Chaiton and George Benchetrit for the applicant/respondent by cross-application

Mel Solmon, Fred Tayar and Colby Linthwaite for the respondents and applicants by cross-application

Robb English for the Toronto Dominion Bank

A. Kaufman for proposed Receiver, BDO Canada Ltd.

Jennifer Imrie for Third Eye Capital

HEARD: December 14, 2011

2012 ONSC 163 (CanLII)

ENDORSEMENT

Introduction:

[1] I heard this application for the appointment of a receiver and the debtors' cross application for an initial order under the *Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act* [1](*CCAA*) on December 14, 2011. At the end of the hearing I made the following endorsement:

For reasons to follow, an order will go in the following terms:

a) The debtors' cross application for an initial order under the CCAA is dismissed.

b) The application to appoint a Receiver is granted, but will not take effect until 5:00 p.m. on December 20, 2011.

c) If the debtor has obtained alternate financing & has paid the applicant in full by 5:00 p.m. December 20, 2011 then the Receivership Order will not take effect.

d) If the terms of paragraph (3) [i.e. paragraph (c)] above have not occurred then the Receivership order will be with effect as of 5:01 pm December 20/11.

e) If the parties cannot agree on the terms of the Receivership order (following the terms of the Model Order) they may make an appointment to settle the terms of the order.

f) Even if the Receivership Order takes effect on December 20/11 at 5:00 pm nothing prohibits the Debtor from continuing its efforts to refinance.

[2] Counsel tell me the debtor was unable to obtain financing to pay the applicant in full by December 20, 2011. Accordingly, the Receivership Order is now in effect, and it is necessary for me to deliver the reasons for my decision to appoint a receiver and decline to make an initial order under the *CCAA*.

[3] These are those reasons.

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[1] R.S.C. 1985 c. C-36

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<u>The application and cross-application:</u>

[4] The applicant, Callidus, is the respondents' first secured lender. On this application, it sought the appointment of a Receiver under both the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act*[2] and section 101 of the *Courts of Justice Act.*[3] The TD Bank, who is the respondents' second secured lender, supported the receivership application. It pointed out none of the respondents' refinancing proposals included sufficient financing to retire the respondents' debt to the TD Bank. Accordingly, the TD Bank took the position that even if the respondents were able to find alternate financing sufficient to pay out Callidus, the TD Bank would bring its own application to appoint a receiver under the terms of its own security.

[5] The respondents brought a cross-application for relief under the *CCAA.* Both Callidus and TD Bank opposed the cross-application.

<u>Facts:</u>

[6] The respondent CarCap is in the business of sub-prime car lease financing. The respondent Cashland provides sub-prime equity car loans. Both companies are subsidiaries of CarCap Auto Finance Inc., which itself is a subsidiary of Kaptor Financial Inc. Kaptor Financial owns several other companies, either in whole or in part. The parties refer to these companies as the Kaptor Group. An individual named Eric Inspektor controls the entire Kaptor Group, either directly or indirectly.

[7] The Kaptor Group, including the respondents, had deposit accounts with the TD Bank. Initially, they did not have any credit facilities with the TD. Both the respondents and the Kaptor Group had financing elsewhere. Before Callidus lent operating funds to the respondents, the Laurentian Bank provided an operating facility to them. In addition, the Kaptor Group used private investors to finance their businesses through separately incorporated special purpose investment vehicles. They refer to them as "silos". The silos provided funding either through secured term debentures or preference shares.

Callidus provides financing

[8] On September 1, 2011 Callidus replaced the Laurentian Bank as the respondents' first secured lender. It did so pursuant to a credit facility agreement, under which it

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[2] R.S.C. 1985 c. B-3 as amended
[3] R.S.O. 1990, c. C-43, as amended

agreed to advance a demand loan of up to $15 million subject to certain margin conditions. The agreement provided that advances were to be used:

a) To pay off the existing indebtedness to the Laurentian Bank;

b) To repay certain silo investors;

c) To provide working capital; and

d) To finance existing and future vehicle lease and vehicle loan transactions.

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[9] Another term of the agreement required the respondents to establish "blocked" accounts at a bank. The respondents had to deposit all funds they received from all sources into these blocked accounts. The respondents established the blocked accounts at the TD Bank.

[10] The Callidus credit facility had other provisions that are relevant to this application. The respondents' representations required them to disclose "all commitments of any lender (other than the Lender) for all debt for borrowed money, and all debt for borrowed money outstanding of the Borrowers or Corporate Guarantors."[4] The respondents did not disclose they owed any money to TD Bank, although at the time they did. In fact, in the schedule where the respondents were required to list their "current debt defaults", they entered "none". This was not true. I will discuss this more fully in the section "Changes to the respondents' arrangements with TD Bank", below.

[11] The respondents also represented that all the information they had given Callidus was "true and correct and does not omit any fact necessary in order to make such information not misleading."[5]

[12] Callidus made its advances to a disbursement account that the respondents maintained. The disbursement account was also at the TD Bank.

[13] The credit facility's terms provided that it was due on demand, and was repayable in full on the earlier of September 1, 2012 or an event of default. Remedies on default include Callidus' right to appoint a receiver and to apply to the court to appoint a receiver.

[14] The credit facility is fully secured by general security agreements as well as a first ranking secured interest over the properties, assets and undertakings of the respondents.

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[4] Credit facility agreement paragraph 17(k)

[5] *Ibid.* paragraph 17(q)

Changes to the respondents' arrangements with TD Bank.

[15] The respondents and other Kaptor Group companies initially had only deposit accounts with the TD Bank. Their banking arrangements did not include any overdraft or credit facilities. In July and August of 2011 the TD noticed what it characterized as a high rate of unusual activity in the respondents' accounts as well as in those of other Kaptor Group companies.

[16] What was unusual is that more than $60 million in cheques passed through various Kaptor Group accounts. On August 18, 2011 about $18 million flowed through in a single day. TD Bank viewed this as unusual since the businesses generally had annual revenue of about $24 million. That day, the TD Bank froze the Kaptor Group accounts. When they froze the accounts, they were in an overdraft position of about $7 million, contrary to their banking arrangements with the TD.

[17] TD Bank then entered into an accommodation agreement with the Kaptor Group, including the respondents. The accommodation agreement, which was dated August 23, 2011, provided a secured loan of $5 million to cover the overdraft, and to provide some working capital. The loan was to be repaid in full by August 29, 2011. It was not.

Callidus advances

[18] Callidus knew nothing about the Kaptor Group/respondents' overdraft with the TD Bank, the accommodation agreement or their failure to repay the TD loan. On September 1, 2011 Callidus made its first advance into the respondents' disbursement accounts. The advance totalled just over $8.4 million and was used to pay out the Laurentian Bank debt, make payments to silo investors and provide working capital of just under $1 million. Clearly, given the respondents' situation with TD Bank at the time of the advance, the respondents were in breach of their representations to Callidus in the credit facility agreement.

The TD Bank's accommodation agreement is amended, then terminated

[19] Since the TD Bank had not been repaid, it entered into an agreement to amend the original accommodation agreement. The amending agreement was dated September 7, 2011, a week after Callidus had advanced. The amending accommodation agreement provided for the Kaptor Group to acknowledge it was in overdraft at that date to the extent of $2.6 million. TD Bank agreed to advance up to $2 million (instead of the original $5 million) to cover the overdraft. TD Bank was to be repaid in full by September 12, 2011. Again, it was not.

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[20] On September 16, TD Bank entered into an agreement to terminate the accommodation agreement. In the termination agreement TD Bank agreed to extend the financing subject to certain paydowns, and with the requirement that the financing be paid in full by September 30. Once again, Kaptor Group failed to pay off the debt. It remains outstanding. Currently, the respondents owe the TD Bank about $1 million.

[21] By this point the respondents had set up the required blocked account and disbursement accounts at TD Bank, and Callidus had advanced. By this point as well, TD Bank was no longer prepared to do business with the respondents. As part of its termination agreement with the respondents, TD Bank required them to transfer the blocked accounts and disbursement accounts within 90 days of September 16, 2011.

[22] Before TD Bank made its various accommodation agreements with the respondents and Kaptor Group, there was a three week period in September where the TD Bank returned as NSF many cheques the respondents had written for payroll, investor payments and dealer and supplier payments. The NSF cheques to silo investors also put the respondents in breach of their obligations to Callidus.

Callidus learns of the debt with TD Bank

[23] Callidus did not learn of any of the respondents' agreements with TD Bank, or the security they had given the Bank until three weeks after Callidus had made its first advance. It was only around that time that Eric Inspektor, who essentially controls the Kaptor Group, including the respondents, told Callidus that the respondents and other Kaptor Group companies maintained accounts with the TD Bank. He said that their arrangements with the TD Bank permitted the TD Bank to offset overdrafts in one corporate account against deposits in another, including the disbursement accounts into which Callidus deposited its advances to the respondents.

[24] Mr. Inspektor explained that because of the overdraft position the Kaptor Group found itself in, the TD Bank had returned as NSF some of the cheques the respondents had written to some silo investors under Callidus' initial advance. It was one of the conditions of the advance that these investors were to be paid from the advance. Until this time, Callidus knew nothing of any debt the respondents owed to TD Bank. Callidus also did not know that one of the conditions of its initial advance had not been fulfilled – that is, paying off some specific silo investors.

[25] Matters deteriorated. TD Bank dishonoured various Cashland cheques for things like payroll, dealership payments and business expenses. Dealers were complaining to the Ontario Motor Vehicle Industry Council.

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The field audit

[26] Under the terms of its security, Callidus was permitted to conduct a field audit of the respondents. When it did, it discovered that some government remittances were made late. It also learned that Mr. Inspector had directed funds in various Kaptor Group accounts to cover overdrafts in other accounts. This might have included diversion of funds from the respondents to cover overdrafts of other Kaptor Group companies. Over $300,000 in September lease and loan payments had been deposited into the disbursement accounts instead of into the blocked accounts. Mr. Inspektor and his wife deposited nearly $700,000 into the disbursement accounts instead of the blocked accounts. Again, this constituted a breach of the terms of the credit facility agreement.

The Callidus demand

[27] Needless to say, all of this created significant concern for Callidus. Callidus took the position that the respondents had made misrepresentations and material non-disclosure to it. It viewed the respondents' actions as constituting material breaches of the credit facility agreement. It was not prepared to continue to lend. On October 18, 2011 it demanded payment in full, pursuant to the terms of the credit facility agreement. It also served notice under section 244 of the *BIA* of its intention to enforce its security.

The Callidus forbearance agreement and events following

[28] On October 25, 2011 Callidus entered into a forbearance agreement with the respondents. Callidus agreed to forbear from enforcing its rights, but only on a day-to-day basis. The agreement permitted Callidus to terminate it at any time, in its sole and absolute discretion.

[29] In the Callidus forbearance agreement the respondents have acknowledged Callidus' *BIA* Notices are valid. They agree not to contest the validity of the demands for payment. They waive the 10-day notice period, and consent to the immediate enforcement of Callidus' security.

[30] The forbearance agreement also required the respondents to hire a new interim executive officer to replace Mr. Inspektor, who ceased to have any managerial role, or any cheque signing authority. The respondents also agreed to hire MNP

corporate Finance Inc. to find them alternate financing so they could pay out Callidus by April 30, 2012. They were not able to secure alternate financing in this way.

[31] The agreement also required the respondents to submit a complete restructuring plan to Callidus by November 30, 2011. First, the plan had to be acceptable to Callidus, and second had to be completed by December 31, 2011. The respondents have been unable to comply with either of these conditions.

[32] Although the parties concede the term is not enforceable, the Callidus forbearance agreement also contains a promise from the respondents not to commence any restructuring or reorganization proceedings under either the *BIA* or *CCAA.*

[33] Since the forbearance agreement, Callidus says the respondents' financial position has deteriorated more. The loan balance has increased by more than $770,000 while the lease rental stream has dropped by about $225,000. By the end of November, the respondents were in an over advance position of more than $1.2 million.

[34] Callidus was not prepared to continue without changes to the arrangement. On November 16, Callidus told the respondents it would continue to fund under the credit facility if and only if there was a minimum cash injection at least $500,000 into the businesses by subordinated debt or equity within two days, and the respondents would also have to fund their 30% of the cost of buying new vehicles for lease. The respondents failed to fulfil either of these conditions.

[35] On November 24, Callidus terminated the forbearance agreement, and told the respondents it would apply to court to have a receiver appointed.

[36] Even though it has terminated the forbearance agreement, Callidus continues to provide some funding to the respondents. It does so at its discretion, in order to protect its security.

[37] The respondents have been looking for alternate financing. They have not been able to secure any.

<u>Discussion:</u>

[38] Callidus takes the position that the respondent made material misrepresentations even before the first advance. It says had it known of the respondents' situation with TD Bank it would never have agreed to advance in the first place. Now it sees the respondents' financial position deteriorating. Its demand for payment has not been satisfied. The respondents' revenue stream is declining, meaning it cannot acquire new vehicles to lease. Callidus says this results in a reduction of its security, while the debt increases. As a result, Callidus says it is just

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and convenient to appoint a receiver in order to protect its security and the interests of other stakeholders.

[39] For their part, the respondents accuse Callidus of taking an aggressive and unreasonable position (even though every position Callidus has taken has been supported by the specific terms of either the credit facility or the forbearance agreement.) The respondents point out that they are not actually behind in their payments. They view the interim financial officer who is now in place as being akin to a "soft receivership", and suggested that if they were able to have a *CCAA* stay in place for thirteen weeks, they would be able to restructure. They did not, however, present any restructuring plan, even in very draft form.

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Receiver?

[40] Callidus brought its receivership application under both section 101 of the *Courts of Justice Act,* and s.47 of the *BIA.* The test to appoint a receiver under the *CJA* requires the court to conclude it would be just and convenient to do so. The court may appoint an interim receiver under s. 47 of the *BIA* if and only if the court is persuaded a receiver is necessary to protect the debtor's estate or the interests of the creditor who sent a notice under s. 244(1) of the *BIA.*

[41] The question is whether it is more in the interests of all concerned to have the receiver appointed or not.[6] In order to answer the question the court must consider all the circumstances of the case, particularly:

a) The effect on the parties of appointing the receiver. This includes potential costs and the likelihood of maximizing return on and preserving the subject property;

b) The parties' conduct; and

c) The nature of the property and the rights and interests of all parties in relation to it.[7]

[42] Receivers are considered an "extraordinary" remedy, much in the same way as granting an injunction is considered an extraordinary remedy. The law is clear, however, that an applicant who wishes the court to appoint a receiver need not show irreparable harm if a receiver is not appointed.[8]

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[6] *Bank of Nova Scotia v. Freure Village on Clair Creek,* 1996 CarswellOnt 2328, 40 C.B.R. (3d) 274 (S.C.J.)
[7] *Bank of Montreal v. Carnival Leasing Limited,* 2011 ONSC 1007 (CanLII)
[8] *Swiss Bank Corp. (Canada) v. Odyssey Industries Inc.* [1995] O.J. No. 144 (O.C.J. – Gen. Div.)

[43] Many security instruments will specifically contemplate appointing a receiver. The fact that the creditor has a right to appoint a receiver under its security is therefore an important consideration. Generally, a court will appoint a receiver when it is necessary to enforce rights between the parties or to preserve of assets pending judgment. Receivers will also be appointed where there is a serious apprehension about the safety of the assets.

[44] Here, of course, the credit facility agreement itself specifically contemplated appointing a receiver. Following the reasoning in *Fruere Village,* the "extraordinary" nature of the remedy is therefore less important here than it might otherwise be.

[45] This leads me to consider the interests of all concerned, in order to determine whether the test under either the *Courts of Justice Act* or *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act*, or both, has been met.

[46] What is the likely effect on the parties of appointing a receiver? From Callidus' point of view, it will allow it to protect its security, and dispose of it in an organized and court-supervised fashion. It proposes to sell the businesses as a going concern, in order to maximize value for all stakeholders. The respondents concede that a possible restructuring plan might be to liquidate, in which case the hope would also be a going concern sale. In this regard, I see no difference in outcome if a receiver is appointed.

[47] Callidus has legitimate concerns about the businesses continuing as a going concern while the respondents attempt to restructure. The respondents have stopped purchasing vehicles for lease. They have no money to do so. As a result, the value of Callidus' security is declining.

[48] The activities in the TD accounts that led to the Bank's freezing them suggest companies that were out of financial control, operating outside of the normal course of business.

[49] The respondents' difficulties with the TD Bank overdraft arose in August of last year. They have been given every opportunity since then to cure their defaults, and have failed to do so.

[50] Similarly, the respondents have been in default with Callidus since it demanded payment in mid October of last year, and delivered its notice of intention to enforce its security. Even though Callidus had agreed to forbear, the respondents have failed to honour the terms of the forbearance agreement.

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[51] Neither Callidus nor TD Bank has faith in the respondents' management. This is a factor that supports appointing a receiver. [9] While the interim executive officer Mr. Willis has brought some stability to the businesses, they cannot operate without further borrowing, and none is available. Without further borrowing, the respondents cannot purchase new inventory for lease, and thus its inventory is declining. What this means is that its lease and loan revenues are also declining, while its debt load to Callidus is increasing. All this suggests to me that appointing a receiver is necessary in order to protect Callidus' security from further erosion.

[52] The respondents' past conduct also gives cause for concern if there is no receiver who can manage the businesses and arrange for an orderly sale under the court's supervision.

[53] As to the nature of the property, I note that Callidus' security is declining in value. Both secured creditors' rights in it are being eroded. The court must put an end to the continued haemorrhaging of money. Given the respondents' failure to come up with even a rudimentary restructuring plan, it is time for a receiver to take control, and manage the businesses to the extent necessary to result in an orderly liquidation to protect the interests of all stakeholders.

[54] At the hearing of the application and cross-application, the respondents urged me to consider only the current situation with the businesses, and look to the future, rather than to problems in the past. Even doing only this, there is no comfort to Callidus. The respondents have repeatedly sought new financing and failed – even after I made the receivership order, but held it in abeyance so they could refinance. Most importantly, nothing prevents the respondents from continuing their efforts to restructure, even though I have appointed a receiver.

CCAA?

[55] The respondents took the position that granting an initial order under the *CCAA* is the proper way to proceed. They point to the fact that Mr. Willis (the interim executive officer) says the businesses are not out of control, are not a disaster, and are good businesses that will not deteriorate if a stay is granted and the companies are allowed to restructure. I disagree.

[56] The respondents have no operating capital. They are borrowers in default, with two unwilling lenders who are unprepared to lend more. Under the *CCAA* these lenders have no obligation to advance more funds.[10] Without further advances,

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[9] *GE Commercial Distribution Finance Canada v. Sandy Cove Marine Co.* [2011] O.J. No. 2954 (S.C.J.)
[10] Section 11.01(b) of the *CCAA*

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the respondents cannot continue to operate without further deterioration in inventory of vehicles and the resulting deterioration in revenue.

[57] The respondents ask, what is the harm in letting them reorganize? While that is an interesting question, it is not the test. It seems to me this is nothing more than a last ditch effort on the respondents' part to stave off the inevitable. In *Re Marine Drive Properties Ltd.* [11] the court put a similar situation this way: "to put in bluntly, the Petitioners have sought *CCAA* protection to buy time to continue their attempts to raise new funding ... they need time to 'try to pull something out of the hat.'" Or, as Farley J. put it in *Re Inducon Development Corp.,* [12] "... *CCAA* is designed to be remedial; it is not however designed to be preventative. *CCAA* should not be the last gasp of a dying company; it should be implemented if it is to be implemented, at a stage prior to the death throe."

[58] Here, the respondents only brought their application after Callidus had brought its application for a receiver. The respondents knew in November that Callidus intended to seek a receiver. They waited until they had been served with the receivership application before launching their own effort to restructure. As a result, the cross-application for *CCAA* relief seems more a defensive tactic than a *bona fide* attempt to restructure. The respondents have no restructuring plan. They have no outline of a plan. They do not have even a "germ of a plan". Again, as the court said in *Inducon*:

> [W]hile it is desirable to have a formalized plan when applying, it must be recognized as a practical matter that there may be many instances where only an outline is possible. I think it inappropriate, absent most unusual and rare circumstances, not to have a plan outline at a minimum, in which case then I would think that there would be requisite for the germ of a plan.

[59] The respondents have been attempting to refinance for some time. They have failed to meet every deadline for payment they agreed to with Callidus as well as with the TD Bank. Even when I delayed the date for the receivership order to take effect in order to give the respondents time to complete a refinancing, they were unable to do so.

[60] The absence of even a "germ of a plan" militates against granting relief under the *CCAA.*

[61] Finally, in considering the question of whether to grant relief under the *CCAA,* I must also look at the position of the two major secured creditors. Neither will

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[11] 2009 BCSC 145

[12] [1992] O.J. No. 8 (Gen. Div.)

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support a plan of arrangement. They represent a considerable part of the respondents' creditors. I have no evidence any other creditors would support a plan, either. I see no merit in making an initial order and imposing a stay in circumstances where a plan of arrangement is most likely going to be defeated.

[62] Having considered all these factors, I decline to grant relief under the *CCAA.*

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Conclusion:

[63] It is for these reasons I made the order I did on December 14, 2011.

MESBUR J.

Released: 20120105

2017 SKQB 228
Saskatchewan Court of Queen's Bench

Affinity Credit Union 2013 v. Vortex Drilling Ltd.

2017 CarswellSask 399, 2017 SKQB 228, 282 A.C.W.S. (3d) 773, 50 C.B.R. (6th) 220, 7 P.P.S.A.C. (4th) 195

AFFINITY CREDIT UNION 2013 (PLAINTIFF) and VORTEX DRILLING LTD. (DEFENDANT)

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES' CREDITORS ARRANGEMENT ACT, RSC 1985, c C-36, AS AMENDED

IN THE MATTER OF THE SASKATCHEWAN BUSINESS CORPORATIONS ACT, RSS 1978, c B-10

IN THE MATTER OF A PROPOSED PLAN OF COMPROMISE OR ARRANGEMENT OF VORTEX DRILLING LTD.

B. Scherman J.

Judgment: July 24, 2017
Docket: Saskatoon QBG 783/17, 1030/17

Counsel: Jeffrey M. Lee, Q.C., Paul D. Olfert, for Affinity Credit Union and Radius Credit Union
Mary I.A. Buttery, Jared Enns, for Vortex Drilling
Ian A. Sutherland, Jordan F. Richards, for Receiver
Brent Warga, for Interim Receiver
P. Koliaskis, for Proposed Monitor

Subject: Civil Practice and Procedure; Corporate and Commercial; Insolvency

Related Abridgment Classifications

Bankruptcy and insolvency
IV Receivers
IV.1 Appointment

Bankruptcy and insolvency
XIX Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act
XIX.3 Arrangements
XIX.3.b Approval by court
XIX.3.b.iv Miscellaneous

Debtors and creditors
VII Receivers
VII.3 Appointment
VII.3.b Application for appointment
VII.3.b.iii Grounds
VII.3.b.iii.E Miscellaneous

Headnote

Bankruptcy and insolvency --- Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act — Arrangements — Approval by court —

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Miscellaneous
Defendant company (V Ltd.) was in business of drilling oil wells and was hit hard by price drop of oil — In 2013, plaintiff financial institution (A Co.) advanced V Ltd. nearly $15 million to refinance two drilling rigs and to purchase third — While loan facilities were repayable on demand, prior to demand there was schedule of combined monthly interest and principal payments — Credit agreement also provided that any material change in risk or adverse change in financial condition of V Ltd. would constitute default — After oil prices collapsed, V Ltd. could not make its scheduled payments and A Co. agreed on several occasions to allow V Ltd. to defer principal payments — V Ltd. then failed to make negotiated balloon principal payments and in January 2017 failed to resume regular monthly principal and interest payments as V Ltd. had undertaken to do — A Co. demanded payment in May 2017, allowing V Ltd. 30 days to pay in full — A Co. applied for appointment of receiver; V Ltd. applied for adjournment of A Co.'s application to allow time to respond to A Co.'s affidavits and to apply for relief, including stay of proceedings pursuant to Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA) — Interim receiver was appointed for short period under which interim receiver could investigate, monitor and facilitate V Ltd.'s continuing operation so as to give V Ltd. time to file responses and to make its CCAA application — A Co.'s application granted; V Ltd.'s application dismissed — It was evident that V Ltd. heavily relied on affidavit evidence from self-described Administrative Director and her evidence was based on information and belief that had no basis or establishment and would not be admissible on final order — Significant weight could not be placed on Administrative Director's evidence because reliability could not be assessed — A Co. provided significant relief from contractual terms over two-year period and in practical sense, had effectively provided V Ltd. with much of remedial opportunity contemplated by CCAA — V Ltd. had two-year benefit of debt repayment accommodations and forbearance and opportunity to seek alternate financing.

Bankruptcy and insolvency --- Receivers — Appointment
Defendant company (V Ltd.) was in business of drilling oil wells and was hit hard by price drop of oil — In 2013, plaintiff financial institution (A Co.) advanced V Ltd. nearly $15 million to refinance two drilling rigs and to purchase third — While loan facilities were repayable on demand, prior to demand there was schedule of combined monthly interest and principal payments — Credit agreement also provided that any material change in risk or adverse change in financial condition of V Ltd. would constitute default — After oil prices collapsed, V Ltd. could not make its scheduled payments and A Co. agreed on several occasions to allow V Ltd. to defer principal payments — V Ltd. then failed to make negotiated balloon principal payments and in January 2017 failed to resume regular monthly principal and interest payments as V Ltd. had undertaken to do — A Co. demanded payment in May 2017, allowing V Ltd. 30 days to pay in full — A Co. applied for appointment of receiver; V Ltd. applied for adjournment of A Co.'s application to allow time to respond to A Co.'s affidavits and to apply for relief, including stay of proceedings pursuant to Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA) — Interim receiver was appointed for short period under which interim receiver could investigate, monitor and facilitate V Ltd.'s continuing operation so as to give V Ltd. time to file responses and to make its CCAA application — A Co.'s application granted; V Ltd.'s application dismissed — It was evident that V Ltd. heavily relied on affidavit evidence from self-described Administrative Director and her evidence was based on information and belief that had no basis or establishment and would not be admissible on final order — Significant weight could not be placed on Administrative Director's evidence because reliability could not be assessed — A Co. provided significant relief from contractual terms over two-year period and in practical sense, had effectively provided V Ltd. with much of remedial opportunity contemplated by CCAA — V Ltd. had two-year benefit of debt repayment accommodations and forbearance and opportunity to seek alternate financing.

Debtors and creditors --- Receivers — Appointment — Application for appointment — Grounds — Miscellaneous
Defendant company (V Ltd.) was in business of drilling oil wells and was hit hard by price drop of oil — In 2013, plaintiff financial institution (A Co.) advanced V Ltd. nearly $15 million to refinance two drilling rigs and to purchase third — While loan facilities were repayable on demand, prior to demand there was schedule of combined monthly interest and principal payments — Credit agreement also provided that any material change in risk or adverse change in financial condition of V Ltd. would constitute default — After oil prices collapsed, V Ltd. could not make its scheduled payments and A Co. agreed on several occasions to allow V Ltd. to defer principal payments — V Ltd. then failed to make negotiated balloon principal payments and in January 2017 failed to resume regular monthly principal and interest payments as V Ltd. had undertaken to do — A Co. demanded payment in May 2017, allowing V Ltd. 30 days to pay in full — A Co. applied for appointment of receiver; V Ltd. applied for adjournment of A Co.'s application to allow time to respond to A Co.'s affidavits and to apply for relief, including stay of proceedings pursuant to Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA) — Interim receiver was appointed for short period under which interim receiver could investigate, monitor and facilitate V Ltd.'s continuing operation so as to give V Ltd. time to file responses and to make its CCAA application — A Co.'s application granted; V Ltd.'s application dismissed — It was evident that V Ltd. heavily relied on affidavit evidence from self-described Administrative Director and her evidence was based on information and belief that had no basis or establishment and would

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not be admissible on final order — Significant weight could not be placed on Administrative Director's evidence because reliability could not be assessed — A Co. provided significant relief from contractual terms over two-year period and in practical sense, had effectively provided V Ltd. with much of remedial opportunity contemplated by CCAA — V Ltd. had two-year benefit of debt repayment accommodations and forbearance and opportunity to seek alternate financing.

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APPLICATION by plaintiff financial institution for appointment of receiver; APPLICATION by defendant company for relief including stay of proceedings to permit it to pursue successful arrangement or reorganization.

***B. Scherman J.*:**

Introduction

1 Affinity Credit Union 2013 [Affinity], a secured lender to Vortex Drilling Ltd. [Vortex], is owed in excess of $8,350,000 and has applied for the appointment of a Receiver of all of the assets and properties of Vortex under s. 243 of the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act*, RSC 1985, c B-3 [*BIA*] and s. 64 of *The Personal Property Security Act, 1993*, SS 1993, c P-6.2 [*PPSA*].

2 Vortex has applied under s. 11.02(a) of the *Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act*, RSC 1985, c C-36 [*CCAA*], for an initial order granting various relief including a stay of all proceedings against Vortex for a period of time to permit it to pursue a successful arrangement or reorganization.

3 Vortex is insolvent. The other statutory requirements to permit Affinity to pursue the appointment of a Receiver under the *BIA* and for Vortex to seek an initial order and stay under the *CCAA* have been met or established.

4 Affinity has since early 2015 accommodated financial difficulties being faced by Vortex and agreed, under the terms of various agreements, to interest only payments for periods of time in return for various undertakings of Vortex. It says Vortex has breached those undertakings, has ceased making even interest payments and since April of 2017 has been in default under the terms of its credit agreements. Affinity has demanded payment in full of the indebtedness owed to it, and Vortex has failed to pay what it is contractually obligated to pay.

5 Vortex is in the business of drilling oil wells. It says that its financial difficulties are the direct result of the significant drop in the price of oil that occurred in 2014 and has continued to date. This has caused a related reduction in the demand for drilling rigs to drill new wells. Oil prices peaked well in excess of $100 U.S. per barrel and since 2014 have fallen to $50 U.S. or less per barrel.

6 Vortex argues the economic climate in the Western Canadian oil industry is improving, it is expecting a substantial improvement in its cash flow, Affinity is fully secured for the indebtedness owed and the initial *CCAA* order it seeks should be granted so as to give it an opportunity to seek refinancing from other lenders or to facilitate the making of a compromise or arrangements with its existing creditors so as to permit it to be able to continue in business.

7 The issue to be decided in the context of the competing applications is whether the appropriate order to make is to grant an initial order and stay of proceedings under the *CCAA* or to grant Affinity's application for the appointment of a Receiver.

Background Facts

8 Vortex was created in November of 2010 and subsequently purchased and/or constructed three drilling rigs largely utilizing borrowed funds. Under the terms of an August 12, 2013 Offer to Finance from Affinity [Credit Agreement] accepted and agreed to by Vortex, Affinity advanced Vortex, under three separate loan facilities, a total of $14,910,711 to pay out existing loans in respect of two rigs and to finance the construction of a third drilling rig. The individual loan facilities were each payable on demand, but before demand were to be paid by combined monthly principal and interest payments totalling $325,257. The Credit Agreement expressly provided that any material change in risk or adverse change in the financial condition of Vortex or failure to comply with any condition of the Offer to Finance would constitute an event of default entitling Affinity to demand payment of all sums owing and to realize on the security taken for the loan.

9 As required by the Credit Agreement, Vortex granted to Affinity, under the terms of a general security agreement registered in the personal property registries of each of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta [GSA], a security interest in all

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of its present and after acquired property. The terms of the GSA included the right of Affinity, upon the occurrence of an event of default as therein defined, to seize and sell any of Vortex's property or to appoint a Receiver (see paragraphs 9 to 13 of the GSA). Events of default were widely defined and include the insolvency of Vortex.

10 With the collapse of oil prices and the resulting downturn in the oil industry Vortex was unable to make the monthly payments contemplated by the Credit Agreement and sought accommodations from Affinity. By a series of agreements Affinity provided principal repayment deferrals to Vortex, which resulted in Vortex paying only interest for most of the months of 2016. Vortex failed to fulfil its commitments to make balloon principal payments and to resume principal and interest payments by dates and in amounts contemplated by these accommodations or deferral agreements.

11 As of January 2017 regular monthly principal and interest payments of $325,257 were again to resume but Vortex failed to make such payments. In March of 2017 Vortex informed Affinity that it could only afford to make monthly payments of $100,000 rather than the $325,257 per month then required by the Credit Agreement. Affinity prepared an amendment to the Credit Agreement which would have permitted such reduced payments on condition that Vortex approach its shareholders to obtain an injection of equity capital to finance its business operations and reduce the indebtedness owing to Affinity. Vortex did not sign that amending agreement, has not made the required monthly payments, nor remedied the defaults that have occurred under the Credit Agreement, as amended from time to time.

12 By letter of May 1, 2017 Affinity gave Vortex notice of intention to enforce its security pursuant to s. 244(1) of the *BIA* and demanded that the full outstanding obligations (stated to be $8,422,061.01 as at April 28, 2017) be repaid within 30 days, failing which Affinity would proceed to avail itself of its legal remedies including enforcing its security. On June 6, 2017 Affinity filed with this Court its notice of application, returnable June 9, 2017, seeking the appointment of a receiver. By agreement between counsel for Affinity and Vortex this application was adjourned to June 23, 2017.

13 During this adjournment negotiations continued between the parties with Vortex seeking continuing accommodations or forbearance on the part of Affinity. Vortex was representing it had prospects to refinance the indebtedness with other lenders.

14 Affinity takes that position that these negotiations resulted in a concluded agreement under which Affinity was to provide an additional two-week period of forbearance so as to give Vortex additional time to pursue refinancing and would fund current payroll obligations of Vortex, in return for which Vortex would consent to the appointment of a receiver should its refinancing efforts fail. Vortex takes the position that no such agreement was ever concluded.

15 Affinity's application for the appointment of a receiver came before me on June 23, 2017. Vortex sought an adjournment of that application, advancing the position that it needed time to respond to the affidavits filed by Affinity and to bring its own application for *CCAA* relief. In the circumstances I ordered the appointment of an interim receiver for a period ending July 23, 2017 under which the interim receiver could investigate, monitor and facilitate Vortex's continuing operation so as to give Vortex an opportunity to file opposition affidavits and make its *CCAA* application.

16 That application and the affidavit evidence of both Vortex and Affinity on both applications are before me. As stated above, Vortex is insolvent, in the sense of being unable to pay its debts as they become due. The issue to be decided is whether in the circumstances the appointment of a Receiver or an initial order under the *CCAA* is most appropriate in the circumstances.

The Law Respecting CCAA Applications

17 Jurisprudence establishes that the following principles are applicable to *CCAA* applications:

a. The legislative purpose of the *CCAA* is to permit qualifying debtors to carry on business and where possible avoid the social and economic costs of liquidating its assets: See *Ted Leroy Trucking Ltd., Re*, 2010 SCC 60 (S.C.C.) at para 15, [2010] 3 S.C.R. 379 (S.C.C.) [*Century*].

b. The remedial purpose of the *CCAA* is to facilitate the making of a compromise or arrangement between an insolvent debtor company and its creditors to the end that the company is able to continue in business: See *Hongkong Bank of*

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Canada v. Chef Ready Foods Ltd. (1990), [1991] 2 W.W.R. 136 (B.C. C.A.).

c. The requirements of appropriateness, good faith and due diligence are baseline considerations that a court should always bear in mind when exercising *CCAA* jurisdiction: *Century* at para 70.

d. Appropriateness is assessed by inquiring whether the order sought advances the remedial purpose of the *CCAA*: *Century* at para 70

e. Section 11.02(3)(a) of the *CCAA* states that the court shall not grant a stay of proceedings unless:

(a) the applicant satisfies the court that circumstances exist that make the order appropriate...

18 I proceed on the basis that a *CCAA* applicant bears the burden of establishing each of the requirements of appropriateness, good faith and due diligence.

The Law Respecting Receivership Applications

19 In a previous unreported decision in *Golden Opportunities Fund Inc. v. Phenomenome Discoveries Inc.* [2016 CarswellSask 607 (Sask. Q.B.)]. (25 February 2016) Saskatoon, QB 1639 of 2015, I summarized jurisprudence with respect to applications to appoint a receiver under s. 243 of the *BIA*. I repeat here that summary, which I view as remaining accurate:

5. Under s. 243(1) of the *BIA* this court can, on application of a secured creditor, appoint a receiver where it considers it just and convenient to do so. Instructive decisions on the factors relevant to the court's determination of whether it is "just and convenient" include *Bank of Montreal v. Carnival National Leasing Ltd*. 2011 ONSC 1007 *and Kasten Energy Inc. v. Shamrock Oil & Gas Ltd*. 2013 ABQB 63.

6. In Carnival the court said the following regarding the just and convenient criteria at para 24 of its reason:

In *Bank of Nova Scotia v. Freure Village on Clair Creek* (1996), 40 C.B.R. (3d) 274 (Ont. Gen. Div. [Commercial List]), Blair J. (as he then was) dealt with a similar situation in which the bank held security that permitted the appointment of a private receiver or an application to court to have a court appointed receiver. He summarized the legal principles involved as follows:

10 The Court has the power to appoint a receiver or receiver and manager where it is "just or convenient" to do so: the Courts of Justice Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. 43, s. 101. In deciding whether or not to do so, it must have regard to all of the circumstances but in particular the nature of the property and the rights and interests of all parties in relation thereto. The fact that the moving party has a right under its security to appoint a receiver is an important factor to be considered but so, in such circumstances, is the question of whether or not an appointment by the Court is necessary to enable the receiver-manager to carry out its work and duties more efficiently; see generally *Third Generation Realty Ltd. v. Twigg* (1991) 6 C.P.C. (3d) 366 at pages 372-374;*Confederation Trust Co. v. Dentbram Developments Ltd*. (1992), 9 C.P.C. (3d) 399*; Royal Trust Corp. of Canada v. D.Q. Plaza Holdings Ltd*. (1984), 54 C.B.R. (N.S.) 18 at page 21. It is not essential that the moving party, a secured creditor, establish that it will suffer irreparable harm if a receiver-manager is not appointed: *Swiss Bank Corp. (Canada) v. Odyssey Industries Inc*. (1995), 30 C.B.R. (3d) 49.

7. In *Kasten* the court said the following:

13 Both parties agree that the factors that may be considered in making a determination whether it is just and convenient to appoint a Receiver are listed in a non-exhaustive manner in *Paragon Capital Corp. v. Merchants & Traders Assurance Co.*, 2002 ABQB 430 (Alta. Q.B.) at para 27, (2002), 316 A.R. 128 (Alta. Q.B.) [Paragon Capital], citing from Frank Bennett, Bennett on Receiverships, 2nd ed (Toronto: Thompson Canada Ltd, 1995) at

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130] to include:

a) whether irreparable harm might be caused if no order were made, although it is not essential for a creditor to establish irreparable harm if a receiver is not appointed, particularly where the appointment of a receiver is authorized by the security documentation;

b) the risk to the security holder taking into consideration the size of the debtor's equity in the assets and the need for protection or safeguarding of the assets while litigation takes place;

c) the nature of the property;

d) the apprehended or actual waste of the debtor's assets;

e) the preservation and protection of the property pending judicial resolution;

f) the balance of convenience to the parties;

g) the fact that the creditor has the right to appoint a receiver under the documentation provided for the loan;

h) the enforcement of rights under a security instrument where the security-holder encounters or expects to encounter difficulty with the debtor and others;

i) the principle that the appointment of a receiver is extraordinary relief which should be granted cautiously and sparingly;

j) the consideration of whether a court appointment is necessary to enable the receiver to carry out its' duties more efficiently;

k) the effect of the order upon the parties;

l) the conduct of the parties;

m) the length of time that a receiver may be in place;

n) the cost to the parties;

o) the likelihood of maximizing return to the parties;

p) the goal of facilitating the duties of the receiver.

See also, *Lindsey Estate v. Strategic Metals Corp.*, 2010 ABQB 242 (Alta. Q.B.) at para 32, aff'd 2010 ABCA 191 (Alta. C.A.); and *Romspen Investment Corp. v. Hargate Properties Inc.*, 2011 ABQB 759 (Alta. Q.B.) at para 20.

20 Consistent with my view that a *CCAA* applicant bears the burden of establishing each of the requirements of appropriateness, good faith and due diligence, I am of the view that an applicant under s. 243 of the *BIA* bears the burden of satisfying the Court that it would be just and convenient to appoint a receiver in the circumstances.

The Parties' Positions in Brief

21 Vortex's position is that on a proper application of the legislative and remedial purposes of the *CCAA* it is appropriate

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to issue an initial order and grant a stay. It argues that putting Vortex into receivership is going to result in liquidation of its assets and the end of its business with the resulting loss of employment for many individuals as well as the loss of the other economic activity that Vortex generates in its home community.

22 Vortex says that the economic climate in the Western Canadian oil industry is improving and it is expecting a substantial improvement in its cash flow. It says it expects to soon secure additional business and that it is actively pursuing promising refinancing opportunities. Thus it says it is appropriate that it be given an opportunity to pursue such refinancing or a compromise with its creditors so as to avoid the social and economic costs of liquidation. It says that the security that Affinity holds has a value significantly beyond the debt owed by it, and there will be no real prejudice to Affinity by granting an initial order and granting a stay.

23 Affinity says the proper and appropriate order in the circumstances is the receivership order it seeks. It says that Vortex is insolvent, it has the contractual right to appoint a receiver or seize and sell the rigs upon an event of default (which both insolvency and failure to pay the debt owed are), it has already provided Vortex with lengthy and significant accommodations and for good and sufficient cause it has lost trust in Vortex. Affinity says Vortex has repeatedly failed to honour contractual commitments made to Affinity in return for the deferrals granted and that the evidence demonstrates that Vortex has not acted in good faith.

24 Beyond these factors Affinity's position is that, given the realities of the oil industry and Vortex's financial position, the business is unviable now and into the foreseeable future. Over nearly 2 1/2 years Affinity has accepted deferral in payments totalling some $4,500,000, but notwithstanding this accommodation Vortex has been unable to generate cash flow that permitted it to cover its variable operating costs, much less make a contribution to fixed costs. The application made by Vortex does not contain even the germ of a reorganization plan that has any prospect of succeeding. It relies on purported, but unverified, refinancing possibilities. Vortex has had many months' opportunity to obtain refinancing and has not been able to do so.

25 Affinity says that continuing to operate the rigs without generating revenue sufficient to cover the fixed costs (which includes repayment of the loans) means the rigs will continue to depreciate and Affinity's security position will be eroded.

26 For all of these reasons it says to issue an initial order and grant a stay of proceedings under the *CCAA* would be inappropriate and that is just and convenient to appoint a receiver.

Analysis of Vortex's Position that CCAA Relief is Appropriate

i. Evidentiary Concerns

27 At paragraphs 20 to 22 of the Vortex Brief of Law counsel argues as follows:

> 20. A stay of proceedings would fulfill the legislative objective of the CCAA by permitting Vortex to carry on its business operations during the reorganization process. The evidence in support of this application clearly demonstrates that such an order is appropriate in these circumstances:
>
>> (a) the industry within which Vortex operates is seasonal, and Vortex's Rigs are generally deployed from the month of June onwards (Twietmeyer Affidavit, at para 18);
>>
>> (b) as the industry itself is seasonal, so too is Vortex's cash flow (Twietmeyer Affidavit, at para 18);
>>
>> (c) Vortex's assets are worth significantly more than its debts (Twietmeyer Affidavit, at paras 2 and 17);
>>
>> (d) two of Vortex's three Rigs are currently deployed and operational for the 2017 season, one for Crescent Point Energy Cop. (sic), which is one of Canada's largest light and medium oil producers, and the second Rig is currently in operation for Aldon Oil Ltd. (Twietmeyer Affidavit, at para 19);
>>
>> (e) Vortex's general manager and sales consultant are currently deploying significant efforts in order to secure a

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contract in respect of its third Rig. The evidence before this court is that these efforts have successfully generated new business for Vortex, including its most recent contract with Aldon Oil Ltd. Accordingly, and through these ongoing efforts, it is believed that it is highly likely that Vortex will secure a contract for its third Rig (Twietmeyer Affidavit, at para 20); and

(f) assuming all of the relief sought in this application is granted, Vortex's cash-flow projections indicate that, if DIP Financing is approved, Vortex will have enough liquidity to meet its cash flow needs through to the end of the 13-week forecast period (Twietmeyer Affidavit, at para 61).

28 It should be noted that for each of the points in paragraph 20 (a) to (f) counsel references supporting evidence from affidavits of one Tina Twietmeyer. I have concluded that it is not appropriate for me to rely on much of the affidavit evidence of Tina Twietmeyer for the reasons that follow:

a. In paragraph 1 of her affidavit she describes herself as the Administrative Director of Vortex without providing any information or details as to what that job function involves and how it would give her the personal knowledge she claims to have. The evidence establishes she is not and has never been a corporate director of Vortex.

b. Notwithstanding her statement that she has personal knowledge of matters in question, on a close read of her affidavits it is apparent much of her evidence is based on information and belief without the basis for her information and belief being provided.

c. Rule 13-30 of *The Queen's Bench Rules* requires that an affidavit must be confined to facts within the personal knowledge of the person swearing the affidavit except that on an interlocutory application affidavit evidence based on information and belief is permissible provided the basis for the claimed information and belief is disclosed.

d. Applying the test in *Verlaan v. Lang Estate*, 2004 SKQB 376 (Sask. Q.B.), that an application is interlocutory where the decision in respect of it given in one way would finally dispose of the matter but if given in another way would allow the action to go on, I am of the opinion that an application for an initial order and stay of proceedings under the *CCAA* is not an interlocutory application. I fully appreciate that if the initial order is granted a further application approving a restructuring plan would be required. While the current application may lie close to the tipping point between what is a final application and an interlocutory application, it is my conclusion that Vortex's *CCAA* application has more of the characteristics of a final application than of an interlocutory application and thus I find the application to not be an interlocutory application. The result is that affidavit evidence based on information and belief is not admissible and should not be considered.

e. If I am wrong in my conclusion that the application is not interlocutory, then nonetheless, in various instances where Ms. Twietmeyer is giving evidence based upon information and belief for which the basis is not provided, the weight and reliability to be given to much of her evidence cannot be assessed.

f. Beyond these concerns, the Rules applicable to affidavit evidence do not permit opinion, argument, irrelevant matters or hearsay on either an interlocutory or final application. Much of Ms. Twietmeyer's affidavit evidence consists of opinion, argument and hearsay or irrelevant matters and thus should not be considered on those grounds.

g. An example of this is her evidence at paragraph 3 of her referenced affidavit that "the economic climate in the Western Canadian oil industry is improving. As a result, Vortex is experiencing significant growth in its business and is expecting a substantial improvement in its cash flow". This evidence includes inadmissible opinion, speculation and argument.

h. On the basis of all of the evidence, I conclude it is wrong to say that Vortex is experiencing significant growth. Rather it is limping along drilling wells on a "one-off" basis as and when such contracts come available. This work is done at depressed prices that cover the variable costs of operation, if that, and the bulk of its capacity is unused.

i. Ms. Twietmeyer is in no position to provide opinion evidence that the economic climate in the Western Canadian oil industry is improving, and her statement that Vortex is expecting a substantial improvement in its cash flow can at best

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be viewed as her hope, but in the context of affidavit evidence is inadmissible speculation.

29 With reference to the points made in paragraph 20 of the Vortex Brief of Law above:

i. The facts stated in paragraphs 20 (a) and (b) that the industry in which Vortex operates and thus its cash flow is seasonal is of no or little relevance. The fact that the oil well drilling industry cash flow is seasonal is simply a fact of the business that should be accommodated in the budgeting. The evidence establishes that over a continuous 2 1/2 years this business has been unviable.

ii. The statement at paragraph 20 (c) that Vortex's assets are worth significantly more that its debts is either or both inadmissible hearsay evidence or inadmissible opinion evidence. Paragraph 17 of Ms. Twietmeyer's affidavit indicated that an appraisal of the equipment had been obtained valuing it at $17,146,000, but Vortex has not filed this appraisal claiming confidentiality. This is not an acceptable reason for not filing an appraisal relied upon. Where appropriate, evidence with confidentiality concerns can be filed on a basis that protects the confidentiality.

iii. Opinion evidence can only be given by an individual found to be qualified to give such opinion evidence. To attempt to bootstrap opinion evidence of value into the record in this way is an attempt to introduce hearsay evidence. It denies Affinity any ability to test the opinion evidence or respond. Opinion evidence of value should be provided directly by the person expressing the opinion accompanied by the details of qualifications and the opinion so as to give the party opposite and this Court an opportunity to assess its reliability.

iv. Given no evidence that establishes the expertise of the provider of such appraisal and other evidence that the daily rates for drilling rigs have declined from in excess of $16,000 per day to under $7,000 per day and that only one out of three of Vortex's rigs has been operating on any regular basis gives significant basis to be concerned about the reliability of such evidence.

v. Paragraph 20 (d) of the Vortex brief argues, based on paragraph 19 of the Twietmeyer affidavit, that two of Vortex's three rigs are operational for the 2017 season. This is misleading as to the true state of affairs. The current evidence, as of the date this matter was heard, was that the second rig had drilled one well for Aldon, over a period of approximately one week, and has since been idle. While there may be two rigs which are in operating condition, the relevant fact is that these two rigs are far from fully engaged.

vi. The argument advanced at paragraph 20(e) of the Vortex brief that "it is believed that it is highly likely that Vortex will secure a contract for its third Rig" is based on an expressed "belief" in paragraph 20 of the Twietmeyer affidavit without Twietmeyer having provided any basis for such belief other than reference to efforts on the part of a Messrs. Geysen and Rae. If there is relevant evidence on efforts and prospects for future work it should be given by these individuals rather than in the second-hand, hearsay manner here attempted. Reduced to its essence this is speculation and argument, not evidence.

30 An applicant seeking relief under the *CCAA* should be placing before the Court the best evidence available. Section 11.02(3) of the *CCAA* requires the applicant to satisfy the Court that circumstances exist that make the order sought appropriate. It is a concern to me that I have a number of affidavits from Ms. Twietmeyer but no affidavit on this application from Mr. Geysen, who is the President and General Manager of Vortex, and thus presumably the responsible person within the company who has the requisite personal knowledge.

31 Counsel for Vortex argues that I should have similar or enhanced concerns with respect to the affidavit evidence filed on behalf of Affinity and says I need to consider Ms. Spencer's affidavits with great care. I do not find reason for overall concern. While Ms. Spencer has expressed opinions or beliefs with regard to the impact on the viability of Vortex given Mr. Big Eagle is no longer on the Board or the Chief Executive Officer of Vortex, I have not relied on that evidence for the decisions I have made.

32 Ms. Spencer's affidavits make it clear that she has had day-to-day responsibility for administration of Affinity's account relating to Vortex and that she has conducted a detailed review of the books, records, files and correspondence of Affinity relating to that account. To the extent to which she provides factual evidence based upon the knowledge of the

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books, records, files and correspondence of Affinity, I find the factual evidence provided by Ms. Spencer in her affidavits to be appropriate and reliable. To the extent to which she engaged in measures of speculation, argument or providing evidence that she did not have personal knowledge of, I have not relied on such evidence.

ii. Good Faith Considerations in CCAA Applications

33 I find on the basis of the evidence before me that there have been elements of bad faith in Vortex's dealings with Affinity. Vortex had, arising from both the nature of their relationship and by virtue of express contractual provisions, an obligation to provide complete and accurate financial information to Affinity and to not hide or misrepresent matters relevant to their relationship. Good faith of the applicant is a baseline consideration for a Court when considering *CCAA* applications.

34 As of June 20, 2017, with Affinity's receivership application before this Court, but adjourned while the parties were negotiating a potential forbearance agreement, Vortex represented to Radius Credit Union (a member of the Affinity lending syndicate and independently providing an operating line of credit to Vortex) it had no accounts payable. This it did by writing cheques purporting to pay various accounts payable, but then holding those cheques totalling some $235,548 and not delivering them to the payees. This accounting fiction that accounts payable had been paid was used by Vortex to access, under the Radius margining formula, some $121,000 in operating credits that would not have been available had the facts been accurately disclosed. I find this to be a breach of Vortex's contractual covenants to Affinity to provide honest and accurate financial information to Affinity notwithstanding that the misrepresentation was made to Radius in the first instance. Given the circumstances and Affinity's concerns with respect to Vortex's financial position, this action was a failure to act in good faith. It only came to light by reason of investigations by the Interim Receiver.

35 In a June 30, 2016 revision to the Credit Agreement, which allowed Vortex's request to pay interest only from July through November, Vortex agreed that any financial settlement with one Harvey Turcotte would be funded from outside sources and not from Vortex's cash flow. Notwithstanding this agreement, in February of 2017 Vortex made a payment of $525,000 to Harvey Turcotte from its cash flow in breach of this agreement. This fact was not disclosed by Vortex to Affinity and only came to light by reason of investigations by the Interim Receiver. This I find to be a failure on the part of Vortex to act in good faith.

iii. Is CCAA Relief Appropriate or the Appointment of a Receiver Just and Convenient?

36 On the basis of the totality of the evidence before me, I have concluded that it is not appropriate to make an initial order nor grant a stay of proceedings as requested by Vortex in its *CCAA* application. For reasons that overlap, I find it is just and convenient that a Receiver be appointed. I am assisted in these findings by the information provided in the Interim Receiver's reports. In particular I note the Interim Receiver's statements in his July 18, 2017 report, that:

a. Vortex is not contemplating any debt payment to be made to Affinity during the period July 17, 2017 to September 24, 2017 (para. 39); and

b. "Vortex would not have been able to manage its cash flow needs from ongoing operations without the injection of the July 7, 2017 payroll funded by the Interim Receiver." (para. 41).

37 Vortex bears the burden of satisfying me that the relief they seek is appropriate in the circumstances. I am fully alive to the consequences that appointing a receiver may have upon Vortex's employees, unsecured creditors, shareholders and business associates. However, the evidence satisfies me that:

a. The prospect of Vortex finding a lender to refinance it, at the level required to satisfy all of the indebtedness to Affinity and other creditors without significant equity injections by the shareholders, is remote or non-existent.

b. The shareholders of Vortex have demonstrated over the last 2 1/2 years that they are not prepared to invest further monies in Vortex. While Vortex says it has interest from other lenders in refinancing it, Vortex has chosen not to share with Affinity and the Court the details of such refinancing proposals. In the circumstances I am unable to give weight to

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suggestions that there are real prospects of refinancing that do not involve either substantial write-off of current indebtedness or the injection of significant additional equity.

c. Vortex has long known that Affinity wanted additional capital injection to the company. Vortex has, given the accommodations Affinity provided over the last two years, had ample opportunity to pursue alternate financing. At a minimum they have since May 1, 2017 had the knowledge that the need for alternate financing was immediate.

d. Two years of financial statements of Vortex establishes that, given the day rates for drilling rigs and the work available, it is unviable at its current debt levels. To the extent Vortex has been able to generate revenue, that revenue has barely covered, and during some periods not covered, the variable costs of operating those rigs, much less making a contribution to fixed costs. Vortex is currently in breach of its statutory obligation to pay employee withholdings to Canada Revenue Agency.

e. While Vortex argues that the economic prospects are improving, there is no credible evidence provided to support that argument. Rather the evidence is that since 2014 the day rate paid for drilling rigs has been reduced to less than one half of their previous levels and even at these rates Vortex is unable to find work that does more than partially utilize its rigs.

f. Oil prices remain below $50.00 per barrel, and Vortex has provided no evidence to support a conclusion that drill utilization rates or daily charges can or will improve beyond the rates experienced over the last 2 1/2 years. No statistical evidence has been provided that establishes the number of rigs available in Western Canada and their current utilization rates nor economic forecasts or analysis that demonstrates that those utilization rates or the presently available day rates for such rigs will increase.

g. If alternate or takeout financing is not available, then the only other justification for an initial order and stay would be to provide time to Vortex to negotiate a compromise agreement between Vortex and its creditors, secured and unsecured. Affinity is the only secured creditor, and it has made it clear that it is not prepared to compromise its debts. Affinity cannot be criticized for such a position. Indeed the members of Affinity would have good reason to criticize Affinity management were they to compromise a debt which it has reasonable prospects to fully recover.

h. Affinity's position is that they have lost confidence in and no longer trust Vortex. This position is reasonable given that Vortex has repeatedly over the last two years failed to meet its commitments to make balloon payments or to resume regular payments coupled with the concerns with respect to Vortex's good faith discussed above.

i. While Vortex argues Affinity is not only fully secured, but has a significant cushion of security such that Affinity would suffer no prejudice by permitting Vortex to pursue *CCAA* relief, that argument is but one of many considerations to weigh. It does not weigh heavily given the absence of admissible and credible evidence as to the value of Affinity's security and my common sense conclusion, given the utilization rates and day rates available to Vortex, that the present value of these rigs is a matter of significant uncertainty.

j. Continued operation of the rigs carries with it the consequence that to some greater or lesser extent the value of the rigs will continue to physically depreciate independent from market forces related to the depressed state of the Western Canadian oil industry or that may result from the introduction of new technologies in drilling rigs and practices.

k. If Vortex were granted *CCAA* protection, Affinity would effectively bears the risks and costs associated with that action since, with the exception of the relatively insignificant dollar amount owed to unsecured creditors (some $193,000), Affinity is the only creditor. If Vortex were given *CCAA* protection then, under the usual DIP financing protocols of *CCAA* protection, costs arising from the continuing operation of Vortex that are in excess of its revenue, including the costs of the Monitor and its legal counsel, will effectively be borne by the security Affinity holds. The Pre-Filing Report of the Proposed Monitor contemplates approval of up to $1,000,000 in DIP financing for the proposed 13-week cash flow period which includes $500,000 in professional fees. Such DIP financing would, of course, assume a super priority position over the secured financing of Affinity. Thus the risks associated with *CCAA* protection are effectively borne by Affinity and the unsecured lenders if the security cushion suggested by Vortex turns out not to exist.

38 The contractual agreement between Affinity and Vortex clearly contemplated loans payable on demand, with specified

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principal and interest payments before demand. Affinity has provided significant relief from the contractual terms over a two-year period. In a practical sense, Affinity has already effectively provided Vortex with much of the remedial opportunity contemplated by the *CCAA*. Vortex has had the benefit of two years of debt repayment accommodations and forbearance and the opportunity to seek alternate financing. During this period Vortex has failed to honour undertakings it gave in exchange of the deferral relief provided. Affinity is contractually entitled, following its demand, to either seize and sell the rigs or to have a Receiver appointed. Having regard to the relevant factors I outlined in paragraph 19 above, I conclude that it is just and convenient to appoint a Receiver as sought by Affinity.

iv. Other Considerations

39 Affinity argued that there was a concluded agreement in which Vortex had agreed to consent to the appointment of a Receiver. Vortex disputes that such an agreement was concluded and took exception to evidence Affinity wished to rely on as being without prejudice communications. In light of the conclusions I have reached above, I do not find it necessary to address these arguments and the related argument relating to settlement privilege. My decision is made without regard to the evidence and argument submitted surrounding these issues.

Conclusion

40 For the reasons set forth above:

a. I dismiss Vortex's application for relief under the *CCAA*.

b. I order that Deloitte Restructuring Inc. be appointed Receiver of Vortex effective immediately.

c. I contemplate that the form of that order will be substantially in the form of the draft order filed by counsel for Affinity on July 6, 2017. However, at the hearing of the applications counsel for Affinity and Vortex asked that the final form of the order not be settled until after counsel had reviewed my decision and had discussion on the final form of order. I ask counsel to consult promptly. If they are able to agree on the form of order they shall file same for my approval. If they cannot agree on the form of the order, a conference call with me shall be arranged to settle this matter.

c. I approve the actions of the Interim Receiver since the date of appointment as Interim Receiver to the termination of that order.

Plaintiff's application granted; defendant's application dismissed.

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2020 SKQB 19
Saskatchewan Court of Queen's Bench

Pillar Capital Corp. v. Harmon International Industries Inc.

2020 CarswellSask 34, 2020 SKQB 19, 314 A.C.W.S. (3d) 470

PILLAR CAPITAL CORP. (APPLICANT) and HARMON INTERNATIONAL INDUSTRIES INC. (RESPONDENT)

R.W. Elson J.

Judgment: January 22, 2020
Docket: Saskatoon QBG 1401/19

Counsel: Michael J. Russell, Kevin N. Hoy, for Applicant
Jared D. Epp, for Respondent

Subject: Corporate and Commercial; Evidence; Insolvency

Related Abridgment Classifications

Bankruptcy and insolvency
IV Receivers
IV.1 Appointment

Headnote

Bankruptcy and insolvency --- Receivers — Appointment
Respondent debtor had been engaged in manufacture of various equipment, it had carried on business for almost 30 years, but it stopped operating as going concern — Applicant creditor specialized in providing short-term loans for companies that required non-traditional debt financing, and it advanced secured loan of $3.3 million to debtor — Debtor defaulted on its payments, and it owed funds exceeding $3.7 million to creditor — Creditor applied for appointment of receiver of all of assets and properties of debtor pursuant to s. 243 of Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act (BIA) — Application granted — Debtor was insolvent person within meaning of s. 2 of BIA — There was more than enough evidence to establish insolvency through circumstances listed in ss. 2(a) and (b) of BIA, being unable to meet obligations as they generally became due, and ceasing to pay current obligations in ordinary course of business as they generally became due — Debtor's failure to pay creditor or to meet its property tax obligations was sufficient to establish insolvency — It was both just and convenient for court to appoint receiver — Most of relevant factors favoured court appointment of receiver — Given that debtor had not carried on active business for some time, with no stated intention of doing so, balance of convenience clearly favoured granting application — Nature and condition of property, appropriately described as "catastrophe of asset", factored heavily in favour of court-appointed receiver in preference to one appointed under security agreement.

Table of Authorities

Cases considered by *R.W. Elson J.*:

Affinity Credit Union 2013 v. Vortex Drilling Ltd. (2017), 2017 SKQB 228, 2017 CarswellSask 399, 50 C.B.R. (6th) 220, 7 P.P.S.A.C. (4th) 195 (Sask. Q.B.) — considered

Bank of Montreal v. Carnival National Leasing Ltd. (2011), 2011 ONSC 1007, 2011 CarswellOnt 896, 74 C.B.R. (5th)

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300 (Ont. S.C.J.) — considered

Bank of Nova Scotia v. Freure Village on Clair Creek (1996), 40 C.B.R. (3d) 274, 1996 CarswellOnt 2328 (Ont. Gen. Div. [Commercial List]) — considered

Golden Opportunities Fund Inc. v. Phenomenome Discoveries Inc. (February 25, 2016), Doc. Saskatoon QB 1639/15 (Sask. Q.B.) — considered

Kasten Energy Inc. v. Shamrock Oil & Gas Ltd. (2013), 2013 ABQB 63, 2013 CarswellAlta 153, 20 P.P.S.A.C. (3d) 128, 99 C.B.R. (5th) 178, 76 Alta. L.R. (5th) 407, 555 A.R. 305 (Alta. Q.B.) — considered

Swiss Bank Corp. (Canada) v. Odyssey Industries Inc. (1995), 30 C.B.R. (3d) 49, 1995 CarswellOnt 39 (Ont. Gen. Div. [Commercial List]) — referred to

Statutes considered:

Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. B-3
Generally — referred to

s. 2 "insolvent person" — considered

s. 2 "person" — considered

s. 243 — considered

s. 244(1) — considered

APPLICATION by creditor for appointment of receiver of all of assets and properties of debtor.

***R.W. Elson J.*:**

Introduction

1 In a brief fiat, dated January 16, 2020, I directed the issue of an order for the appointment of a receiver of all assets, undertakings and property of Harmon International Industries Inc. [Harmon]. In that fiat, I stated that reasons would follow in a published decision. This fiat contains those reasons.

2 Harmon is a Saskatoon company that has been engaged in the manufacture of various equipment, including light agricultural equipment. It stopped operating as a going concern on an undisclosed date, in late 2018 or early 2019. Before that, it had carried on business for almost 30 years.

3 Pillar Capital Corp. [Pillar] is a company specializing in providing short/medium-term loans for companies that require "non-traditional debt financing". Pillar advanced a secured loan of $3.3 million to Harmon in the summer of 2018. Harmon defaulted on its payment against the debt. It now finds itself owing in excess of $3.7 million to Pillar.

4 Pillar applies to this Court for the appointment of a receiver of all of the assets and properties of Harmon under s. 243 of the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act*, RSC 1985, c B-3 [*BIA*].

5 For the reasons that follow, I am satisfied that: 1) Harmon is insolvent; and 2) it is both just and convenient for the Court to make the appointment requested.

Background Facts

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6 The facts relating to this application are drawn from a considerable volume of affidavit evidence and exhibits to those affidavits. The affidavit material includes two affidavits from Steven Dizep, Pillar's president, and three affidavits from Calvin Moneo, one of Harmon's principal officers.

7 Harmon was incorporated in 1989. It carried on its manufacturing operations from the date of incorporation until its decision to cease operations, altogether. Its facilities and equipment have been idle since that time.

8 Prior to its financing arrangement with Pillar, Harmon appears to have been experiencing debt and cash flow issues. In the summer of 2018, it decided it would consolidate its existing debt. To that end, it approached Pillar through a brokerage to explore refinancing possibilities. According to Mr. Dizep, Harmon had existing mortgages on six parcels of real property, in Saskatoon's north industrial district. The addresses of the land, consisting of almost seven acres, are at 2401 Millar Avenue and 821 - 47th Street East. Harmon told Pillar that the requested loan was to serve as bridge financing to pay out the existing mortgages. In turn, Harmon planned to sell all six parcels of land in order to extinguish any remaining debt then in place.

9 Pillar agreed to provide the financing. Under a loan agreement, dated July 10, 2018, Pillar made available to Harmon a 12-month term facility in the maximum principal amount of $3.3 million. As consideration for the loan, Harmon executed a promissory note in favour of Pillar for the principal amount under the loan agreement plus interest.

10 In further support of the loan agreement, Harmon granted security to Pillar under the following documents, all dated July 26, 2018:

a. a general security agreement, covering all present and after-acquired personal property of Harmon;

b. a collateral mortgage, over the six parcels of the land; and

c. a general assignment of rents in regard to the six parcels of land.

11 The general security agreement provides Pillar with the right to pursue specific remedies in the event of Harmon's default. One such remedy, set out in para. 13(a), is the right to appoint a receiver by way of an instrument in writing. Subject to the provisions of the appointing instrument, para. 13(a) recognizes that the extra-judicially appointed receiver possesses broad powers, including: 1) taking possession of the collateral; 2) preserving the collateral or its value; 3) carrying on or concur in carrying on all or any part of Harmon's business; and 4) selling, leasing, licensing or otherwise disposing of the collateral, or concurring in same.

12 Pillar also received security from Harmon's two principals, being Mr. Moneo and his brother, Victor. The Court was advised that no steps are being taken, in this particular application, against that security. Accordingly, it is not necessary to describe the particulars of that security in this decision.

13 The evidence shows that Pillar advanced to Harmon the full principal amount of the loan on August 10, 2018. Following the advance, Harmon made monthly payments, in accordance with the loan agreement, up to and including the month of April 2019. The monthly payment due on May 31, 2019 was not paid until June 14, 2019. Since then, Harmon has failed to make any payments to Pillar as they became due.

14 By letter, dated August 19, 2019, Pillar's counsel wrote to Harmon and the other entities from whom security and/or guarantees had been provided, giving notice of the default and demanding payment of the outstanding indebtedness. According to the letter, the indebtedness under the loan agreement amounted to $3,430,483.52 as at July 10, 2018. The letter further noted that, pursuant to the loan agreement, interest was accruing on the outstanding amount at $1,678.50 per day. The notices, provided under cover of counsel's letter, included the notice of intention to enforce security pursuant to s. 244(1) of the *BIA*.

15 Following the provision of the ten-day notice, Pillar endeavoured to facilitate the conclusion of an agreement between

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itself, Harmon, and a third-party auctioneer for the purpose of arranging for the voluntary liquidation of Harmon's personal property by way of auction. Notwithstanding Pillar's efforts to reach an agreement, no such contract was entered into and discussion concerning the voluntary liquidation of Harmon's assets have since broken down.

16 The Court received oral submissions on this application in two separate hearings, one on October 8, 2019 and the other on January 10, 2020. When the application was filed in advance of the first hearing, Pillar expressed serious concern for the protection of its security. Pillar grounded its concerns on two circumstances. First, it presented considerable evidence that Harmon had neglected the buildings, equipment and inventory. The evidence included photographs which showed considerable clutter as well as disrepair of Harmon's two buildings.

17 The second circumstance reflected, in Pillar's view, a much more urgent worry. In this regard, Pillar informed the Court that Harmon had accrued considerable arrears in its utility payments. This circumstance presented the real risk that the power and natural gas for its buildings would be shut off.

18 By the date of the first hearing, this second circumstance became less worrisome. The Court was advised that, since the affidavit evidence was filed, Harmon had covered the utility payments. While Pillar continued to seek the appointment of a receiver, the risk to its security was not as dire as it was at the time the application was filed.

19 Further, a few hours before the first hearing, the Court received an affidavit from Mr. Moneo. Aside from confirming the utility payments, Mr. Moneo deposed to the efforts he and his brother were taking to sell the parcels of land. He also exhibited an appraisal report, dated August 28, 2017, prepared by Brunsdon Lawrek & Associates [Brunsdon]. That report appraised the value of the five parcels of land, specifically located at 2401 Millar Avenue, at $5.5 million.

20 In addition to the Brunsdon report, Mr. Moneo also exhibited a valuation opinion by the commercial realtors with whom Harmon had listed the same five parcels. That valuation, dated September 4, 2018, was estimated at $5,125,000. The Court also learned that the land is for sale at a list price of $5,290,000.

21 Relying substantially on Mr. Moneo's evidence, Harmon vigorously argued that the court appointment of a receiver was premature. Aside from the absence of any immediate risk to Pillar's security, Harmon relied heavily on the prospect that it could pay out the debt in full if the land sold at a value approximating the valuations it had received.

22 After the October hearing, I wrote a short fiat in which I adjourned Pillar's application to January 10, 2020. In doing so, I concluded that it was "fair, just and convenient" to give the dispute between the parties more time to sort out. In particular, I felt that the additional time might allow Harmon and its officers the opportunity to show how serious they were in addressing all of Pillar's concerns and, in particular, paying down the indebtedness.

23 Unfortunately, when this application returned to court in the New Year, little had changed. The additional affidavit evidence, presented for the second hearing, disclosed that the indebtedness had increased to in excess of $3.7 million, as of January 6, 2020, with interest accruing at $1,835.55 per day. In the meantime, property taxes, which were in arrears at the time of the October hearing, remain unpaid and continue to accrue. The Court learned that the total tax arrears for both addresses now exceeds $100,000.

24 The Court also received more illuminating evidence on the value of the land that Harmon "purportedly" intends to sell. First, Pillar obtained an appraisal report from its own appraisers, Suncorp Valuations [Suncorp]. This appraisal, for the same five parcels of land described in the Brunsdon report, values the property within a range of $3.43 million to $3.65 million. Notably, Suncorp stipulates that its appraisal is based on "extraordinary assumptions". These assumptions are: 1) that the assessment of "deferred maintenance" issues presented to Suncorp are accurate; and 2) that the areas of the building unavailable to Suncorp during the site visit are of a similar condition to the remainder of the building. The author of the report took care in pointing out that the assumptions are "extraordinary" because they pertain to matters for which the appraiser did not have specialized knowledge or training, such as matters relating to the structural integrity of the building.

25 As a footnote to this report, it should be noted that Harmon's principals were less than cooperative in providing Suncorp access to the Millar Avenue property. Despite representations that the appraiser would be accommodated at an earlier time, access was not permitted until January 6, 2020, leaving little time before the matter returned to court.

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26 As for efforts to sell the land, Harmon showed no interest or movement in this direction, at all. Specifically, the Court heard that Harmon maintained the list price of $5.295 million in place since the listing was issued. Secondly, and somewhat interestingly, the Court also received affidavit evidence from the commercial realtors with the listing of the land at 2401 Millar Avenue. One of the agents confirmed that he had provided Mr. Moneo with the market valuation he described in his earlier affidavit. The agent deposed that the valuation was based on an assumption that the interior of the industrial facility on the property was in a usable condition. Based on his personal inspection since that time, the realtor is of the view that the $5,125,000 list price is excessive. The realtor also deposed that, at Harmon's instruction, the listing agreement provided for a price of $5,290,000. He said that, in the course of the realtor's engagement with Harmon, he verbally advised Mr. Moneo that the list price was too high and should be reduced. Despite this advice, no such reduction was authorized.

27 In passing, I should also note that, in his most recent affidavit, Mr. Moneo expressed some umbrage at the fact that Harmon's realtors deposed affidavit evidence in support of Pillar. He also said that Harmon intends to change listing agents and reduce the list price to $4.5 million as soon as a new listing agent is retained.

Relevant Legislation

28 This application engages Part XI of the *BIA*, specifically s. 243, which reads as follows:

> **243(1)** Subject to subsection (1.1), on application by a secured creditor, a court may appoint a receiver to do any or all of the following if it considers it to be just or convenient to do so:
>
> > (a) take possession of all or substantially all of the inventory, accounts receivable or other property of an insolvent person or bankrupt that was acquired for or used in relation to a business carried on by the insolvent person or bankrupt;
> >
> > (b) exercise any control that the court considers advisable over that property and over the insolvent person's or bankrupt's business; or
> >
> > (c) take any other action that the court considers advisable.
>
> **(1.1)** In the case of an insolvent person in respect of whose property a notice is to be sent under subsection 244(1), the court may not appoint a receiver under subsection (1) before the expiry of 10 days after the day on which the secured creditor sends the notice unless
>
> > (a) the insolvent person consents to an earlier enforcement under subsection 244(2); or
> >
> > (b) the court considers it appropriate to appoint a receiver before then.
>
> **(2)** Subject to subsections (3) and (4), in this Part, **"receiver"** means a person who
>
> > (a) is appointed under subsection (1); or
> >
> > (b) is appointed to take or takes possession or control — of all or substantially all of the inventory, accounts receivable or other property of an insolvent person or bankrupt that was acquired for or used in relation to a business carried on by the insolvent person or bankrupt — under
> >
> > > (i) an agreement under which property becomes subject to a security (in this Part referred to as a "security agreement"), or
> > >
> > > (ii) a court order made under another Act of Parliament, or an Act of a legislature of a province, that provides for or authorizes the appointment of a receiver or receiver-manager.

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(3) For the purposes of subsection 248(2), the definition “receiver” in subsection (2) is to be read without reference to paragraph (a) or subparagraph (b)(ii).

(4) Only a trustee may be appointed under subsection (1) or under an agreement or order referred to in paragraph (2)(b).

(5) The application is to be filed in a court having jurisdiction in the judicial district of the locality of the debtor.

(6) If a receiver is appointed under subsection (1), the court may make any order respecting the payment of fees and disbursements of the receiver that it considers proper, including one that gives the receiver a charge, ranking ahead of any or all of the secured creditors, over all or part of the property of the insolvent person or bankrupt in respect of the receiver’s claim for fees or disbursements, but the court may not make the order unless it is satisfied that the secured creditors who would be materially affected by the order were given reasonable notice and an opportunity to make representations.

(7) In subsection (6), **”disbursements”** does not include payments made in the operation of a business of the insolvent person or bankrupt.

29 This application also engages two specific definitions in s. 2 of the *BIA*. They are the definitions of the word “person” and the phrase “insolvent person”, which read as follows:

2. In this Act

. . .

”person” includes a partnership, an unincorporated association, a corporation, a cooperative society or a cooperative organization, the successors of a partnership, of an association, of a corporation, of a society or of an organization and the heirs, executors, liquidators of the succession, administrators or other legal representatives of a person;

. . .

”insolvent person” means a person who is not bankrupt and who resides, carries on business or has property in Canada, whose liabilities to creditors provable as claims under this Act amount to one thousand dollars, and

(a) who is for any reason unable to meet his obligations as they generally become due,

(b) who has ceased paying his current obligations in the ordinary course of business as they generally become due, or

(c) the aggregate of whose property is not, at a fair valuation, sufficient, or, if disposed of at a fairly conducted sale under legal process, would not be sufficient to enable payment of all his obligations, due and accruing due;

Issues

30 There are two issues for the Court to determine in this application. They are:

a. Is Harmon an insolvent person within the meaning of the *BIA*?

b. If Harmon is insolvent, is it just or convenient for the Court to appoint a receiver over its property, assets, and undertakings of Harmon?

Law

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Insolvent Person

31 The Court's authority to appoint a receiver under s. 243 first depends on a finding that the subject debtor is either a "bankrupt" or an "insolvent person" within the meaning of the respective definitions set out in s. 2. As Harmon is obviously not a bankrupt, the question is whether it is an insolvent person.

32 The definition of an "insolvent person" in s. 2 contains three discrete circumstances. As the list of these circumstances is worded disjunctively, the applicant need only establish that the debtor fits within one listed circumstance. Consequently, a debtor, who has ceased to meet its obligations as they generally became due, as described in subparagraph (a), is insolvent even if the aggregate value of the debtor's property is sufficient to pay out all the debtor's obligations.

33 In the present case, there has been an arguable dispute about the value of Harmon's property, and whether that value was sufficient for it to pay out all its obligations, and its obligation to Pillar, in particular. While the evidence in the most recent affidavits raises considerable doubt about the present state of the earlier property valuations, I am satisfied that there is more than enough evidence to establish insolvency through the circumstances listed in subparagraphs (a) and (b). Harmon's failure to pay Pillar, or to meet its property tax obligations, is sufficient to establish insolvency. Accordingly, I find that Harmon is an insolvent person within the meaning of s. 2 of the *BIA*.

Just or Convenient

34 Having found insolvency, the Court's authority to make the requested appointment depends on whether it is "just or convenient" for the Court to do so. The burden in this regard lies with the party seeking the appointment.

35 The jurisprudence relative to the "just or convenient" test is considerable. In *Affinity Credit Union 2013 v. Vortex Drilling Ltd.*, 2017 SKQB 228, 50 C.B.R. (6th) 220 (Sask. Q.B.) [*Vortex*], Scherman J. repeated his earlier summary of that jurisprudence from an unreported decision, *Golden Opportunities Fund Inc. v. Phenomenome Discoveries Inc.* (February 25, 2016), Doc. Saskatoon QB 1639/15 (Sask. Q.B.). In the summary, two notable authorities were referenced, namely, *Bank of Montreal v. Carnival National Leasing Ltd.*, 2011 ONSC 1007, 74 C.B.R. (5th) 300 (Ont. S.C.J.) [*Carnival*], and *Kasten Energy Inc. v. Shamrock Oil & Gas Ltd.*, 2013 ABQB 63, 99 C.B.R. (5th) 178 (Alta. Q.B.) [*Kasten*]. The summary is recited at para. 19 of the *Vortex* decision:

> . . .
>
> 5. Under s. 243(1) of the *BIA* this court can, on application of a secured creditor, appoint a receiver where it considers it just and convenient to do so. Instructive decisions on the factors relevant to the court's determination of whether it is "just and convenient" include *Bank of Montreal v. Carnival National Leasing Ltd*. 2011 ONSC 1007 *and Kasten Energy Inc. v. Shamrock Oil & Gas Ltd*. 2013 ABQB 63.
>
> 6. In Carnival the court said the following regarding the just and convenient criteria at para 24 of its reason:
>
> In *Bank of Nova Scotia v. Freure Village on Clair Creek* (1996), 40 C.B.R. (3d) 274 (Ont. Gen. Div. [Commercial List]), Blair J. (as he then was) dealt with a similar situation in which the bank held security that permitted the appointment of a private receiver or an application to court to have a court appointed receiver. He summarized the legal principles involved as follows:
>
>> 10 The Court has the power to appoint a receiver or receiver and manager where it is "just or convenient" to do so: the Courts of Justice Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. 43, s. 101. In deciding whether or not to do so, it must have regard to all of the circumstances but in particular the nature of the property and the rights and interests of all parties in relation thereto. The fact that the moving party has a right under its security to appoint a receiver is an important factor to be considered but so, in such circumstances, is the question of whether or not an appointment by the Court is necessary to enable the receiver-manager to carry out its work and duties more efficiently; see generally *Third Generation Realty Ltd. v. Twigg* (1991) 6 C.P.C. (3d) 366 at pages 372-374; *Confederation Trust Co. v. Dentbram*

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> *Developments Ltd*. (1992), 9 C.P.C. (3d) 399; *Royal Trust Corp. of Canada v. D.Q. Plaza Holdings Ltd*. (1984), 54 C.B.R. (N.S.) 18 at page 21. It is not essential that the moving party, a secured creditor, establish that it will suffer irreparable harm if a receiver-manager is not appointed: *Swiss Bank Corp. (Canada) v. Odyssey Industries Inc*. (1995), 30 C.B.R. (3d) 49.

7. In *Kasten* the court said the following:

> 13 Both parties agree that the factors that may be considered in making a determination whether it is just and convenient to appoint a Receiver are listed in a non-exhaustive manner in *Paragon Capital Corp. v. Merchants & Traders Assurance Co.*, 2002 ABQB 430 (Alta. Q.B.) at para 27, 316 A.R. 128 (Alta. Q.B.) [Paragon Capital], citing from Frank Bennett, Bennett on Receiverships, 2nd ed (Toronto: Thompson Canada Ltd, 1995) at 130] to include:
>
> > a) whether irreparable harm might be caused if no order were made, although it is not essential for a creditor to establish irreparable harm if a receiver is not appointed, particularly where the appointment of a receiver is authorized by the security documentation;
> >
> > b) the risk to the security holder taking into consideration the size of the debtor's equity in the assets and the need for protection or safeguarding of the assets while litigation takes place;
> >
> > c) the nature of the property;
> >
> > d) the apprehended or actual waste of the debtor's assets;
> >
> > e) the preservation and protection of the property pending judicial resolution;
> >
> > f) the balance of convenience to the parties;
> >
> > g) the fact that the creditor has the right to appoint a receiver under the documentation provided for the loan;
> >
> > h) the enforcement of rights under a security instrument where the security-holder encounters or expects to encounter difficulty with the debtor and others;
> >
> > i) the principle that the appointment of a receiver is extraordinary relief which should be granted cautiously and sparingly;
> >
> > j) the consideration of whether a court appointment is necessary to enable the receiver to carry out its' duties more efficiently;
> >
> > k) the effect of the order upon the parties;
> >
> > l) the conduct of the parties;
> >
> > m) the length of time that a receiver may be in place;
> >
> > n) the cost to the parties;
> >
> > o) the likelihood of maximizing return to the parties;
> >
> > p) the goal of facilitating the duties of the receiver.
>
> See also, *Lindsey Estate v. Strategic Metals Corp.*, 2010 ABQB 242 (Alta. Q.B.) at para 32, aff'd 2010 ABCA 191 (Alta. C.A.); and *Romspen Investment Corp. v. Hargate Properties Inc.*, 2011 ABQB 759 (Alta. Q.B.) at para 20.

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36 In the consideration of the non-exhaustive factors cited in *Kasten*, it is important to observe that, while the factors vary in their importance, no one factor is determinative. This includes the presence, or not, of irreparable harm to the applicant or the applicant's security. See *Swiss Bank Corp. (Canada) v. Odyssey Industries Inc.* (1995), 30 C.B.R. (3d) 49 (Ont. Gen. Div. [Commercial List]). By and large, courts have taken a contextual approach to the consideration of these factors. A court is expected to have consideration for all attendant circumstances, including the interests of all concerned, in the "just or convenient" analysis.

37 A question that often arises in the "just or convenient" analysis pertains to whether a court should appoint a receiver where the applicant's security provides for the private appointment of a receiver, as the security does in the present case. While the right to make such an appointment is a factor, the real inquiry is whether a court appointment is the "preferable" option — not the "essential" one. This point was also addressed in *Carnival*, where, at para. 27, Newbould J. recited the following passage from the decision of Blair J. in *Bank of Nova Scotia v. Freure Village on Clair Creek* (1996), 40 C.B.R. (3d) 274 (Ont. Gen. Div. [Commercial List]):

> **27** ...
>
> 12. While I accept the general notion that the appointment of a receiver is an extraordinary remedy, it seems to me that where the security instrument permits the appointment of a private receiver — and even contemplate, as this one does, the secured creditor seeking a court appointed receiver — and where the circumstances of default justify the appointment of a private receiver, the "extraordinary" nature of the remedy sought is less essential to the inquiry. Rather, the "just or convenient" question becomes one of the Court determining, in the exercise of its discretion, whether it is more in the interests of all concerned to have the receiver appointed by the Court or not. This, of course, involves an examination of all the circumstances which I have outlined earlier in this endorsement, including the potential costs, the relationship between the debtor and the creditors, the likelihood of maximizing the return on and preserving the subject property and the best way of facilitating the work and duties of the receiver-manager.

38 Turning to the application at bar, I am satisfied that it is both just and convenient that the requested application be granted. In my view, most of the factors identified in *Kasten* favour court appointment of a receiver. Given that Harmon has not carried on active business for some time, with no stated intention of doing so, the balance of convenience clearly favours the application.

39 More importantly, however, I am persuaded that the nature and condition of the property factors heavily in favour of a court appointed receiver — in preference to one appointed under the security agreement. It is now reasonably clear that the sanguine picture Mr. Moneo painted in his first affidavit does not bear up to the image now presented in the most recent evidence. In his most recent submission, Mr. Hoy described Harmon's property as a "catastrophe of an asset". As unfortunate as that description is, I am satisfied that it is apt.

Conclusion

40 In the result, the Court appoints Hardie & Kelly Inc. as receiver, without security, of all assets, undertakings and properties of Harmon. The order may issue in the form of the draft order filed by Pillar, subject to one modification. That modification, which counsel for Pillar agreed to in chambers, is the removal of the reference to the assets of Harmon's principals, Victor Moneo and Calvin Moneo, in para. 2 of the draft. In all other respects, the order may issue in the form of the draft.

41 In the event there are any matters related to the issuance of this order, or its terms, I shall consider myself seized with those matters.

Application granted.

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