

IN THE MATTER OF MASON MANAGEMENT d/b/a
STELLAR MANAGEMENT,

Respondent.

SUBSTANTIAL BASIS INVESTIGATION REPORT
AND SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT
Case No. 12-37

WHEREAS, the Joint Commission on Public Ethics ("Commission") is authorized by Executive Law §94 to conduct an investigation to determine whether a substantial basis exists to conclude that any violations of Article 1-A of the New York State Legislative Law (the "Lobbying Act") have occurred, to issue a report of its findings of fact and conclusions of law, and to impose penalties for any violation;

WHEREAS, on January 25, 2010, Mason Management d/b/a Stellar Management ("Respondent") became a client under the Lobbying Act when its lobbyist, Wilson, Elser, Moskowitz, Edelman & Dicker, LLP filed a Statement of Registration to lobby on behalf of the Respondent for the period January 25, 2010 through December 31, 2011;

WHEREAS, as a lobbying client in 2010 and 2011, Respondent is required to comply with the reporting requirements set forth in the Lobbying Act;

WHEREAS, Respondent was required to file with the Commission the 2010 July/December and 2011 January/June Client Semi-Annual Reports (the "Reports") by the statutory due dates;

WHEREAS, lobbyist, Wilson, Elser, Moskowitz, Edelman & Dicker, LLP fully complied with their filing obligations relating to lobbying activities on behalf of Respondent during the relevant period;

WHEREAS, on April 19, 2012, a letter was sent to Respondent alleging violations of the Lobbying Act which afforded the Respondent (fifteen) 15 days to respond; and no response was received;

WHEREAS, on May 14, 2012, the Commission issued a Notice of Substantial Basis Investigation;

WHEREAS, Respondent and the Commission, the parties to this Settlement Agreement ("Agreement") have agreed to resolve this matter in a manner that avoids additional administrative and/or adjudicatory proceedings;

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants made herein, as the final settlement of this matter, the parties stipulate and agree that:

1. Respondent admits it violated §1-j of the Lobbying Act by failing to file the Reports by the statutory due dates.
2. Respondent filed the outstanding Reports on October 7, 2013 and subsequently filed amendments to update its reports to reflect a change in entity name resulting in further required filings by IP Mortgage Borrower, LLC f/k/a WB Stellar IP Owner, which it completed in August 20, 2015.

3. Respondent agrees to pay to the Commission the amount of six thousand dollars (\$6,000) in settlement of said violation within thirty (30) days of the execution of this Agreement.
4. The Commission has agreed to the terms of this Agreement based on, among other things, the representations made to the Commission by Respondent. To the extent that representations made by Respondent are later found by the Commission to be materially incomplete or inaccurate, Respondent shall be in breach of this Agreement.
5. If the Respondent fails to timely perform any conditions set forth in the Agreement, Respondent shall be in breach of this Agreement.
6. Respondent agrees not to take any action or to make, permit to be made, authorize, or agree to any public statement denying, directly or indirectly, any finding in this Agreement or creating the impression that this Agreement is without factual basis. Nothing in this paragraph affects Respondent's: (a) testimonial obligations; or (b) right to take legal or factual positions in defense of litigation or other legal proceedings to which the Commission is not a party. A violation of this Paragraph constitutes a breach of this Agreement by Respondent.
7. Upon a breach of this Agreement, the Commission shall have sole discretion to deem the Agreement null and void in its entirety, issue a new Substantial Basis Investigation Report, which may include additional charges against Respondent, and proceed with an enforcement action. As to any new Substantial Basis Investigation Report or enforcement action by the Commission pursuant to this paragraph: (1) Respondent waives any claim that such action is time-barred by a statute of limitations or any other time-related defenses; and (2) Respondent expressly acknowledges and agrees that the Commission may use any statements herein, or any other statements, documents or materials produced or provided by Respondent prior to or after the date of this Agreement, including, but not limited to, any statements, documents, or materials, if any, provided for the purposes of settlement negotiations or in submissions by Respondent or by counsel on behalf of Respondent, in any proceeding against Respondent relating to the allegations herein.
8. Respondent shall upon request by the Commission, provide all documentation and information reasonably necessary for the Commission to verify compliance with this Agreement.
9. Respondent understands and acknowledges that the Commission may investigate any other conduct, not covered by this Agreement, by Respondent and take any appropriate action.
10. Respondent waives the right to assert any defenses or any challenges to this Agreement, as well as any right to appeal or challenge the determination or conduct of the Commission relating to this matter in any forum.
11. Respondent hereby waives any rights as provided in Section 1-o(c)(iii) of the Lobbying Act and may not assert such right at any future time.
12. This Agreement and any dispute related thereto shall be governed by the laws of the State of New York without regard to any conflict of laws principles.

13. Respondent consents to the jurisdiction of the Commission in any proceeding to enforce this Agreement.
14. It is understood that this Agreement is not confidential and will be made public within 45 days of its execution in accordance with Executive Law §§94(14) & (19).
15. This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties and supersedes any prior communication, understanding, or agreement, whether oral or written, concerning the subject matter of this Agreement. No representation, inducement, promise, understanding, condition or warranty not set forth in this Agreement has been relied upon by any party to this Agreement.
16. Any amendment or modification to this Agreement shall be in writing and signed by both parties.
17. This Agreement shall become effective upon execution by the Commission or its designee.
18. In the event that one or more provisions contained in this Agreement shall for any reason be held to be invalid, illegal, or unenforceable in any respect, such invalidity, illegality, or unenforceability shall not affect any other provision of this Agreement.
19. By signing below, Respondent acknowledges reading this Agreement in its entirety, understanding all terms and conditions of this Agreement, and having done so, knowingly, voluntarily, and freely enters into this Agreement.

Dated: October 22, 2015

Daniel J. Horwitz

Daniel J. Horwitz, Chairperson
New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics

ACCEPTED AND AGREED TO
THIS 5th DAY OF September, 2015

Respondent: ~~Mason Management~~ d/b/a Stellar Management

By: 

Name:

Title:

Approved:

Daniel J. Horwitz
Chair

David Arroyo
Hon. Joseph Covello
Marvin E. Jacob
Hon. Eileen Koretz
Hon. Mary Lou Rath
David A. Renzi
Michael A. Romeo, Sr.
Hon. Renee R. Roth
Michael K. Rozen
Dawn L. Smalls
George H. Weissman

Absent:

Seymour Knox, IV
Gary J. Lavine
Members