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13	UNITED STATES	DISTRICT COURT
14	CENTRAL DISTRIC	CT OF CALIFORNIA
15		
16	SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION,	Case No. 8:23-cv-00855-JWH-KES
17	Plaintiff,	MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES IN SUPPORT OF
18	ŕ	RECEIVER'S MOTION FOR AUTHORITY TO (A) ENGAGE
19	vs. INTEGRATED NATIONAL	LICENSED AUCTIONEERS AND DEALERS TO ASSIST IN SELLING
20	RESOURCES, INC. dba WEEDGENICS, ROLF MAX	PERSONAL PROPERTY, (B) SELL AUTOMOBILES, JEWELRY, AND
21 22	HIRSCHMANN aka "MAX BERGMANN," PATRICK EARL WILLIAMS,	OTHER PERSONAL PROPERTY OF THE RECEIVERSHIP ENTITIES, AND (C) ENGAGE BROKERS TO
23	Defendants, and	LIST REAL PROPERTIES FOR SALE
24	WEST COAST DEVELOPMENT LLC,	D
25	INR CONSULTING LLC (WYOMING ENTITY), OCEANS 19 INC.,	Date: October 27, 2023 Time: 9:00 a.m.
26	AUTOBAHN PERFORMANCE LLC, ONE CLICK GENERAL MEDIA INC.,	Ctrm: 9D Judge: Hon. John W. Holcomb
27	OPUS COLLECTIVE, JOHN ERIC FRANCOM, INR-CA INVESTMENT	
28	HOLDINGS, LLC, MICHAEL DELGADO, TOTAL SOLUTION CONSTRUCTION LLC. BAGPIPE	

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HOLDINGS LLC, BAGPIPE MULTIMEDIA LLC, TYLER CAMPBELL, INR CONSULTING LLC (CALIFORNIA ENTITY), HIDDEN SPRINGS HOLDINGS GROUP LLC, and ALEXANDRIA PORTER BOVEE aka "AIA MONTGOMERY", Relief Defendants. 

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Krista L. Freitag ("Receiver"), the Court-appointed permanent receiver for Defendant Integrated National Resources, Inc., dba Weedgenics, and Relief Defendants West Coast Development LLC, INR Consulting LLC (Wyoming Entity), Oceans 19 Inc., Autobahn Performance LLC, One Click General Media Inc., Opus Collective, INR-CA Investment Holdings, LLC, Total Solution Construction LLC, Bagpipe Holdings LLC, Bagpipe Multimedia LLC, INR Consulting LLC (California Entity), and Hidden Springs Holdings Group LLC, and their subsidiaries and affiliates (collectively the "Receivership Entities"), seeks authority to (a) engage licensed auctioneers and dealers, as deemed appropriate, (b) use such auctioneers/dealers to sell automobiles, jewelry, and other personal property owned by the Receivership Entities ("Personal Property"), and (c) engage licensed real estate brokers to list real properties owned by the Receivership Entities ("Real Properties") for sale, with such sales being subject to further Court approval.

#### I. <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

It is clear now that Integrated National Resources, Inc., dba Weedgenics ("INR") was a large Ponzi scheme that has caused millions of dollars in losses to hundreds of investors. The SEC filed voluminous evidence showing the fraud at the outset of the case, the Receiver's investigation and accounting to date confirms it, and Defendant Patrick Earl Williams ("Williams") has now admitted it (while Defendant Rolf Max Hirschmann aka Max Bergmann ("Hirschmann") has asserted his Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination). Therefore, the overarching objective for the receivership should be to maximize the recovery for defrauded investors.

Thus far, the Receiver has identified and asserted control of six real properties owned by the Receivership Entities, three of which she has possession of, two of which are occupied by Hirschmann and his family, and one of which is occupied by a purported tenant and "family friend" of Hirschmann named Loretta Cruz. With respect to Personal Property, the Receiver has thus far recovered 12 vehicles (all but

two of which are luxury vehicles and sportscars) and 13 watches and pieces of expensive jewelry. Two additional luxury BMW vehicles (along with the two real properties occupied by Hirschmann and his family) were required to be turned over by Hirschmann on or before September 20, 2023. Other vehicles and pieces of jewelry were identified and purchased by Defendant Hirschmann and Relief Defendant Michael Delgado ("Delgado") using funds raised from investors and have not yet been recovered. Hirschmann has stated that he gave some of these vehicles and pieces of jewelry to various women. Thus far, Delgado has not responded to inquiries relating to any vehicles or jewelry purchases. The Declaration of Krista Freitag filed herewith ("Freitag Decl."), ¶ 2.

The costs to hold, insure, and maintain the Real Properties are significant, as are the costs to securely store and insure the Personal Property. Holding the Real Properties and Personal Property has no benefit for defrauded investors. Therefore, the Receiver proposes to have the Personal Property sold by licensed, qualified auctioneers and/or dealers at commission rates that are competitive in their respective industries. With respect to the automobiles, the Receiver, with assistance from her staff, has been in contact with several luxury car dealers and auctioneers regarding different options for selling the cars (including different types of live and online auctions, as well as private sales) and the costs associated with each option. Similarly, with respect to the watches and jewelry, the Receiver, with assistance from her staff, has been in contact with several watch and jewelry dealers and auctioneers and has gathered information about different methods of selling the watches and jewelry, including auctions and private sales and the costs associated with each method. It may be deemed necessary to engage more than one dealer and/or auctioneers to sell the cars and more than one to sell the watches and jewelry,

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Hirschmann filed an ex parte application to extend the September 20, 2023 deadline, which application was opposed by the SEC and the Receiver, and was denied by the Court. Dkt. 160.

depending on the nature of the assets, their potential value, and the market for them.

2 The Receiver requests authority to do so in her business judgment and at

commission rates competitive in the dealer/auctioneer/broker industry and will use

her experience in selling personal property to obtain the highest and best net

recovery from all personal property assets. Freitag Decl., ¶ 3.

For the Real Properties, the Receiver proposes to have the properties listed for sale and marketed by licensed real estate brokers with relevant experience in the respective markets in which the properties are located. The Receiver will use her business judgment in selecting brokers and negotiating fees and commissions. Then, as required by statute, the Receiver will seek Court approval of each sale, including the fees and commissions to be paid to the broker in connection with such sale. Freitag Decl., ¶ 8.

# II. ENGAGEMENT OF DEALERS/AUCTIONEERS AND PERSONAL PROPERTY SALES

From her more than 20 years in the receivership industry, the Receiver has extensive experience in selling personal property assets of all kinds. Freitag Decl., ¶ 4. With assistance from her staff, she has and will continue to gather information and rates from multiple dealers and auctioneers with knowledge and experience in the luxury and exotic automobile industry, as well as dealers and auctioneers with knowledge and experience in the watch and jewelry industry. Using this information, the Receiver will identify the best approach for selling each asset on terms which maximize exposure of each asset to likely buyers and minimize fees and costs. Freitag Decl., ¶ 5, 6.

With respect to the automobiles, the Receiver has already gathered information on sales approaches, including live auctions, online auctions, and private sales, from four different luxury and exotic dealers and auctioneers. The Receiver has also gathered information from these dealers and auctioneers about their fees and commissions. The Receiver will use her business judgment to select

the best sale option(s) and negotiate the best rates in terms of dealer/auctioneer fees and commissions. Freitag Decl., ¶ 5.

Similarly, with respect to the watches and jewelry, the Receiver has already gathered information on various sales approaches, including live auctions, online auctions, and private sales. The Receiver, with assistance from her staff, is in the process of gathering information from multiple dealers and auctioneers about their fees and commissions. As with the automobiles, the Receiver will use her business judgment to select the best sale option(s) and negotiate the best rates in terms of dealer/auctioneer fees and commissions. Freitag Decl., ¶ 6.

With respect to sales, the Receiver will likewise use her business judgment to carefully consider all offers, negotiate sale prices, and finalize sale terms. Having these sales authorized by the Court in advance (as opposed to returning to Court for approval of each sale) is critically important because delaying sales of cars, jewelry, and other Personal Property for 45-60 days in order to seek Court approval of each sale would significantly limit the market for the assets and could substantially impair sale prices. Freitag Decl., ¶ 7.

### III. ENGAGEMENT OF LICENSED REAL ESTATE BROKERS

The Receiver also has extensive experience in selling real property of all kinds based on her over 20 years of experience in the receivership industry. She also has a California-licensed real estate broker on her staff with extensive knowledge regarding real property sales. Freitag Decl., ¶ 4.

Here, the Real Properties are located in the Boise, Idaho area, Las Vegas, Nevada, and Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The Receiver has been and will continue to gather information about the market for each property, comparable sales and other market data, and will consult with multiple licensed brokers with knowledge and experience in each specific market. As noted above, the Receiver will use her business judgment in selecting the broker for each Real Property and in negotiating fees and commissions. Then, as required by statute (28 U.S.C. § 2001) and as

further discussed below, the Receiver will seek Court approval of each sale, including the fees and commissions to be paid to the broker in connection with such sale. Freitag Decl., ¶ 8. IV. **ARGUMENT** "The power of a district court to impose a receivership or grant other forms of ancillary relief does not in the first instance depend on a statutory grant of power from the securities laws. Rather, the authority derives from the inherent power of a court of equity to fashion effective relief." SEC v. Wencke, 622 F.2d 1363, 1369 (9th Cir. 1980). The "primary purpose of equity receiverships is to promote orderly and efficient administration of the estate by the district court for the benefit of creditors." SEC v. Hardy, 803 F.2d 1034, 1038 (9th Cir 1986). As the appointment of a receiver is authorized by the broad equitable powers of the court, any distribution of assets must also be done equitably and fairly. See SEC v. Elliot, 953 F.2d 1560, 1569 (11th Cir. 1992). District courts have the broad power of a court of equity to determine the appropriate action in the administration and supervision of an equity receivership. See SEC v. Capital Consultants, LLC, 397 F.3d 733, 738 (9th Cir. 2005). The Ninth Circuit explained: A district court's power to supervise an equity receivership and to determine the appropriate action to be taken in the administration of the receivership is extremely broad. The district court has broad powers and wide discretion to determine the appropriate relief in an equity receivership. The basis for this broad deference to the district court's supervisory role in equity receiverships arises out of the fact that most receiverships involve multiple parties and complex transactions. A district court's decision concerning the supervision of an equitable receivership is reviewed for abuse of discretion. Id. (citations omitted); see also Commodities Futures Trading Comm'n. v. Topworth Int'l, Ltd., 205 F.3d 1107, 1115 (9th Cir. 1999) ("This court affords 'broad

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deference' to the court's supervisory role, and 'we generally uphold reasonable

procedures instituted by the district court that serve th[e] purpose' of orderly and efficient administration of the receivership for the benefit of creditors.").

Accordingly, this Court has broad equitable powers and discretion in formulating procedures, schedules and guidelines for administration of the receivership estate and disposition of receivership assets.

#### A. The Court Has Authority to Authorize Sales of Personal Property

It is generally conceded that a court of equity having custody and control of property has power to order a sale of the same in its discretion. *See, e.g., Elliott, supra*, 953 F.2d at 1566 (finding that the District Court has broad powers and wide discretion to determine relief in an equity receivership). "The power of sale necessarily follows the power to take possession and control of and to preserve property." *See also SEC v. American Capital Invest., Inc.*, 98 F.3d 1133, 1144 (9th Cir. 1996), *cert. denied* 520 U.S. 1185 (decision abrogated on other grounds) (*citing* 2 Ralph Ewing Clark, *Treatise on Law & Practice of Receivers* § 482 (3d ed. 1992) (citing *First Nat'l Bank v. Shedd*, 121 U.S. 74, 87 (1887)). "When a court of equity orders property in its custody to be sold, the court itself as vendor confirms the title in the purchaser." 2 Ralph Ewing Clark, *Treatise on Law and Practice of Receivers* § 487).

"A court of equity, under proper circumstances, has the power to order a receiver to sell property free and clear of all encumbrances." *Miners' Bank of Wilkes-Barre v. Acker*, 66 F.2d 850, 853 (2d Cir. 1933). *See also*, 2 Ralph Ewing Clark, *Treatise on Law & Practice of Receivers* § 500. To that end, a federal court is not limited or deprived of any of its equity powers by state statute. *Beet Growers Sugar Co. v. Columbia Trust Co.*, 3 F.2d 755, 757 (9th Cir. 1925) (state statute allowing time to redeem property after a foreclosure sale not applicable in a receivership sale).

Generally, when a court-appointed receiver is involved, the receiver, as agent for the court, should conduct the sale of the receivership property. *Blakely Airport* 

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Joint Venture II v. Federal Sav. and Loan Ins. Corp., 678 F. Supp. 154, 156 (N.D. Tex. 1988). The receiver's sale conveys "good" equitable title enforced by an injunction against the owner and against parties to the suit. See 2 Ralph Ewing Clark, Treatise on Law and Practice of Receivers §§ 342, 344, 482(a), 487, 489, 491. "In authorizing the sale of property by receivers, courts of equity are vested with broad discretion as to price and terms." Gockstetter v. Williams, 9 F.2d 354,

Here, the Receiver seeks authority to sell Personal Property for the benefit of the receivership estate. The Personal Property items recovered to date consist of watches and jewelry, which are costly to securely store and insure. The Personal Property should be sold in the near term with the net proceeds being retained for the benefit of investors.

The Receiver and her staff have many years of experience in handling sales of personal property of receivership estates and will use that expertise and experience to evaluate licensed, experienced auctioneers and dealers to conduct the sales. The Receiver requests authority to engage such auctioneers and/or dealers. The Receiver will ensure the Personal Property is adequately marketed and advertised in advance of the auction(s) and/or sales and will report on all auctions/sales activity in her quarterly interim reports. The Receiver will also negotiate with the auctioneers and/or dealers to ensure that costs and fees charged are at or below industry standards to maximize the net recovery.

# B. Further Notices/Appraisals Should Be Waived

Sales of personal property out of receivership are governed under 28 U.S.C. § 2004 which provides that such property "shall be sold in accordance with section 2001 of this title, *unless the court orders otherwise*." 28 U.S.C. § 2004 (emphasis added). Section 2001 provides that notice shall be given "by publication or otherwise as the court directs ...." 28 U.S.C. § 2001(b). Thus, "[t]he statute on its face vests the court with discretion in directing the terms and conditions of the

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357 (9th Cir. 1925).

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public sale." Keybank Nat'l Ass'n v. Perkins Rowe Assocs., L.L.C., 2012 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 157828, \*4 (M.D. La. 2012); see also U.S. v. Little, 2008 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 93467, \*4-5 (E.D. Cal. 2008) (finding that "[t]he Court has broad discretion in setting the terms and conditions of a sale pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2001."); U.S. v. Heasley, 283 F.2d 422 (8th Cir. 1960) (finding that in the context of 28 U.S.C. § 2001(b), "the matter of confirming a judicial sale rests in the sound judicial discretion of the trial court ..."); U.S. v. Peters, 777 F.2d 1294 (7th Cir. 1985) (noting that 28 U.S.C. § 2001(a) authorizes a court to direct the terms and conditions of the sale). Therefore, Sections 2004 and 2001(b) give the Court discretion in

In today's market, used personal property assets are commonly sold by licensed auctioneers and dealers, often with specified times to view items prior to sales. Auctioneers and dealers publicize auctions and private sales via their websites and email marketing campaigns to known prospective buyers in the applicable industries. Hiring three independent appraisers and publishing notices of sales in newspapers imposes a considerable financial burden on the receivership estate with no corresponding benefit. Furthermore, the Receiver generally has copies of the (relatively recent) purchase documents for most assets and regarding vehicles, there is typically comparable sales data readily available. Accordingly, the Receiver requests that the requirements of Sections 2001 and 2004 regarding the appointment of appraisers by the Court and publication of notices be waived.

# **C.** Engagement of Real Estate Brokers

determining procedures for the sale of personal property.

The Receiver requests authority to engage licensed real estate brokers with experience in the market where each Real Property is located. The Real Properties are expensive to hold, insure and maintain, and therefore should be sold in the near term with the net proceeds being retained for the benefit of investors. As noted above, the Receiver will use her business judgment in selecting the broker for each Real Property and in negotiating fees and commissions. Then, as required by statute

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(28 U.S.C. § 2001), the Receiver will seek Court approval of each sale (via noticed motion), including the fees and commissions to be paid to the broker in connection with such sale. All purchase and sale contracts will be conditioned on Court approval and will have no force or effect unless and until the sale has received Court approval.

# D. Proposed Sale Procedures for Real Property

For sales of all real properties included in the receivership estate, the Receiver proposes to follow the publication of notice and public auction requirements of 28 U.S.C. §§ 2001-2002. For each of the Real Properties, most of which are residential properties, after, (a) an offer is determined to be market or in the best interest of the receivership estate, (b) wherewithal to complete the transaction is verified, (c) a purchase and sale agreement is signed and earnest money deposited into escrow, and (d) the purchaser has removed all contingencies (with the exception of potential overbids, possible auction, financing (in certain circumstances) and Court approval contingencies), the Receiver will file a noticed motion seeking Court approval of the sale, subject to overbid. The Receiver will publish notice of the sale in a newspaper of general circulation in the area in which the property is located for four consecutive weeks. The notice will state the deadline and requirements for submitting a qualified overbid.

If a qualified overbid is received on or before the published deadline and the highest and best bidder (or "stalking horse" bid) is prepared to continue to bid, the Receiver will, (a) notice and recommend to the Court that an auction should be conducted, and (b) invite all qualified bidders to said auction. Such invitation and notice to the Court will include auction instructions for the qualified bidders. At the conclusion of the auction, the Receiver will file a notice of the highest and best/winning (and if applicable, backup) bid, along with an amended proposed order seeking approval of the sale to the highest and best/winning (and if applicable, backup) bidder. If no qualified overbids are received on or before the published

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deadline, the Receiver will advise the Court and seek approval of the sale to the originally noticed highest and best bidder. The Receiver will also seek authority to pay the commission for the real estate broker (a portion of which may be paid to the buyer's broker, if applicable), the secured lender (as applicable) and other ordinary 4 closing costs from the sale proceeds. V. **CONCLUSION** 6 7 For the reasons set forth herein, the Receiver respectfully requests entry of an 8 Order authorizing: (1) engagement of licensed dealers and auctioneers to market 9 Personal Property for sale; (2) sales of Personal Property and payment of fees and 10 commissions in connection therewith to the dealer or auctioneer used, and (3) engagement of licensed real estate brokers to list and market Real Properties for 11 sale, subject to each sale and broker fee/commission being separately approved by 12 the Court. 13 14 ALLEN MATKINS LECK GAMBLE Dated: September 29, 2023 15 MALLORY & NATSIS LLP 16 By: /s/Edward G. Fates 17 EDWARD G. FATES Attorneys for Court-Appointed 18 Temporary Receiver KRISTA L. FREITAG 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

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