

UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT

Eastern District of California

Honorable Michael S. McManus
Bankruptcy Judge
Sacramento, California

February 20, 2018 at 1:30 p.m.

THIS CALENDAR IS DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS. THEREFORE, TO FIND ALL MOTIONS AND OBJECTIONS SET FOR HEARING IN A PARTICULAR CASE, YOU MAY HAVE TO LOOK IN BOTH PARTS OF THE CALENDAR. WITHIN EACH PART, CASES ARE ARRANGED BY THE LAST TWO DIGITS OF THE CASE NUMBER.

THE COURT FIRST WILL HEAR ITEMS 1 THROUGH 5. A TENTATIVE RULING FOLLOWS EACH OF THESE ITEMS. THE COURT MAY AMEND OR CHANGE A TENTATIVE RULING BASED ON THE PARTIES' ORAL ARGUMENT. IF ALL PARTIES AGREE TO A TENTATIVE RULING, THERE IS NO NEED TO APPEAR FOR ARGUMENT. HOWEVER, IT IS INCUMBENT ON EACH PARTY TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER ALL OTHER PARTIES WILL ACCEPT A RULING AND FOREGO ORAL ARGUMENT. IF A PARTY APPEARS, THE HEARING WILL PROCEED WHETHER OR NOT ALL PARTIES ARE PRESENT. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE HEARING, THE COURT WILL ANNOUNCE ITS DISPOSITION OF THE ITEM AND IT MAY DIRECT THAT THE TENTATIVE RULING, AS ORIGINALLY WRITTEN OR AS AMENDED BY THE COURT, BE APPENDED TO THE MINUTES OF THE HEARING AS THE COURT'S FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW.

IF A MOTION OR AN OBJECTION IS SET FOR HEARING PURSUANT TO LOCAL BANKRUPTCY RULE 3015-1(c), (d) [eff. May 1, 2012], GENERAL ORDER 05-03, ¶ 3(c), LOCAL BANKRUPTCY RULE 3007-1(c)(2) [eff. through April 30, 2012], OR LOCAL BANKRUPTCY RULE 9014-1(f)(2), RESPONDENTS WERE NOT REQUIRED TO FILE WRITTEN OPPOSITION TO THE RELIEF REQUESTED. RESPONDENTS MAY APPEAR AT THE HEARING AND RAISE OPPOSITION ORALLY. IF THAT OPPOSITION RAISES A POTENTIALLY MERITORIOUS DEFENSE OR ISSUE, THE COURT WILL GIVE THE RESPONDENT AN OPPORTUNITY TO FILE WRITTEN OPPOSITION AND SET A FINAL HEARING UNLESS THERE IS NO NEED TO DEVELOP THE WRITTEN RECORD FURTHER. IF THE COURT SETS A FINAL HEARING, UNLESS THE PARTIES REQUEST A DIFFERENT SCHEDULE THAT IS APPROVED BY THE COURT, THE FINAL HEARING WILL TAKE PLACE MARCH 19, 2018 AT 1:30 P.M. OPPOSITION MUST BE FILED AND SERVED BY MARCH 5, 2018, AND ANY REPLY MUST BE FILED AND SERVED BY MARCH 12, 2018. THE MOVING/OBJECTING PARTY IS TO GIVE NOTICE OF THE DATE AND TIME OF THE CONTINUED HEARING DATE AND OF THESE DEADLINES.

THERE WILL BE NO HEARING ON ITEMS 6 THROUGH 16 IN THE SECOND PART OF THE CALENDAR. INSTEAD, THESE ITEMS HAVE BEEN DISPOSED OF AS INDICATED IN THE FINAL RULING BELOW. THAT RULING WILL BE APPENDED TO THE MINUTES. THIS FINAL RULING MAY OR MAY NOT BE A FINAL ADJUDICATION ON THE MERITS; IF IT IS, IT INCLUDES THE COURT'S FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS. IF ALL PARTIES HAVE AGREED TO A CONTINUANCE OR HAVE RESOLVED THE MATTER BY STIPULATION, THEY MUST ADVISE THE COURTROOM DEPUTY CLERK PRIOR TO HEARING IN ORDER TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE COURT VACATE THE FINAL RULING IN FAVOR OF THE CONTINUANCE OR THE STIPULATED DISPOSITION.

IF THE COURT CONCLUDES THAT FED. R. BANKR. P. 9014(d) REQUIRES AN EVIDENTIARY HEARING, UNLESS OTHERWISE ORDERED, IT WILL BE SET ON FEBRUARY 26, 2018, AT 2:30 P.M.

February 20, 2018 at 1:30 p.m.

Matters to be Called for Argument

1. 18-20210-A-13 AMIRA ENDERIZ MOTION TO
MET-1 VALUE COLLATERAL
VS. WELLS FARGO DEALER SERVICES 2-6-18 [15]

- Telephone Appearance
- Trustee Agrees with Ruling

Tentative Ruling: Because less than 28 days' notice of the hearing was given by the debtor, this motion is deemed brought pursuant to Local Bankruptcy Rule 9014-1(f)(2). Consequently, the creditors, the trustee, the U.S. Trustee, and any other parties in interest were not required to file a written response or opposition to the motion. If any of these potential respondents appear at the hearing and offers opposition to the motion, the court will set a briefing schedule and a final hearing unless there is no need to develop the record further. If no opposition is offered at the hearing, the court will take up the merits of the motion. Below is the court's tentative ruling, rendered on the assumption that there will be no opposition to the motion. Obviously, if there is opposition, the court may reconsider this tentative ruling.

The valuation motion pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 3012 and 11 U.S.C. § 506(a) will be granted. The debtor is the owner of the subject property. The debtor's evidence indicates that the replacement value of the subject property is \$12,400 as of the effective date of the plan. Given the absence of contrary evidence, the debtor's evidence of value is conclusive. See Enewally v. Washington Mutual Bank (In re Enewally), 368 F.3d 1165 (9th Cir. 2004). Therefore, \$12,400 of the respondent's claim is an allowed secured claim. When the respondent is paid \$12,400 and subject to the completion of the plan, its secured claim shall be satisfied in full and the collateral free of the respondent's lien. Provided a timely proof of claim is filed, the remainder of its claim is allowed as a general unsecured claim unless previously paid by the trustee as a secured claim.

2. 16-21320-A-13 JUAN/CATHERINE MARTINEZ MOTION TO
JPJ-4 RECONVERT CASE
1-16-18 [111]

- Telephone Appearance
- Trustee Agrees with Ruling

Tentative Ruling: The motion will be conditionally denied.

This case was commenced under chapter 13, then converted to chapter 7, then reconverted to chapter 13. While under chapter 7, the trustee determined that assets were available to pay the claims of unsecured creditors.

Since reconversion of the case in August 2017, the plan proposed by the debtor was denied confirmation and the debtor delayed proposing another. Also, the debtor has not made 20 plan payments under the terms of the last proposed plan.

After this motion was filed, the debtor proposed another modified plan. It will be considered for confirmation at a hearing on March 26. If the plan is not confirmed at that hearing, without further notice or hearing, the case will be reconverted to chapter 7. Such is in the best interests of creditors inasmuch as there are substantial nonexempt assets that may be liquidated for the benefit of creditors.

3. 17-28335-A-13 LISA KOPPLE MOTION TO
PSB-2 VALUE COLLATERAL
VS. TIMOTHY AND DEBBIE LASLEY 1-16-18 [14]

- Telephone Appearance
- Trustee Agrees with Ruling

Tentative Ruling: The motion will be dismissed without.

According to the debtor, his home has a value of \$560,000 and it is encumbered by a first deed of trust held by Nationstar. The debtor asserts that this deed of trust secures a home loan with a balance of \$565,876.13.

Therefore, because the second priority deed of trust held by the respondent is "out of the money," this claims can be stripped off the property by application of 11 U.S.C. § 506(a) as interpreted by In re Zimmer, 313 F.3d 1220 (9th Cir. 2002) and In re Lam, 211 B.R. 36 (B.A.P. 9th Cir. 1997).

Unfortunately for the debtor, according to the proof of claim filed by or on behalf of Nationstar, the balance on the home loan as of the petition date is only \$548,887.77. Because this is less than the asserted value of \$560,000, 11 U.S.C. § 1322(b)(2), which prevents a chapter 13 plan from modifying a home loan, and Nobelman v. American Savings Bank, 508 U.S. 324 (1993) are applicable. This authority prevents a chapter 13 debtor from "stripping off" a completely under-secured home mortgage or deed of trust.

Therefore, because no purpose would be served by granting this motion, it is dismissed without prejudice.

4. 15-29553-A-13 DEAN/SHELYA WILLIAMS MOTION TO
SS-4 APPROVE LOAN MODIFICATION
2-6-18 [73]

- Telephone Appearance
- Trustee Agrees with Ruling

Tentative Ruling: Because less than 28 days' notice of the hearing was given by the debtor, this motion is deemed brought pursuant to Local Bankruptcy Rule 9014-1(f)(2). Consequently, the creditors, the trustee, the U.S. Trustee, and any other parties in interest were not required to file a written response or opposition to the motion. If any of these potential respondents appear at the hearing and offers opposition to the motion, the court will set a briefing schedule and a final hearing unless there is no need to develop the record further. If no opposition is offered at the hearing, the court will take up the merits of the motion. Below is the court's tentative ruling, rendered on the assumption that there will be no opposition to the motion. Obviously, if there is opposition, the court may reconsider this tentative ruling.

The motion will be granted. The debtor is authorized but not required to enter into the proposed modification. To the extent the modification is inconsistent with the confirmed plan, the debtor shall continue to perform the plan as confirmed until it is modified.

- Telephone Appearance
- Trustee Agrees with Ruling

Tentative Ruling: Because less than 28 days' notice of the hearing was given by the debtor, this motion is deemed brought pursuant to Local Bankruptcy Rule 9014-1(f)(2). Consequently, the creditors, the trustee, the U.S. Trustee, and any other parties in interest were not required to file a written response or opposition to the motion. If any of these potential respondents appear at the hearing and offers opposition to the motion, the court will set a briefing schedule and a final hearing unless there is no need to develop the record further. If no opposition is offered at the hearing, the court will take up the merits of the motion. Below is the court's tentative ruling, rendered on the assumption that there will be no opposition to the motion. Obviously, if there is opposition, the court may reconsider this tentative ruling.

The motion will be granted.

This is the second chapter 13 case filed by debtor Ebony Johnson. A prior case was dismissed within one year of the filing of the current case because the debtor was unable to maintain the payments required by a confirmed plan.

The co-debtor has not filed a prior case that was dismissed in the prior year. Therefore, as to the co-debtor, the automatic stay is fully in place. The remainder of this ruling pertains only to debtor Ebony Johnson.

11 U.S.C. § 362(c)(3)(A) provides that if a single or joint case is filed by or against a debtor who is an individual in a case under chapter 7, 11, or 13, and if a single or joint case of the debtor was pending within the preceding one-year period but was dismissed, the automatic stay with respect to a debt, property securing such debt, or any lease terminates on the 30th day after the filing of the new case.

Section 362(c)(3)(B) allows a debtor to file a motion requesting the continuation of the stay. A review of the docket reveals that the debtor has filed this motion to extend the automatic stay before the 30th day after the filing of the petition. The motion will be adjudicated before the 30-day period expires.

In order to extend the automatic stay, the party seeking the relief must demonstrate that the filing of the new case was in good faith as to the creditors to be stayed. For example, in In re Whitaker, 341 B.R. 336, 345 (Bankr. S.D. Ga. 2006), the court held: "[T]he chief means of rebutting the presumption of bad faith requires the movant to establish 'a substantial change in the financial or personal affairs of the debtor . . . or any other reason to conclude' that the instant case will be successful. If the instant case is one under chapter 7, a discharge must now be permissible. If it is a case under chapters 11 or 13, there must be some substantial change."

Here, it appears since the dismissal of the prior case, the debtor's household income has more than doubled, enhancing the likelihood that the debtor will be able to confirm and complete a plan.

FINAL RULINGS BEGIN HERE

6. 17-23304-A-13 ANTONIO AGUIRRE AND ANA OBJECTION TO
JPJ-1 CEBALLOS DE ADAME CLAIM
VS. QUANTUM3 GROUP, L.L.C. 1-5-18 [31]

Final Ruling: This objection to the proof of claim of Quantum3 Group has been set for hearing on at least 44 days' notice to the claimant as required by Local Bankruptcy Rule 3007-1(c)(1)(ii). The failure of the claimant to file written opposition at least 14 calendar days prior to the hearing is considered as consent to the sustaining of the objection. Cf. Ghazali v. Moran, 46 F.3d 52, 53 (9th Cir. 1995). Further, because the court will not materially alter the relief requested by the objecting party, an actual hearing is unnecessary. See Boone v. Burk (In re Eliapo), 468 F.3d 592 (9th Cir. 2006). Therefore, the claimant's default is entered and the objection will be resolved without oral argument.

The objection will be sustained and the claim disallowed.

The last date to file a timely proof of claim was September 27, 2017. The proof of claim was filed on October 9, 2017. Pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 502(b)(9) and Fed. R. Bankr. P. 3002(c), the claim is disallowed because it is untimely. See In re Osborne, 76 F.3d 306 (9th Cir. 1996); In re Edelman, 237 B.R. 146, 153 (B.A.P. 9th Cir. 1999); Ledlin v. United States (In re Tomlan), 907 F.2d 114 (9th Cir. 1989); Zidell, Inc. V. Forsch (In re Coastal Alaska), 920 F.2d 1428, 1432-33 (9th Cir. 1990).

7. 17-24512-A-13 LINDA CONKLING MOTION TO
MJD-2 AVOID JUDICIAL LIEN
VS. MAIN STREET ACQUISITION CORP. 1-17-18 [45]

Final Ruling: This motion to avoid a judicial lien has been set for hearing on the notice required by Local Bankruptcy Rule 9014-1(f)(1). The failure of the trustee and the respondent creditor to file written opposition at least 14 days prior to the hearing as required by Local Bankruptcy Rule 9014-1(f)(1)(ii) is considered as consent to the granting of the motion. Cf. Ghazali v. Moran, 46 F.3d 52, 53 (9th Cir. 1995). Further, because the court will not materially alter the relief requested by the moving party, an actual hearing is unnecessary. See Boone v. Burk (In re Eliapo), 468 F.3d 592 (9th Cir. 2006). Therefore, the defaults of the trustee and the respondent creditor are entered and the matter will be resolved without oral argument.

The motion will be granted.

A judgment was entered against the debtor in favor of Main Street Acquisition Corp. The abstract of judgment was recorded in Sacramento County on February 27, 2014. That lien attached to the debtor's interest in residential real property in Sacramento, California.

The motion will be granted pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 522(f)(1)(A). The subject real property had an approximate value of \$348,038 as of the petition date. The unavoidable liens totaled more than \$385,000. The debtor claimed an exemption pursuant to Cal. Civ. Proc. Code § 704.730 in the amount of \$75,000 in Schedule C.

The respondent holds a judicial lien created by the recordation of an abstract of judgment in the chain of title of the subject real property. After

application of the arithmetical formula required by 11 U.S.C. § 522(f)(2)(A), there is no equity to support the judicial lien. Therefore, the fixing of this judicial lien impairs the debtor's exemption of the real property and its fixing will be avoided subject to 11 U.S.C. § 349(b)(1)(B).

8. 15-21528-A-13 KEVIN KRONE MOTION TO
PGM-5 MODIFY PLAN
1-10-18 [101]

Final Ruling: This motion to confirm a modified plan proposed after confirmation of a plan has been set for hearing on the notice required by Local Bankruptcy Rules 3015-1(d)(2) and 9014-1(f)(1) and Fed. R. Bankr. R. 3015(g). The failure of the debtor, the U.S. Trustee, creditors, and any other party in interest to file written opposition at least 14 days prior to the hearing as required by Local Bankruptcy Rule 9014-1(f)(1)(ii) is considered as consent to the granting of the motion. Cf. Ghazali v. Moran, 46 F.3d 52, 53 (9th Cir. 1995). Further, because the court will not materially alter the relief requested by the trustee, an actual hearing is unnecessary. See Boone v. Burk (In re Eliapo), 468 F.3d 592 (9th Cir. 2006). Therefore, the respondents' defaults are entered and the matter will be resolved without oral argument.

The motion will be granted. The modified plan complies with 11 U.S.C. §§ 1322(a) & (b), 1323(c), 1325(a), and 1329.

9. 17-23129-A-13 TIMOTHY NEHER OBJECTION TO
TLN-24 CLAIM
VS. MATT G. JOINER 1-2-18 [188]

Final Ruling: The objection will be dismissed without prejudice. Inasmuch as the claimant has filed a complaint to determine the dischargeability of the obligation that is the subject of the proof of claim, the existence and extent of the obligation as well as its dischargeability will be determined in the adversary proceeding.

10. 17-26434-A-13 TRINA ENOS MOTION TO
PLG-3 CONFIRM PLAN
1-2-18 [42]

Final Ruling: This motion to confirm a modified plan proposed after confirmation of a plan has been set for hearing on the notice required by Local Bankruptcy Rules 3015-1(d)(2) and 9014-1(f)(1) and Fed. R. Bankr. R. 3015(g). The failure of the debtor, the U.S. Trustee, creditors, and any other party in interest to file written opposition at least 14 days prior to the hearing as required by Local Bankruptcy Rule 9014-1(f)(1)(ii) is considered as consent to the granting of the motion. Cf. Ghazali v. Moran, 46 F.3d 52, 53 (9th Cir. 1995). Further, because the court will not materially alter the relief requested by the trustee, an actual hearing is unnecessary. See Boone v. Burk (In re Eliapo), 468 F.3d 592 (9th Cir. 2006). Therefore, the respondents' defaults are entered and the matter will be resolved without oral argument.

The motion will be granted. The modified plan complies with 11 U.S.C. §§ 1322(a) & (b), 1323(c), 1325(a), and 1329.

11. 17-23950-A-13 DEBRA MARTIN
JPJ-2

MOTION TO
RECONSIDER DISMISSAL OF CASE
1-24-18 [44]

Final Ruling: The court concludes that a hearing will not be helpful to its consideration and resolution of this matter. The court will not materially alter the relief requested. Accordingly, an actual hearing is unnecessary and this matter is removed from calendar for resolution without oral argument. See Boone v. Burk (In re Eliapo), 468 F.3d 592 (9th Cir. 2006).

The motion will be granted on the condition stated below.

This case was dismissed on January 9 when the debtor failed to timely cure a default noticed by the trustee on November 29. While the default is not in default, the debtor believed the default had been cured when a plan payment was mailed to the trustee around the same date as the notice of a default. Therefore, on condition that all payments due through January 2017 have been tendered to the trustee, or will be within three business days of the hearing on this motion, the dismissal will be vacated.

12. 17-20552-A-13 MARK/LAURA MCMULLEN
MJD-2

MOTION TO
EMPLOY
1-22-18 [39]

Final Ruling: This motion to employ special counsel has been set for hearing on the notice required by Local Bankruptcy Rule 9014-1(f)(1) and Fed. R. Bankr. R. 2002(a)(6). The failure of the trustee, the creditors, the United States Trustee, and any other party in interest to file written opposition at least 14 days prior to the hearing as required by Local Bankruptcy Rule 9014-1(f)(1)(ii) is considered as consent to the granting of the motion. Cf. Ghazali v. Moran, 46 F.3d 52, 53 (9th Cir. 1995). Further, because the court will not materially alter the relief requested by the moving party, an actual hearing is unnecessary. See Boone v. Burk (In re Eliapo), 468 F.3d 592 (9th Cir. 2006). Therefore, the defaults of the above-mentioned parties in interest are entered and the matter will be resolved without oral argument.

The chapter 13 debtor seeks approval to employ legal counsel to represent her in a personal injury case. The employment will be on a contingency fee basis.

Subject to court approval, 11 U.S.C. § 327(a) permits a trustee to employ a professional to assist the trustee in the administration of the estate. Such professional must "not hold or represent an interest adverse to the estate, and [must be a] disinterested [person]." 11 U.S.C. § 327(a). 11 U.S.C. § 328(a) allows for such employment "on any reasonable terms and conditions . . . including on a contingent fee basis."

While the applicant here is not the trustee but the debtor, because this is a chapter 13 case, the debtor remains in possession of the debtor's assets and retains the right to prosecute the claim. Therefore, as to the debtor, the motion will be granted. The court concludes that the terms of employment and compensation are reasonable. Special counsel is disinterested persons within the meaning of 11 U.S.C. § 327(a) and does not hold an interest adverse to the estate.

Accordingly, the motion will be granted with the proviso that any settlement must be approved by the court and before any compensation is paid it must be approved by the court. See Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9019 and 11 U.S.C. §§ 328(a) &

330 (a) .

13. 13-26465-A-13 DARREN COCREHAM MOTION TO
PGM-7 APPROVE COMPENSATION OF DEBTOR'S
ATTORNEY
1-22-18 [144]

Final Ruling: The court concludes that a hearing will not be helpful to its consideration and resolution of this matter. The court will not materially alter the relief requested and the debtor has conceded the issue raised in the opposition. Accordingly, an actual hearing is unnecessary and this matter is removed from calendar for resolution without oral argument. See Boone v. Burk (In re Eliapo), 468 F.3d 592 (9th Cir. 2006).

The motion will be granted in part.

The motion seeks approval of \$1,500 in additional fees incurred principally in connection with a home loan modification. However, the court will deduct \$180 charged for services relating to resolving an objection filed by the trustee to a proposed modified plan. His objection concerned errors and mistakes in the proposed plan that with due care could have been avoided. With this deduction, \$1,320 represents reasonable compensation for actual, necessary, and beneficial services rendered to the debtor. Any retainer may be drawn upon and the balance of the approved compensation is to be paid through the plan in a manner consistent with the plan and Local Bankruptcy Rule 2016-1, if applicable.

14. 17-27280-A-13 EVELINA TSVETANOVA MOTION TO
MDA-1 CONFIRM PLAN
1-9-18 [26]

Final Ruling: This motion to confirm a modified plan proposed after confirmation of a plan has been set for hearing on the notice required by Local Bankruptcy Rules 3015-1(d)(2) and 9014-1(f)(1) and Fed. R. Bankr. R. 3015(g). The failure of the debtor, the U.S. Trustee, creditors, and any other party in interest to file written opposition at least 14 days prior to the hearing as required by Local Bankruptcy Rule 9014-1(f)(1)(ii) is considered as consent to the granting of the motion. Cf. Ghazali v. Moran, 46 F.3d 52, 53 (9th Cir. 1995). Further, because the court will not materially alter the relief requested by the trustee, an actual hearing is unnecessary. See Boone v. Burk (In re Eliapo), 468 F.3d 592 (9th Cir. 2006). Therefore, the respondents' defaults are entered and the matter will be resolved without oral argument.

The motion will be granted. The modified plan complies with 11 U.S.C. §§ 1322(a) & (b), 1323(c), 1325(a), and 1329.

15. 17-27290-A-13 SHARI FRAZIER MOTION TO
MAC-2 VACATE DISMISSAL OF CASE
2-1-18 [36]

Final Ruling: The motion will be dismissed without prejudice.

First, Local Bankruptcy Rule 2002-1(c) provides that notices in adversary proceedings and contested matters that are served on the IRS shall be mailed to three entities at three different addresses: (1) IRS, P.O. Box 7346, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7346; (2) United States Attorney, for the IRS, 501 I Street, Suite 10-100, Sacramento, CA 95814; and (3) United States Department of Justice, Civil Trial Section, Western Region, Box 683, Franklin Station,

