

UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT

Eastern District of California

Honorable Michael S. McManus  
Bankruptcy Judge  
Sacramento, California

December 9, 2014 at 1:30 p.m.

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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 13. 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 ON JANUARY 5, 2015 AT 1:30 P.M. OPPOSITION MUST BE FILED AND SERVED BY DECEMBER 22, 2014, AND ANY REPLY MUST BE FILED AND SERVED BY DECEMBER 29, 2014. 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 14 THROUGH 18 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 DECEMBER 15, 2014, AT 2:30 P.M.

December 9, 2014 at 10:00 p.m.

**Matters to be Called for Argument**

1. 14-31200-A-13 SHERI ARNOLD MOTION TO  
TLA-1 EXTEND AUTOMATIC STAY  
11-24-14 [11]

- 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 denied.

This is the second chapter 13 case filed by the debtor. The debtor's earlier chapter 13 case was dismissed within one year of the most recent petition.

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 30<sup>th</sup> 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 30<sup>th</sup> 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 that the debtor was unable to confirm a feasible plan in the prior case because she and her former attorney were unable to negotiate loan modifications of two home loans. However, there still are no agreed modifications. Instead, the proposed plan compels the home lenders to negotiate modifications and accept "adequate protection payments" in lieu of the payments required by the loans during the negotiations. This violates 11 U.S.C. § 1322(b)(2) which prevents modifications of home loans. Pending an agreed modification, each lender must be paid the contract installment required

by the existing loans, not some other installment, unless they agree to accept such alternate payment.

Because this case is no more likely to succeed than the prior case, there are insufficient changes in circumstances rebut the presumption of bad faith.

2. 14-30206-A-13 STANLEY WOO MOTION TO  
RJ-2 INCUR DEBT  
10-27-14 [16]

- Telephone Appearance
- Trustee Agrees with Ruling

**Tentative Ruling:** The motion will be denied.

The debtor filed two prior chapter 13 cases. The first, Case No. 14-24896, was filed on May 9, 2014 and dismissed on August 8 because the debtor failed to appear at the meeting of creditors, failed to file a delinquent income tax return for 2013, and failed to provide the trustee records concerning the debtor's self employment income.

The second case, Case No. 14-28641, was filed on August 26, 2014 and was dismissed on September 29 because the debtor failed to timely file all schedules and statements.

This case was filed approximately two weeks later, on October 14. All schedules and statements were not filed with the petition but they have now been filed. However, Schedules I and J show only enough monthly net income to fund the plan. The plan payment is \$1,210 while the debtor has monthly net income of just \$1,210. Therefore, it is unclear how the debtor will be able to repay the new credit and the motion fails to explain the repayment terms of the a new extension of credit.

3. 14-29613-A-13 DARRELL DIGGS OBJECTION TO  
JPJ-1 CONFIRMATION OF PLAN AND MOTION TO  
DISMISS CASE  
10-24-14 [18]

- Telephone Appearance
- Trustee Agrees with Ruling

**Tentative Ruling:** The objection will be sustained in part and the motion to dismiss the case will be conditionally denied.

The plan's feasibility depends on the debtor successfully prosecuting a motion to value the collateral of GM Financial/Americredit in order to strip down or strip off its secured claim from its collateral. That motion has been denied. Absent a successful motion the debtor cannot establish that the plan will pay secured claims in full as required by 11 U.S.C. § 1325(a)(5)(B) or that the plan is feasible as required by 11 U.S.C. § 1325(a)(6). Local Bankruptcy Rule 3015-1(j) provides: "If a proposed plan will reduce or eliminate a secured claim based on the value of its collateral or the avoidability of a lien pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 522(f), the debtor must file, serve, and set for hearing a valuation motion and/or a lien avoidance motion. The hearing must be concluded before or in conjunction with the confirmation of the plan. If a motion is not filed, or it is unsuccessful, the Court may deny confirmation of the plan."

4. 14-29613-A-13 DARRELL DIGGS MOTION TO  
MRL-1 VALUE COLLATERAL  
VS. AMERICREDIT FINANCIAL SVCS., INC., 10-29-14 [23]

- Telephone Appearance
- Trustee Agrees with Ruling

**Tentative Ruling:** The motion will be denied.

The debtor has filed a valuation motion that accompanies a proposed chapter 13 plan. The valuation motion addresses the value of a 2008 Acura TL that secures the respondent's Class 2 claim. The debtor has opined that the vehicle has a value of \$8,250 based on the vehicle's model year, 148,000 mileage, and general condition.

The respondent counters that the value of the vehicle is \$11,725 based on the retail value set by the NADA Guides.

The vehicle must be valued at its replacement value. In the chapter 13 context, the replacement value of personal property used by a debtor for personal, household or family purposes is "the price a retail merchant would charge for property of that kind considering the age and condition of the property at the time value is determined." See 11 U.S.C. § 506(a)(2). The index offered by the creditor appears to meet this standard assuming the vehicle is showing ordinary wear and tear. This has not been shown but it is not the respondent's burden to do so.

To the extent the debtor maintains that the vehicle is showing more than ordinary wear and tear, the debtor has failed to introduce competent evidence of such. Therefore, the court denies the valuation motion.

5. 14-29629-A-13 DARON HAIRABEDIAN OBJECTION TO  
JPJ-1 CONFIRMATION OF PLAN AND MOTION TO  
DISMISS CASE  
11-19-14 [20]

- Telephone Appearance
- Trustee Agrees with Ruling

**Tentative Ruling:** Because this hearing on an objection to the confirmation of the proposed chapter 13 plan and a motion to dismiss the case was set pursuant to the procedure required by Local Bankruptcy Rule 3015-1(c)(4), the debtor was not required to file a written response. If no opposition is offered at the hearing, the court will take up the merits of the objection. Below is the court's tentative ruling, rendered on the assumption that there will be no opposition. Obviously, if there is opposition, the court may reconsider this tentative ruling.

The objection will be sustained and the motion to dismiss the case will be conditionally denied.

First, the plan is not feasible as required by 11 U.S.C. § 1325(a)(6) because the monthly plan payment of \$155 is less than the \$2,997.87 in dividends and expenses the plan requires the trustee to pay each month.

Second, to pay the dividends required by the plan and the rate proposed by it will take 603 months which exceeds the maximum 5-year duration permitted by 11



the plan. If a motion is not filed, or it is unsuccessful, the Court may deny confirmation of the plan."

Because the plan proposed by the debtor is not confirmable, the debtor will be given a further opportunity to confirm a plan. But, if the debtor is unable to confirm a plan within a reasonable period of time, the court concludes that the prejudice to creditors will be substantial and that there will then be cause for dismissal. If the debtor has not confirmed a plan within 75 days, the case will be dismissed on the trustee's ex parte application.

7. 14-31248-A-13 IMOGENE ESPINOZA MOTION TO  
PLC-1 EXTEND AUTOMATIC STAY  
11-19-14 [8]

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 denied.

This is the second chapter 13 case filed by the debtor. The debtor's earlier chapter 13 case was dismissed within one year of the most recent petition.

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 30<sup>th</sup> 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 30<sup>th</sup> 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."



On July 30, 2014, the court entered its order sustaining the trustee's objection to the confirmation of the debtor's initial chapter 13 plan. That order also conditionally denied the trustee's request that the case be dismissed. The court permitted the case to remain pending on the condition that the debtor confirmed a plan within 75 days of July 30, which was October 13. A review of the docket reveals that the debtor failed, by the October 13 deadline, to file a modified plan, failed to give the trustee a Domestic Support Obligation Checklist as required by Local Bankruptcy Rule 3015-1, failed to give the trustee all employer payments advices as demanded by the trustee, failed to make a motion to confirm a modified plan or the original plan because circumstances had changed permitting its confirmation, or failed to move to reconsider the imposition of the 75-day deadline. As a result, the case was dismissed on October 29.

This motion was filed on November 20 and it asks the court to vacate the dismissal even though the October 13 deadline was not met. The motion concedes that plan payments are delinquent and that the October 13 deadline in the particulars itemized above. The motion fails to offer an excuse or mistake that rises to the level of excusable neglect warranting reconsideration of the dismissal of the case.

10. 10-44658-A-13 DENNIS DIGMAN MOTION TO  
ACW-2 APPROVE COMPENSATION OF DEBTOR'S  
ATTORNEY  
10-8-14 [107]
- Telephone Appearance
  - Trustee Agrees with Ruling

**Tentative Ruling:** The motion will be granted and the objection will be overruled.

The fees represent 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 by the debtor and not through the plan because the plan includes no provision for payment of fees through the plan.

11. 14-30069-A-13 JOSEPH/LORI AUGUSTINE OBJECTION TO  
JPJ-1 CONFIRMATION OF PLAN AND MOTION TO  
DISMISS CASE  
11-19-14 [19]
- Telephone Appearance
  - Trustee Agrees with Ruling

**Tentative Ruling:** Because this hearing on an objection to the confirmation of the proposed chapter 13 plan and a motion to dismiss the case was set pursuant to the procedure required by Local Bankruptcy Rule 3015-1(c)(4), the debtor was not required to file a written response. If no opposition is offered at the hearing, the court will take up the merits of the objection. Below is the court's tentative ruling, rendered on the assumption that there will be no opposition. Obviously, if there is opposition, the court may reconsider this tentative ruling.

The objection will be sustained and the case will be dismissed.



Third, the plan is not feasible as required by 11 U.S.C. § 1325(a)(6) because the monthly plan payment of \$940 in months 13 and 14 is less than the \$1,039.36 in dividends and expenses the plan requires the trustee to pay each month.

Because the plan proposed by the debtor is not confirmable, the debtor will be given a further opportunity to confirm a plan. But, if the debtor is unable to confirm a plan within a reasonable period of time, the court concludes that the prejudice to creditors will be substantial and that there will then be cause for dismissal. If the debtor has not confirmed a plan within 75 days, the case will be dismissed on the trustee's ex parte application.

13. 10-27982-A-13 OSOTONU/BETTY OSOTONU MOTION TO  
PGM-5 MODIFY PLAN  
10-31-14 [82]

**Tentative Ruling:** The motion will be granted on the condition that the plan is further modified in the confirmation order to account for all prior payments made by the debtor under the terms of the prior plan, and to provide for a plan payment of \$2,700 beginning December 25, 2014. As further modified, the plan complies with 11 U.S.C. §§ 1322(a) & (b), 1323(c), 1325(a), and 1329.

**THE FINAL RULINGS BEGIN HERE**

14. 14-26000-A-13 ROBIN SMITH MOTION TO  
FF-2 VALUE COLLATERAL  
VS. FRANCHISE TAX BOARD 11-10-14 [32]

**Final Ruling:** The court finds that a hearing will not be helpful to its consideration and resolution of this matter. Accordingly, it is removed from calendar for resolution without oral argument.

The claim of the FTB is secured by all of the debtor's real and personal property. The real property has a value of \$173,780 but is encumbered by a senior consensual lien of \$236,880.66. The personal property, after deducting consensual liens has a net value of \$8,940.24 but is encumbered by the prior tax lien of the IRS to secure taxes exceeding \$8,940.24. Therefore, the collateral of the FTB has no net value and its secured claim is determined to be \$0.

15. 14-27909-A-13 JUAN/REINA TORRES MOTION TO  
ALF-2 CONFIRM PLAN  
10-21-14 [33]

**Final Ruling:** The motion will be dismissed without prejudice.

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, Washington, D.C. 20044.

Service in this case is deficient because the IRS was not served at the second and third addresses listed above.

16. 14-30268-A-13 NEERAJ/KALYANI KUMAR MOTION FOR  
APN-1 RELIEF FROM AUTOMATIC STAY  
BMW BANK OF NORTH AMERICA VS. 11-7-14 [24]

**Final Ruling:** This motion for relief from the automatic stay has been set for hearing on the notice required by Local Bankruptcy Rule 9014-1(f)(1). The failure of the debtor and the trustee 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 (9<sup>th</sup> 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 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2006). Therefore, the defaults of the above-mentioned parties in interest are entered and the matter will be resolved without oral argument.

The motion will be granted pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 362(d)(1) to permit the movant to repossess and to obtain possession of its personal property security, and to dispose of it in accordance with applicable nonbankruptcy law. The movant is secured by a vehicle. The debtor has proposed a plan that fails to provide for the movant's claim which is secured by a vehicle. The claim is in default, the debtor having failed to make monthly installment payments both before and after the filing of the bankruptcy case. Given the failure to

