# STATE OF WASHINGTON

1 DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS **SECURITIES DIVISION** 2 3 4 IN THE MATTER OF DETERMINING Order Number S-08-381-09-FO01 Whether there has been a violation 5 of the Securities Act of the State ENTRY OF FINDINGS OF FACT AND of Washington by: CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND FINAL ORDER 6 TO CEASE AND DESIST Bruce White 7 Respondents. 8 9 THE STATE OF WASHINGTON TO: Bruce White 10 11 On March 6, 2009, the Securities Administrator of the State of Washington issued Statement of Charges 12 and Notice of Intent to Enter Order to Cease and Desist, to Impose Fines, and to Charge Costs ("Statement of 13 Charges") against Bruce White. The Statement of Charges, together with a Notice of Opportunity to Defend and Opportunity for 14 Hearing ("Notice of Opportunity for Hearing") and an Application for Adjudicative Hearing ("Application for 15 Hearing") were served on Bruce White on March 24, 2009. 16 On April 10, 2009 the Securities Division received an Application for Adjudicative Hearing from Bruce 17 White. Respondent Bruce White waived the right to a hearing in this matter, and in lieu thereof, submitted a 18 written statement for consideration by the Securities Administrator. 19 After considering the written statement, the Securities Administrator makes the following findings of 20 fact and conclusions of law: 21 22 2.3 DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS 1 24

ENTRY OF FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND FINAL ORDER TO CEASE AND DESIST

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## FINDINGS OF FACT

## Respondent

1. Bruce White ("White") is believed to be a real estate developer and resident of the State of Florida.

# Nature of the Conduct

- 2. In or about May 2008 White ran an ad on the craigslist website for the Seattle-Tacoma area seeking an investor for an 18 acre subdivision project located in Lower Nahiku, Maui, Hawaii.
- 3. Investor A, a Washington resident, responded to the advertisement via email and requested further detail. White emailed Investor A and explained that the loan for the Lower Nahiku development project had gone into foreclosure and White wanted an investor to ensure that he did not lose the property. White sought \$393,000 from an investor in order to bring his loan current, make 18 months of advance mortgage payments, and pay various other fees to finish subdivision of the property. White also told Investor A that he had a majority ownership in a real estate development in Florida.
- 4. White stated in an email that he planned to divide the 18 acres into three parcels (2.83 acres, 3.17 acres, 12 acres). White offered the 2.83 acre parcel in return for the \$393,000. White planned to release the parcel to the investor after he brought the loan current and finished the subdivision process. White informed Investor A that he had all the necessary permits to subdivide the land. White estimated the process to take approximately 3 months.

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- 5. According to the email from White, after completion of the subdivision the 3.17 acre parcel should sell for \$750,000 to \$1,250,000. White told Investor A that after subdivision he valued the 2.83 acre parcel at approximately \$1,000,000.
- 6. On or about May 22, 2008 White sent Investor A an agreement ("Reservation Agreement") signed by White which outlined the rough details of the investment and directed the investor to wire a \$5,000 binder to White to secure a position in the project. The investor then had until June 6, 2008 to perform due diligence on the property. If the investor cancelled in writing by June 6, 2008 the Reservation Agreement provided for a full refund of the \$5,000 binder. If the investor did not cancel, the Reservation Agreement called for White and the investor to enter into a "Partnership Agreement" agreed to by both parties. The investor then had to supply the remaining \$388,000.
- 7. Investor A said that he only had to provide funding for the project. White proposed to handle all other details involved in subdividing the property and transferring the parcel to the investor.
- 8. Investor A wired \$5,000 to White on or about May 23, 2008. Investor A then flew to Hawaii to view and research the property. Just prior to leaving for Hawaii White informed Investor A that the project might be missing a minor permit involving some conservation land on the property. Investor A states that White made getting the permit sound like a mere formality.
- 9. Once in Hawaii, Investor A states that he learned that some of the permits White claimed to have had either expired or bordered on expiration. Investor A also spoke with a local attorney and a local real estate broker about the property. Those individuals told Investor A that the process of trying to obtain a permit to subdivide conservation land would likely take years rather than months. Additionally, the permit

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to subdivide would have to go through a public comment period likely to generate vehement objections from the local community.

- 10. Investor A decided not to invest and sent an email via his girlfriend to White declining the deal on June 6, 2008. White has not returned the \$5,000 binder to Investor A as agreed to under the Reservation Agreement.
- 11. White claims that he offered various options to Investor A to deal with the conservation land issue. White also claims that he offered to return Investor A's deposit on June 27, 2008, but Investor A chose to continue working toward a deal. White states that approximately one month later, Investor A backed out of the deal and requested his deposit back. White states that he did not return the deposit because Investor A decided to go forward with the deal after the June 6, 2008 deadline and then withdrew after White had turned away other interested parties.
- 12. The advertisement for the property no longer appears on craigslist, but as of the date of the Statement of Charges, White continued to advertise the investment on various other websites, including www.landandfarm.com; www.stumblehere.com; and www.landwatch.com. The terms differed slightly from those presented to Investor A. White now seeks up to \$550,000 for the Lower Nahiku project and promises the return of principal, plus 10% interest, and a 5 acre parcel.

# Misrepresentations and Omissions

13. Respondent Bruce White failed to provide material information regarding investment in the Lower Nahiku project, including but not limited to: financial statements, the general risks of investing, and the specific risks of investing in a subdivision project in Hawaii.

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ORDER TO CEASE AND DESIST

- 14. Respondent Bruce White misrepresented that he obtained all the preliminary permits and approvals for the Lower Nahiku project when in fact White lacked necessary permits to subdivide the land.
- 15. Respondent Bruce White failed to disclose that the subject property included conservation land that likely cannot be subdivided.

## Registration Status

- 16. Bruce White is not currently registered to offer or sell securities in the State of Washington and has not previously been so registered.
- 17. Bruce White is not currently registered as a securities salesperson or broker-dealer in the state of Washington and has not previously been so registered.

Based upon the above Findings of Fact, the following Conclusions of Law are made:

## **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

- 1. The offer or sale of the parcel in the Lower Nahiku project as described above constitutes the offer or sale of a security as defined in RCW 21.20.005(10) and (12).
- 2. Respondent, Bruce White, violated RCW 21.20.140, the securities registration provision of the Securities Act, because he offered and/or sold securities for which there was no registration on file with the Securities Administrator.
- 3. Respondent Bruce White violated RCW 21.20.040, the securities salesperson registration provision of the Securities Act, because he offered and/or sold securities while not registered as a securities salesperson or broker-dealer in the state of Washington.
- 4. The offer or sale of said securities violated RCW 21.20.010 because, as set forth in the

  Tentative Findings of Fact, Respondent Bruce White, in connection with the offer or sale of said securities

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directly or indirectly made untrue statements of material fact or omitted to state material facts necessary in order to make the statements made, in light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading.

Based upon the foregoing, and finding it in the public interest:

### FINAL ORDER

It is hereby ORDERED that the Respondent, Bruce White, his agents, and employees each cease and desist from violation of RCW 21.20.140, the securities registration section of the Securities Act.

It is further ORDERED that Respondent Bruce White, his agents and employees, each cease and desist from violation of RCW 21.20.040, the broker-dealer and securities salesperson registration section of the Securities Act.

It is further ORDERED that Respondent Bruce White, his agents and employees, each cease and desist from violation of RCW 21.20.010, the anti-fraud section of the Securities Act.

It is further ORDERED that Respondent Bruce White shall be liable for and pay a fine in the amount of \$5,000.

It is further ORDERED that Respondent Bruce White shall be liable for and pay costs in the amount of \$2,000.

#### **AUTHORITY AND PROCEDURE**

This Final Order is entered pursuant to the provisions of RCW 21.20.390 and RCW 21.20.395 and is subject to the provisions of RCW 21.20.120 and Chapter 34.05 RCW. The Respondent has the right to petition the superior court for judicial review of this agency action under the provisions of chapter 34.05 RCW. For the requirements for filing a Petition for Judicial Review, see RCW 34.050.510 and

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sections following. Pursuant to 21.20.395, a certified copy of this order may be filed in Superior Court. 1 If so filed, the clerk shall treat the order in the same manner as a Superior Court judgment as to the fine, 2 and the fine may be recorded, enforced, or satisfied in like manner. 3 WILLFUL VIOLATION OF THIS ORDER IS A CRIMINAL OFFENSE. 4 5 DATED and ENTERED this 12<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2009. 6 7 8 9 MICHAEL E. STEVENSON 10 Securities Administrator 11 12 Approved by: Presented by: 13 An Elm 14 Suzanne Sarason Jack McClellan 15 Chief of Enforcement Financial Legal Examiner 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS 7 24 **Securities Division** ENTRY OF FINDINGS OF FACT AND PO Box 9033 25 CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND FINAL Olympia, WA 98507-9033

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