

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF PLEASANTS COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA
BUSINESS COURT DIVISION**

**BB LAND, LLC, a West Virginia Company,
and JB EXPLORATION 1, LLC,
a West Virginia Company,
PLAINTIFFS**

vs.

**Civil Action No.: 18-C-02
Presiding Judge: Michael D. Lorensen
Resolution Judge: H. Charles Carl, III**

**BLACKROCK ENTERPRISES, LLC,
a West Virginia Company, and
MICHAEL L. BENEDUM,
DEFENDANTS**

And

**BLACKROCK ENTERPRISES, LLC,
DEFENDANT/THIRD-PARTY PLAINTIFF**

vs.

**JAY-BEE PRODUCTION COMPANY,
a West Virginia Corporation,
JAY-BEE OIL & GAS, INC.,
a West Virginia Corporation,
RANDY BRODA and
DEBBIE B. BRODA MORGAN,
THIRD-PARTY DEFENDANTS**

FILED IN OFFICE

OCT 15 2018

**MILLIE FARNSWORTH
CIRCUIT COURT CLERK
PLEASANTS CO WV**

**ORDER REGARDING MEDIATION OR OTHER METHOD OF DISPUTE
RESOLUTION**

This 5th day of October, 2018, came all of the above parties by their respective counsel by telephonic conference as directed by the Resolution Judge for purposes of scheduling Mediation in this matter. After hearing all counsel as to this issue a date, time and location for Mediation to be conducted in this matter was resolved with the mutual agreement of all parties.

Therefore, pursuant to Trial Court Rule 29.08(e), mediation or other agreed alternate dispute resolution in this action shall be conducted on Monday, December 10, 2018 beginning at 10:00 a.m., at the Office of Bowles Rice LLP, University Town Centre, 125 Granville Square, Morgantown, West Virginia, and shall continue day to day thereafter at the sole discretion of the Resolution Judge.

Mediation or other agreed method of dispute resolution shall be conducted by Honorable H. Charles Carl, III, assigned by the Business Court Division as Resolution Judge.

MEDIATION shall be conducted in accordance with the following procedures:

PRE-MEDIATION CONFERENCE CALL

1. Counsel for the parties shall schedule a conference call with the Resolution Judge to discuss any outstanding issues related to the mediation if needed prior to mediation.

REQUIRED PARTICIPANTS

2. The following persons are required to attend the mediation **in person**:
 - a) Corporate and legal entity representative for each party with full authority to enter into and sign a settlement agreement;
 - b) Lead trial counsel for each party.

ABSENT GOOD CAUSE SHOWN, FAILURE OF ANY PERSON REQUIRED TO ATTEND MEDIATION IN PERSON SHALL SUBJECT THAT PERSON TO SANCTIONS, UP TO AND INCLUDING THE STRIKING OF PLEADINGS AND DISMISSAL. COUNSEL AND PARTY REPRESENTATIVES MUST ARRIVE AT MEDIATION BY NO LATER THAN 9:45 A.M. ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2018.

CONFIDENTIALITY

3. The contents of the mediation statements and the mediation discussions, including any resolution or settlement shall remain confidential, shall not be used in the present litigation nor any other litigation (whether presently pending or filed in the future), and shall not be construed as nor constitute an admission. Breach of this provision shall subject the violator to sanctions.

MEDIATION STATEMENTS

4. Mediation statements shall be delivered to the office of Judge H. Charles Carl, III, Hampshire County Judicial Center, 50 South High Street, Suite 6, Post Office Box 856, Romney, West Virginia 26757 for receipt by no later than Tuesday, November 27, 2018. Mediation Statements shall either be hand delivered or delivered by Federal Express, UPS or any other express mail service with tracking capability.
5. **Mediation statements are confidential.** Mediation statements shall state on their face “**CONFIDENTIAL MEDIATION STATEMENT**” and shall be placed in envelopes marked “**CONFIDENTIAL MEDIATION STATEMENT**”. Mediation statements **shall not** be filed with the Clerk’s office, **shall not** be exchanged among the parties or counsel (unless the parties or counsel so desire), **shall not** be provided to the Presiding Judge and **shall not** become part of the record in this matter.
6. Mediation statements may be in memorandum or letter form. They must be double-spaced, in no less than 12-point font, and be no longer **than fifteen (15) pages**.
7. Mediation statements **must** contain the following information:

- a) **Contact information:** all trial counsel participating in the mediation shall provide: (1) a direct dial telephone work number; (2) a cell phone number; and (3) an electronic mail address where lead trial counsel can be reached.
- b) **Parties:** identify the party/parties represented, describe their relationship, if any, to each other, and by whom each party is represented, including the identity of all representatives who will be participating on behalf of a party/parties during the mediation.
- c) **Factual and Procedural History of the Case:** provide a brief summary of the factual and procedural history of the case, including a statement of the essential facts of the litigation, clearly indicating which material facts are not in dispute and which material facts remain in dispute. Each party shall provide their theories of liability and a one-page itemization of damages claimed, both liquidated and special and shall provide their theories of defense and their position as to the damages claimed, if applicable. The one-page itemization of damages claimed by each party shall be provided to adverse parties by no later than November 27, 2018.
- d) **Critical Deposition Testimony:** provide the deposition synopsis of any critical fact witness or expert witness, or in the alternative, a summary of the testimony of such fact witness or expert witness.
- e) **Summary of Applicable Law:** provide a brief summary of the applicable law, including statutes, cases and standards.
- f) **Strengths and Weaknesses of the Case:** provide an **honest** discussion of the strengths **and** weaknesses of the party's claims and/or defenses, the likelihood of a verdict in favor of the party, an opinion as to the probable verdict range, and an opinion as to the range of settlement value.

- g) **Settlement Efforts:** provide a **brief** discussion of prior settlement negotiations and discussions between the parties, including any outstanding demand made by the parties to settle the litigation, any response by the opposing parties to that demand, and an assessment as to why settlement has not been reached.
- h) **Settlement Proposal:** provide the party's term(s) of settlement, including any proposed term(s) that may be non-monetary, as well as any suggestions regarding how the Resolution Judge may assist the parties in reaching a resolution.
- i) **Fees and Costs:** list separately (I) attorneys' fees and costs incurred to date; (II) other fees and costs incurred to date; (III) a good faith estimate of additional attorneys' fees and costs to be incurred if this matter is not settled; and (IV) a good faith estimate of additional fees and costs to be incurred if this matter is not settled. Remember, this information is confidential and shall remain so.
- j) **Other Settlements:** if applicable, counsel shall provide the gross settlement amount of any other settlements on behalf of a party whose case is being mediated.
- k) **Other Matters:** in addition to the required topics described above, and provided that the mediation statement complies with the page limit stated above, counsel are encouraged to address any other matters they believe may be of assistance to the Resolution Judge.
- l) **Request for Expert Technical and Legal Assistance for Resolution Judge:**

Counsel for Defendant did propose that the Resolution Judge consider accepting the services of an independent, non-interested legal and technical expert attorney qualified in the field of Oil and Gas law to attend and assist the Resolution Judge in the Mediation of this case. Counsel cited as reason that the issues in dispute in this case are of a highly technical and legal nature requiring

intricate and specialized knowledge of the Oil and Gas industry to assist the parties in reaching resolution, and that at prior attempts to settle this matter, both before and after the filing of the pleadings, that settlement negotiations have stalled out over extremely technical legal issues unique to the Oil and Gas industry. Counsel feels that without specialized expert assistance in this matter to assist the parties in reaching a settlement, that resolution would be doubtful.

After hearing argument as to same from all counsel, it appears the preliminary consensus between the parties, prior to discussing same with their clients, is that this would in fact assist the Resolution Judge and the parties in reaching a settlement in this case. Therefore, upon request of the parties, the Resolution Judge shall consider the request and did instruct the parties that in order to consider same, if all counsel and their parties do desire such independent expert assistance for the Mediation of this case, that first the parties shall all confer and either reach agreement as to such an expert attorney who could assist the court at Mediation, or in the alternative to submit three such qualified experts for the Resolution Judge to pick one to assist at Mediation. Therefore, it is the Order of the Resolution Judge for the parties to meet and first, reach unanimous agreement as to whether they do desire for the Resolution Judge to utilize the assistance of such an expert at Mediation, and then if so, to agree as to the identity of the proposed expert to assist the Resolution Judge at Mediation, or to submit the names of three satisfactory experts for the Resolution Judge to choose from. In addition,

counsel are also to discuss any procedural rules or requirements in order to utilize the expert at Mediation and comply with all Rules of Civil Procedure and Trial Court Rules. Counsel are to report back to the Court on this matter on or before October 26, 2018, and a written agreement shall be executed by all counsel as to the terms, conditions, etc., of the participation of the expert in this matter.

EXHIBITS TO MEDIATION STATEMENT

8. While counsel may submit documents that will assist the Resolution Judge in understanding the issues and resolving the litigation as exhibits to the mediation statement, counsel is cautioned to limit exhibits to only those documents counsel believes will be crucial to resolution of the litigation.

MEMORIALIZATION OF SETTLEMENT

9. If the parties reach a resolution of their dispute, the Resolution Judge will ensure that it is memorialized before the mediation is deemed concluded.

EX PARTE CONTACTS

10. Before, during and after the scheduled mediation, the Resolution Judge may find it necessary and useful to communicate with one or more parties outside the presence of the other party or parties.

OBLIGATION OF GOOD FAITH PARTICIPATION

11. The required participants shall attend the entire mediation in person and shall be available and accessible throughout the mediation process. No party may be compelled by this Order, the Presiding Judge, or the Resolution Judge to settle a case involuntarily or against the party's judgment. However, the Resolution Judge expects the parties' full and good faith

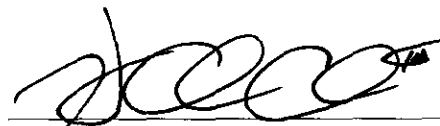
cooperation with the mediation process, and expects the participants to be prepared to participate fully, openly and knowledgeably in a mutual effort to examine and resolve issues. The Resolution Judge encourages all participants to keep an open mind in order to reassess their previous positions and to find creative means for resolving the dispute.

All counsel are reminded of their obligations to read and comply with this Order. To avoid the imposition of sanctions, counsel shall advise the Resolution Judge immediately of any problems regarding compliance with the Order.

It is so ORDERED.

The Clerk shall transmit certified copies to counsel of record and *pro se* parties.

ENTER: 10/11/18



H. CHARLES CARL, III
RESOLUTION JUDGE
BUSINESS COURT DIVISION