IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR PALM BEACH COUNTY , FLORIDA

CASE NO.: 502012CP004391XXXXSB

IN RE:

ESTATE OF SIMON L. BERNSTEIN,

Deceased.

ELIOT IVAN BERNSTEIN, PRO SE

Petitioner(s),

vs.

TESCHER & SPALLINA, P.A., (and all parties associated and of counsel); ROBERT L. SPALLINA (both personally and professionally); DONALD R. TESCHER (both personally and professionally); THEODORE STUART BERNSTEIN (as alleged personal representative, trustee, successor trustee) (both personally and professionally); et al.,

Respondent(s).

EXCERPT OF PROCEEDINGS BEFORE

HONORABLE MARTIN COLIN

DATE: June 12, 2014

TIME: 9:50 a.m. - 10:35 a.m.

		2	
1	APPEARING ON BEHALF OF WILLIAM E.	1	know, fulfill his duties and not run afoul of
	STANSBURY:	2	Eliot, but we've got two or three more petitions.
2	PETER M. FEAMAN, P.A.	3	And the fees, I think, so far, approaching \$50,000
3	3615 W. BOYNTON BEACH BOULEVARD BOYNTON BEACH, FL 33436	4	for the curator.
Ū	By: PETER M. FEAMAN, ESQ.	5	THE COURT: Well, the way it works is pretty
4		6	simple. I mean, you know, if Mr. Brown is getting
5 6	APPEARING ON BEHALF OF TED BERNSTEIN: PAGE, MRACHEK, FITZGERALD ROSE	7	bombarded by a party, and, you know, I mean, he's
	KONOPKA & DOW, P.A.	8	concerned that it may not be necessary and
7	505 SOUTH FLAGLER DRIVE, SUITE 600	9	reasonable, then he, you know, he deals with that
	WEST PALM BEACH, FL 33401	10	and causes himself not to have wasted time, but he
8	By: ALAN B. ROSE, ESQ. MATWICZYK & BROWN	11	knows how to handle that.
Ĭ	625 N. FLALGER DRIVE, SUITE 401	12	MR. ROSE: We have no objection to Mr. Brown.
10	WEST PALM BEACH, FL 33401	13	It's not his the issue is not really with him,
11	By: BENJAMIN P. BROWN, ESQ. (CURATOR)	14	but I think the curator needs some protection from
12	JOHN P. MORRISSEY, ESQ.	15	constantly being bombarded
	330 CLEMATIS STREET, SUITE 213	16	THE COURT: He can protect himself.
13	WEST PALM BEACH, FL 33401	17	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: Are you his attorney
14 15	ELIOT I. BERNSTEIN, Pro se	18	too?
16		19	THE COURT: Eliot, no, no. Don't do that.
17	BE IT REMEMBERED, that the following	20	MR. BROWN: Actually, Judge, this kind of
18	proceedings were taken in the above-styled cause before	21	dovetails into what happened on February 23rd. I
19 20	the Honorable MARTIN COLIN, at the Palm Beach County Courthouse, 200 West Atlantic Avenue, Room 8, in the City	22	did have the two motions for instruction, one of
21	of Delray Beach, County of Palm Beach, State of Florida,	23	them was when Eliot asked me
22	on June 12, 2014, to wit:	24	MR. FEAMAN: May 23rd.
23		25	MR. BROWN: May 23rd. Asked me to look into
24 25			
		3	
1	P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S	3 1	44 different subcategories of documents and kind
1			44 different subcategories of documents and kind of take the lead on objecting to the Tescher
	P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S	1	_
2	P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S	1 2	of take the lead on objecting to the Tescher
2 3	P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S ***** THE COURT: Okay. All right. What's next?	1 2 3	of take the lead on objecting to the Tescher Spallina accounting. The other one is with regard
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PLEASANTON, GREENHILL, MEEK & MARSAA 561/833.7811

		6	
1	said, stop, you don't have to go further. That's	1	trust, who weren't here on the 23rd, or didn't get
2	the position. That's law. You don't do that. If	2	notice. And this is the notice service list.
3	there is an accounting, there is a rule on	3	I mean, this is everybody.
4	objections. The parties object, they don't use	4	THE COURT: Let's put the notice aside. Is
5	you. You don't work for them, which is true, I'm	5	there any other have you guys agreed upon the
6	no one's here attorney.	6	form of the order now, or you didn't notice this?
7	THE COURT: Right.	7	MR. ROSE: I think that my comments are
8	MR. BROWN: You work for the court, that's	8	minor. I think Mr. Brown approved them. So I
9	what you said. You said, you are not an advocate.	9	have no objection to the order.
10	You only investigate things that the parties may	10	THE COURT: In this packet, give me a clean
11	be interested in. They can do that do what	11	order, Mr. Brown.
12	they think they need to do based on the rules of	12	MR. BROWN: All right. I didn't have a
13	procedure and the statutes.	13	problem with it's not necessarily a clean
14	THE COURT: All right. So if someone asked	14	order, Your Honor, itself an order.
15	to do something you think is outside the scope of	15	THE COURT: One that I can sign, I mean.
16	what I ordered, what I mentioned in the hearings,	16	This has Mr. Rose's changes that he has written
17	then don't do it.	17	in.
18	MR. BROWN: Your Honor, you also didn't enter	18	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: Can I do we all
19	an order on those motions on May 23rd.	19	have copies of Roses' things?
20	THE COURT: Well, someone has to submit them	20	THE COURT: Let me see what
21	to me.	21	MR. BROWN: Mr. Rose e-mailed them to
22	MR. BROWN: I did, Your Honor. I	22	everybody. But they are attached to that May 30th
23	submitted I submitted them to all the parties.	23	letter.
24	Mr. Rose had some changes.	24	THE COURT: I'll give you a copy of it. Any
25	THE COURT: Okay.	25	reason not to sign this based upon that hearing
1	MP RPOWN: I then you then went on	7	that I had
1	MR. BROWN: I then you then went on	1	that I had.
2	vacation and then, unfortunately, got ill. I sent	1 2	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: Are you saying he's
2 3	vacation and then, unfortunately, got ill. I sent you a letter that said here are the competing	1 2 3	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: Are you saying he's not authorized, as the estate, if he finds missing
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1	THE COURT: He's not.	1	trying to get this case closed.
2	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: You're precluding him.	2	I mean, he just said are you having
3	THE COURT: He is not.	3	problems scheduling hearings. I want hearings
4	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: Well, he's the PR	4	since, you know, May.
5	tech	5	THE COURT: Hold on. Let me take a look at
6	MR. BROWN: No, I'm not the personal	6	this one.
7	representative, and I have declined to serve.	7	Okay. All right. So I'm going to order
8	THE COURT: He's the curator, it's a	8	everyone cooperate in coordinating hearings.
9	different role.	9	That's a silly thing to have difficulty with.
10	MR. BROWN: In fact, Your Honor, I was	10	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: Am I forced to take a
11	supposed to be the curator for just a couple of	11	deposition before I schedule a hearing with you on
12	months.	12	an unrelated
13	THE COURT: Right.	13	THE COURT: You can schedule a hearing. Then
14	MR. BROWN: We don't even have a hearing set.	14	you get a hearing date from me.
15	THE COURT: Yeah, the parties have to do the	15	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: He won't schedule a
16	objections to the accounting.	16	hearing until I take a deposition.
17	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: Okay.	17	THE COURT: Okay. Here's the way it works.
18	MR. BROWN: Your Honor, it's not anything	18	Scheduling is one thing.
19	that's teed up today, is that we don't have a	19	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: Right.
20	hearing set	20	THE COURT: Discovery is another thing.
21	THE COURT: What do you mean, a hearing on	21	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: That's right.
22	MR. BROWN: to get a personal	22	THE COURT: You try to do your discovery
23	representative.	23	based upon hearing dates coming up. So if you get
24	THE COURT: You know, I can't deal with	24	a hearing date within 30 days, then that tells you
25	getting hearing dates. Is there a problem with	25	you have to have discovery sooner. If you have a
		11	
			bearing in six months unlikely in my division
1	getting hearing dates?	1	hearing in six months, unlikely in my division,
2	getting hearing dates? MR. BROWN: There's not a problem with	1 2	then, you know, you could spread out your
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1	done here, before you all leave, and she'll	1	THE COURT: Sure.	
2	coordinate hearings with you.	2	MR. ROSE: Just had those discussions. I've	
3	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: Well, I can't do that.	3	tried to have discussions with some of the other	
4	l got to	4	beneficiaries to see if we can at least get a	
5	THE COURT: Why?	5	consensus. I thought that was a worthwhile	
6	-	6	-	
-	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: go back and check	-	exercise before we have what's going to be a half	
7	my schedules. Can I call in?	7	day or day contested trial on who should be the	
8	THE COURT: You want quick service and I'm	8	PR. One of the motions dovetails into that I	
9	going to give you	9	have two motions pending today. One is a motion	
10	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: I appreciate that. I	10	to compel Eliot to appear for deposition and	
11	greatly appreciate that.	11	comply with the privilege rule. We had a hearing	
12	THE COURT: So there's a rule there that says	12	you may recall on May 23rd with inadvertent	
13	if you ask for something and I give it to you,	13	privilege. I have that motion. I also have a	
14	like that	14	motion that relates to Mr. Brown, if you want to	
15	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: I didn't bring a cell	15	do that motion first, in case Mr. Brown wanted to	
16	phone, I don't have my schedule, I got doctors	16	leave. We filed a petition a motion for	
17	that's the biggest concern and if I'm free on	17	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: I'd like to do the	
18	those days they want to schedule them, great. I	18	privilege because if we get through this, we'll	
19	already gave them a date, you know, July 14th.	19	find out that he might not even be here in a	
20	THE COURT: Try to work it out, we'll get	20	minute.	
21	there.	21	MR. BROWN: I'd actually prefer to do	
22	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: Your secretary has	22	MR. ROSE: Do whatever Mr. Brown likes.	
23	been holding it.	23	MR. BROWN: I don't know that I like it, but	
24	MR. BROWN: Judge, the problem with	24	I don't have any opposition to it.	
25	appointing a personal representative is not that	25	MR. ROSE: It's the one about the mortgage.	
		15		17
1	nobody is there is no hearing date because	1	MR. BROWN: Okay.	
1		1	MR. BROWN: Okay. THE COURT: Let me see.	
	nobody has actually filed a motion to appoint a		-	
2	nobody has actually filed a motion to appoint a personal representative.	2	THE COURT: Let me see.	
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1	they did an amendment, and they extended the term	1	property.
2	for three years. The lease matures on June 19th,	2	MR. ROSE: They own the property. They are
3	which is in about seven days. Next week. The	3	the title owner. They are the mortgage they
4	first mortgage, not the lease, the first mortgage	4	are the mortgagee of the property.
5	matures. They are owed \$110,000, plus interest.	5	THE COURT: Okay. But who's the mortgagor?
6	The mortgage is held by a gentleman named Walter	6	MR. ROSE: Of the second mortgage, Simon
7	Somm. There is unpaid taxes for 2013. We're told	7	Bernstein, while he was alive. So now it's the
8	that the house is not insured. Okay. That's the	8	estate of Simon Bernstein.
9	starting point. What the estate has, which	9	THE COURT: So he owed the money. He's the
10	Mr. Brown is in possession of, is the estate has a	10	debtor on the debtor/creditor part of the
11	second mortgage on that property. There's a	11	mortgage, Simon was the debtor?
12	second mortgage holder on property when there is a	12	MR. ROSE: No, Simon was the creditor.
13	first, unpaid taxes, no insurance, you would want	13	THE COURT: Who's the debtor?
14	to take action to try to protect whatever equity	14	MR. ROSE: Bernstein Family Realty, an entity
15	is in the property. The current occupant of the	15	that owns the house.
16	house and just so I can assure you we're	16	THE COURT: Okay. I'm not I thought
17	going to hear it in a minute this is no way to	17	they own the house and Bernstein Family Realty
18	try to harm Eliot. This is trying to protect the	18	borrowed \$360,000, or whatever, the amount of the
19	assets that are in the estate, and try to protect	19	second mortgage is?
20	the value of it. But the tenant of the property	20	MR. ROSE: Correct. Bernstein Family Realty
21	is Eliot Bernstein and his family. They live in	21	potentially owns \$110,000, plus interest, to
22	there rent free. They don't pay taxes. I don't	22	Walter Somm. He's the first mortgage holder. And
23	have all the information other than that.	23	Bernstein Family Realty also owes 365,000, plus
24	And just if you indulge me for a little	24	interest, to the estate of Simon Bernstein.
25	background. I think Simon bought the house for	25	THE COURT: Which that transaction, how
1	Flight. He put the ownership though in an	19	did that accord mortgage come about?
1	Eliot. He put the ownership, though, in an	1	did that second mortgage come about?
2	entity called Bernstein Family Realty. It's	1 2	MR. ROSE: Simon put I think Simon put up
2 3	entity called Bernstein Family Realty. It's encumbered by two mortgages. And the mortgages	1 2 3	MR. ROSE: Simon put I think Simon put up all the money for the house and the renovations.
2 3 4	entity called Bernstein Family Realty. It's encumbered by two mortgages. And the mortgages exceed the value of the property. I don't know	1 2 3 4	MR. ROSE: Simon put I think Simon put up all the money for the house and the renovations. And so in order to
2 3 4 5	entity called Bernstein Family Realty. It's encumbered by two mortgages. And the mortgages exceed the value of the property. I don't know what it's exactly worth. I attached a Zillow,	1 2 3 4 5	MR. ROSE: Simon put I think Simon put up all the money for the house and the renovations. And so in order to THE COURT: So he had the owner give him a
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the concern is that Walter Somm, a third party,	1	MR. ROSE: The relief is for first at the
innocent guy, will have to file a lawsuit to	2	request of the curator, the curator would like to
foreclose his mortgage. Eliot is potentially	3	transfer the asset to the trustee of Simon's
going to be a party to that lawsuit because he's a	4	revocable trust.
tenant. Mr. Somm will probably spend a hundred or	5	THE COURT: The property that is owned by
\$200,000 in legal fees fighting with Eliot	6	Bernstein Family Realty, LLC?
Bernstein. And then at the end of the day, poof,	7	MR. ROSE: No, technically, the asset is just
there is nothing left. And the estate's \$365,000	8	the mortgage.
mortgage is worth nothing.	9	THE COURT: Is the mortgage.
We've raised the issue with Mr. Brown. We	10	MR. ROSE: Yeah, you know, the tangible
have worked very closely with him.	11	THE COURT: That's owned by the estate right
THE COURT: I understand.	12	now.
What do you say Eliot?	13	MR. ROSE: It's owned by the estate and under
MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: Well, to deconstruct	14	the control of Mr. Brown.
all those lies you really want me to start	15	THE COURT: And you
my father bought a house for my children. It	16	MR. ROSE: They would remain liable for
wasn't an asset of the estate till suddenly the	17	the trustees of the revocable trust is liable for
guys who altered the estate documents put it on an	18	the debts of a creditor. So, you know,
amended inventory, right after the long arm of the	19	Mr. Stansbury's counsel is here and he would be
law knocked on their door and said come to the	20	someone that might object to it. We're not asking
sheriff's office. This is part of an extortion.	21	to transfer it, other than to have someone other
I put it in motion to you. I asked for emergency	22	than Mr. Brown, who's not prepared to administer
hearings. And what they have done is beyond	23	the asset, to administer the asset. In fact, in
criminal. First of all, my the company, BFR,	24	discussions I've had with Mr. Brown, I mean,
is owned by my three kids entirely. The house	25	his one of Mr. Brown's discussions with me was
23		
trust owned the house. Okay. My brother and	1	he could transfer all the assets in the estate to
Oppenheimer conspired and I got a whole bunch	2	the revocable trust. If the trustee of the
of stuff showing what's happened here to take	3	revocable trust could administer the assets, he
over the management position of BFR. When my	4	would still be liable to Mr. Stansbury for any
father died there was supposed to be vote by the	5	claims. And, you know, you could have Mr. Brown
members, my three minor children, which could be,	6	as a curator take a very nominal role so we don't
or my wife, as quardians, to cleat a new member	7	have to incur as much manay. Alternatively, we

- members, my or my wife, as guardians, to elect a new member. Instead, Spallina anointed Janet Craig of Oppenheimer to self-anoint herself as manager of BFR. Then after they misuse all these funds, telling us, oh, we're going to use the kids' education funds to pay your house expenses, when there is all these other entities that have been paying for the house for years, my brother --Janet Craig of Oppenheimer says, oh, I'm turning over the management to Ted. She hands him all my personal files, my kids, all our statements,
- bills, everything, which I don't even get the
- bills. They've been going through BFR --
- THE COURT: Okay. I got your position. Let
- me ask you this. What's the relief that you're
- asking for, though? Hold on.
- I don't know what the relief is, that's
- what I'm trying to figure out.

have to incur as much money. Alternatively, we could have the PR hearing which --THE COURT: That's what we need to do. We need to have the PR hearing. MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: We need to have an evidentiary hearing on this, don't we, Your Honor? MR. ROSE: But in the short --THE COURT: Go ahead. MR. ROSE: In the short term, if you look at the exhibit we attached. THE COURT: Yeah, go ahead. MR. ROSE: The second mortgage. It's the Exhibit A. I don't have tabs, I apologize, but if you flip through --THE COURT: I see it. MR. ROSE: So there is a promissory note. It's signed by Simon Bernstein. I mean, I don't think there is any question that that's Simon's

signature. And he did it in July of 2008. And if

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1	you go to the next page, which is the actual	1	MR. FEAMAN: Right. So we think we can do
2	second mortgage, it's recorded in the public	2	that.
3	records of this county, on September the 4th,	3	THE COURT: Okay.
4	2008.	4	MR. FEAMAN: And he told me he won't do
5	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: Missing the promissory	5	anything precipitous. He knows he knew
6	note, which was supposed to be attached, but it's	6	Mr. Bernstein, he knows Mr. Stansbury, and
7	not.	7	THE COURT: All right.
8	MR. ROSE: I didn't think I would request	8	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: Your Honor, one
9	that Mr. Bernstein not comment when I'm speaking.	9	last
10	THE COURT: Yeah, true.	10	THE COURT: Okay. Hold on. No. No, I'm
11	MR. ROSE: So we have a mortgage, the second	11	deferring on the motion for instruction in this
12	mortgage. It's signed by Simon Bernstein. He set	12	matter.
13	up the structure with Bernstein Family Realty. I	13	MR. BROWN: Judge, on the PR thing just
14	don't care about the structure. We don't control	14	I'm going to go ahead and seek dates in early
15	Bernstein Family Realty. We have nothing to do	15	August.
16	with it. Our concern is very simply: If you ask	16	THE COURT: All right.
17	Eliot Bernstein what are you going to do when	17	MR. BROWN: Because we have notices of
18	Walter Somm files a foreclosure action, he's going	18	unavailability for July.
19	to tell you, I'm going to make Walter Somm spend	19	THE COURT: Okay.
20	every penny he's got to try to foreclose the	20	MR. BROWN: And frankly, between now and
21	mortgage on Bernstein Family Realty. And we're	21	early August, I can minimize my fees by just
22	going to be back here in two years, or whatever,	22	hanging on to what the estate's got.
23	saying the mortgage is worthless because it's all	23	THE COURT: If you guys will coordinate those
24	been burned away in fees. But at the same time, I	24	hearings.
25	don't think it's appropriate for Mr. Brown or the	25	MR. ELLIOT BERNSTEIN: I've never not
	77		
	27		
1	estate to buy the mortgage if until we take the	1	coordinated a hearing.
2	estate to buy the mortgage if until we take the deposition of Mr. Bernstein and find out if he has	2	THE COURT: Okay. All right. What's next,
2 3	estate to buy the mortgage if until we take the deposition of Mr. Bernstein and find out if he has any issues with regard to the mortgage or the	2 3	THE COURT: Okay. All right. What's next, the last one.
2 3 4	estate to buy the mortgage if until we take the deposition of Mr. Bernstein and find out if he has any issues with regard to the mortgage or the structure. I mean, other, you know, everything,	2 3 4	THE COURT: Okay. All right. What's next, the last one. MR. ROSE: Last one. Two motions to compel.
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2	CERTIFICATE	
3		
4	THE STATE OF FLORIDA	
	COUNTY OF PALM BEACH.	
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6		
7	I, DAVID L. MARSAA, Professional Reporter,	
	State of Florida at large, certify that I was	
	authorized to and did stenographically report the	
	foregoing proceedings and that the transcript is a	
	true and complete record of my stenographic notes.	
12 13	Dated this 15th day of June, 2014.	
14		
14		
13	DAVID L. MARSAA, COURT REPORTER	
16	DAVID E. MANORA, COURT INER ONTEN	
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