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FILED

MAY 2 2 2008

DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE

by K. Mar

BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Accusation of) No. H-7644 SF)
MICHAEL JAMES Deproto;)

Respondent.

ORDER GRANTING REINSTATEMENT OF LICENSE

On August 23, 1999, in Case No. H-7644 SF, a Decision was rendered which revoked the real estate broker license of Respondent effective September 16, 1999, but granted Respondent the right to the issuance of a restricted real estate broker license. A restricted real estate broker license was issued to Respondent on September 16, 1999, and Respondent has operated as a restricted real estate broker licensee since that time.

On April 9, 2007, Respondent petitioned for reinstatement of said real estate broker license, and the Attorney General of the State of California has been given notice of the filing of said petition.

I have considered the petition of Respondent and the evidence and arguments in support thereof. Respondent has

demonstrated to my satisfaction that Respondent meets the requirements of law for the issuance to Respondent of an unrestricted real estate broker license and that it would not be against the public interest to issue said license to Respondent.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that Respondent's petition for reinstatement is granted and that a real estate broker license be issued to Respondent if Respondent satisfies the following conditions within nine (9) months from the date of this Order:

- 1. Submittal of a completed application and payment of the fee for a real estate broker license.
- 2. Submittal of evidence of having, since the most recent issuance of an original or renewal real estate license, taken and successfully completed the continuing education requirements of Article 2.5 of Chapter 3 of the Real Estate Law for renewal of a real estate license.

This Order shall be effective immediately.

DATED: /// S

Real Estate Co

/Commissioner

DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE P. O. Box 187000 2 Sacramento, CA 95818-7000 Telephone: (916) 227-0789 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 13

DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE

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BEFORE THE

DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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In the Matter of the Accusation of) MICHAEL JAMES DE PROTO, Respondent.

NO. H-7644 SF

STIPULATION AND AGREEMENT

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It is hereby stipulated by and between MICHAEL JAMES DE PROTO (hereafter Respondent), represented by Matthew C. Freeman, Attorney at Law, and the Complainant, acting by and through Deidre L. Johnson, Counsel for the Department of Real Estate, as follows for the purpose of settling and disposing the Accusation as to him filed on November 19, 1998, in this matter:

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All issues which were to be contested and all evidence which was to be presented by Complainant and Respondent at a formal hearing on the Accusation, which hearing was to be held in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative

FILE NO. H-7644 SF

MICHAEL JAMES DE PROTO

Procedures Act (APA), shall instead and in place thereof be submitted solely on the basis of the provisions of this Stipulation and Agreement.

- 2. Respondent has received, read and understands the Statement to Respondent, and the Discovery Provisions of the APA filed by the Department of Real Estate in this proceeding.
- 3. On December 9, 1998, Respondent filed his Notice of Defense pursuant to Section 11505 of the Government Code for the purpose of requesting a hearing on the allegations in the Accusation. Respondent hereby freely and voluntarily withdraws said Notice of Defense. Respondent acknowledges that he understands that by withdrawing said Notice of Defense he will thereby waive his right to require the Commissioner to prove the allegations in the Accusation at a contested hearing held in accordance with the provisions of the APA, and that he will waive other rights afforded to him in connection with the hearing such as the right to present evidence in defense of the allegations in the Accusation and the right to cross-examine witnesses.
- 4. Respondent, pursuant to the limitations set forth below, hereby admits that the factual allegations pertaining to him in Paragraphs I through IV of the Accusation filed in this proceeding are true and correct and the Real Estate Commissioner shall not be required to provide further evidence of such allegations.
- 5. Without admitting the truth of the allegations pertaining to him contained in Paragraphs V through XIV of the Accusation, Respondent stipulates that he will not interpose a

defense thereto. This Stipulation is based on the factual allegations contained in the Accusation. In the interests of expedience and economy, Respondent chooses not to contest these allegations, but to remain silent and understands that, as a result thereof, these factual allegations, without being admitted or denied, will serve as a basis for the disciplinary action stipulated to herein. The Real Estate Commissioner shall not be required to provide further evidence to prove said factual allegations.

- 6. Respondent has received, read and understands the "Notice Concerning Costs of Subsequent Audit." Respondent understands, by agreeing to this Stipulation and Agreement, and after the findings set forth below in the "Determination of Issues" become final, that the Commissioner may charge Respondent for the costs of an audit that may be conducted pursuant to Section 10148 of the Business and Professions Code.
- 7. It is understood by the parties that the Real Estate Commissioner may adopt the Stipulation and Agreement as his decision in this matter thereby imposing the penalty and sanctions on Respondent's real estate license and license rights as set forth in the below "Order". In the event that the Commissioner in his discretion does not adopt the Stipulation and Agreement, it shall be void and of no effect, and Respondent shall retain the right to a hearing and proceeding on the Accusation under all the provisions of the APA and shall not be bound by any admission or waiver made herein.

8. The Order or any subsequent Order of the Real Estate Commissioner made pursuant to this Stipulation and Agreement shall not constitute an estoppel, merger or bar to any further administrative or civil proceedings by the Department of Real Estate with respect to any matters which were not specifically alleged to be causes for accusation in this proceeding.

DETERMINATION OF ISSUES

By reason of the foregoing stipulations and waivers and for the purpose of settlement of the pending Accusation as to Respondent without a hearing, it is stipulated and agreed that the following determination of issues shall be made:

The acts and/or omissions of Réspondent MICHAEL JAMES DE PROTO as stipulated above violate Sections 10145 and 10148 of the California Business and Professions Code (hereafter the Code), and Sections 2726, 2831, 2832, 2832.1, and 2834 of Title 10, California Code of Regulations, and constitute grounds for the suspension or revocation of the real estate broker license(s) and license rights of Respondent under the provisions of Section 10177(d) of the Code.

3.3

A. All real estate

ORDER

- A. All real estate license(s) and license rights of Respondent MICHAEL JAMES DE PROTO are revoked.
- B. A restricted real estate broker license shall be issued to Respondent pursuant to Section 10156.6 of the Code if he makes application therefor and pays to the Department the

appropriate fee for said license within ninety (90) days of the effective date of the Order.

- The restricted license issued to Respondent shall be subject to all of the provisions of Section 10156.7 of the Business and Professions Code and to the following limitations imposed under authority of Section 10156.6 of said Code:
 - The restricted license issued to Respondent may be suspended prior to hearing by order of the Real Estate Commissioner in the event of Respondent's conviction or plea of nolo contendere to a crime which bears a substantial relationship to Respondent's fitness or capacity as a real estate licensee.
 - Discreption 2) The restricted license may be suspended prior to hearing by Order of the Real estate Commissioner on evidence satisfactory to the Commissioner that Respondent has violated provisions of the California Real Estate Law, the Subdivided Lands Law, Regulations of the Real Estate Commissioner or conditions attaching to the restricted license.
 - Respondent shall not be eligible to apply for the issuance of an unrestricted real estate license, nor the removal of any of the conditions of the restricted license, until one (1) year has elapsed from the effective date of this Order.
 - Pursuant to Section 10148 of the Business and Professions

 Code, Respondent shall pay the Commissioner's reasonable

 cost for an audit as a result of the above found

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violations. In calculating the amount of the Commissioner's reasonable cost, the Commissioner may use the estimated average hourly salary for all Department Audit Section personnel performing audits of real estate brokers, and shall include an allocation for travel time to and from the auditor's place of work. shall pay such cost within sixty (60) days of receiving an invoice from the Commissioner detailing the activities performed during the audit and the amount of time spent performing those activities. The Commissioner may suspend the restricted license issued to Respondent pending a hearing held in accordance with Section 11500, et seq., of the Government Code, if payment is not timely made as provided for therein, or as provided for in a subsequent agreement between the Respondent and the Commissioner. The suspension shall remain in effect until payment is made in full or until Respondent enters into an agreement satisfactory to the Commissioner to provide for payment, or until a decision providing otherwise is adopted following a hearing held pursuant to this condition.

Sespondent shall, within nine (9) months from the effective date of this Order, present evidence satisfactory to the Real Estate Commissioner that Respondent has, since the most recent issuance of an original or renewal real estate license, taken and successfully completed the continuing education

requirements of Article 2.5 of Chapter 3 of the Real Estate Law for renewal of a real estate license. If Respondent fails to satisfy this condition, the Commissioner may order the suspension of the restricted license until the Respondent presents such evidence. The Commissioner shall afford Respondent the opportunity for hearing pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act to present such evidence.

August 10, 1999

DEADRE L. JOHNSON

Counsel for the Complainant

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FILE NO. H-7644 SF

I have read the Stipulation and Agreement, have

discussed it with my counsel or understand that I have the right

to consult legal counsel, and its terms are understood by me and

are agreeable and acceptable to me. I understand that I am

waiving rights given to me by the California Administrative

waive those rights, including the right of requiring the

hearing at which I would have the right to cross-examine

Procedure Act, and I willingly, intelligently and voluntarily

Commissioner to prove the allegations in the Accusation at a

1	witnesses against me and to present evidence in defense and			
2	mitigation of the charges.			
3	2 199			
4	DATED MICHAEL JAMES DE PROTO			
5	Respondent			
6				
7	APPROVED AS TO FORM:			
8	alulu W//			
9	DATED / MATTHEW/C. FREEMAN			
10	'Counsel for Respondent			
11	* * *			
12				
13	The foregoing Stipulation and Agreement is hereby			
14	adopted as my Decision and shall become effective at 12 o'clock			
15	noon on September 16 , 1999.			
16	77 77 70 00 000000 A A A 22			
17	IT IS SO ORDERED <u>August 23</u> , 1999.			
18	JOHN R. LIBERATOR			
19	Acting Real Estate Commissioner			
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21	John R Liberator			
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BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE STATE OF CALIFORNIA D

JUN 2 3 1999

DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE

By Lathloon Contrara

In the Matter of the Accusation of

MICHAEL JAMES DE PROTO,

Case No. <u>H-7644 SF</u>

OAH No. N-1998120238

Respondent

SECOND CONTINUED NOTICE OF HEARING ON ACCUSATION

To the above named respondent:				
You are hereby notified that a hearing will be held before the Department of Real Estate atThe				
Office of Administrative Hearings, the Elihu Harris State				
Building, 1515 Clay Street, Suite 206, Oakland, CA 94612				
on August 16, 1999, and August 17, 1999, at the hour of 9:00 AM, or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard, upon the Accusation served upon you. If you object to the place of hearing, you must notify the presiding administrative law judge of the Office of Administrative Hearings within ten (10) days after this notice is served on you. Failure to notify the presiding administrative law judge within ten days will deprive you of a change in the place of the hearing.				
You may be present at the hearing. You have the right to be represented by an attorney at your own expense. You are not entitled to the appointment of an attorney to represent you at public expense. You are entitled to represent yourself without legal counsel. If you are not present in person nor represented by counsel at the hearing, the Department may take disciplinary action against you based upon any express admission or other evidence including affidavits, without any notice to you.				

You may present any relevant evidence and will be given full opportunity to cross-examine all witnesses testifying against you. You are entitled to the issuance of subpenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of books, documents or other things by applying to the Department of Real Estate.

The hearing shall be conducted in the English language. If you want to offer the testimony of any witness who does not proficiently speak the English language, you must provide your own interpreter and pay his or her costs. The interpreter must be certified in accordance with Sections 11435.30 and 11435.55 of the Government Code.

DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE

Dated: __June 23, 1999

DEIDRE L. JOHNSON

Councal

BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

APR 2 8 1999

DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE

By Mathleen Contrass

In the Matter of the Accusation of

MICHAEL JAMES DE PROTO,

Case No. <u>H-7644 SF</u>
OAH No. <u>N-1998120238</u>

Respondent

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To the above named respondent:

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T	he Office of Administrative Hearings, the Elih	u Harris S	State
В	uilding, 1515 Clay Street, Suite 206, Oakland,	CA 94612)
hearing, (10) day:	June 7, 1999, and June 8, 1999 on thereafter as the matter can be heard, upon the Accusation served upon you must notify the presiding administrative law judge of the Office of Adms after this notice is served on you. Failure to notify the presiding administrative you of a change in the place of the hearing.	ou. If you object ainistrative Hear	to the place of
	u may be present at the hearing. You have the right to be represented by an atto	orney at your ow	n expense. You

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DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE

Dated: April 28, 1999

DEIDRE L. JOHNSON

Counsel

DEC 2 9 1998

BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE

By Athleen Controls

In the Matter of the Accusation of			
. •	1	Case No.	H-7644 SF
MICHAEL JAMES DE PROTO,	}	OAH No.	N-1998120238
	· J		

NOTICE OF HEARING ON ACCUSATION

To the above named respondent:

Respondent

	You are hereby notified that a hearing will be held before the Department of Real Estate at
	The Office of Administrative Hearings, the Elihu Harris State
	Building, 1515 Clay Street, Suite 206, Oakland, CA 94612
or a: hear (10)	February 10, 1999, and February 11, 1999, at the hour of 9:00 AM, soon thereafter as the matter can be heard, upon the Accusation served upon you. If you object to the place of ring, you must notify the presiding administrative law judge of the Office of Administrative Hearings within ten days after this notice is served on you. Failure to notify the presiding administrative law judge within ten days deprive you of a change in the place of the hearing.

You may be present at the hearing. You have the right to be represented by an attorney at your own expense. You are not entitled to the appointment of an attorney to represent you at public expense. You are entitled to represent yourself without legal counsel. If you are not present in person nor represented by counsel at the hearing, the Department may take disciplinary action against you based upon any express admission or other evidence including affidavits, without any notice to you.

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The hearing shall be conducted in the English language. If you want to offer the testimony of any witness who does not proficiently speak the English language, you must provide your own interpreter and pay his or her costs. The interpreter must be certified in accordance with Sections 11435.30 and 11435.55 of the Government Code.

DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE

Dated: December 30, 1998

DEMDRE L. JOHNSON

Counsel

DEIDRE L: JOHNSON, Counsel 1 State Bar No. 66322 Department of Real Estate 2 P. O. Box 187000 Sacramento, CA 95818-7000 3 Telephone: (916) 227-0789 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

NOV 1 9 1998

DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE

2x Kathleen Contraras

BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

* * *

In the Matter of the Accusation of)

NO. H-7644 SF

MICHAEL JAMES DE PROTO,

Respondent.

ACCUSATION

The Complainant, Les R. Bettencourt, a Deputy Real Estate Commissioner of the State of California, for causes of Accusation against MICHAEL JAMES DE PROTO, is informed and alleges as follows:

PRELIMINARY ALLEGATIONS

Ι

Respondent MICHAEL JAMES DE PROTO (hereafter Respondent) is presently licensed and/or has license rights under the Real Estate Law, Part 1 of Division 4 of the California Business and Professions Code (hereafter the Code).

ΙI

The Complainant, Les R. Bettencourt, a Deputy Real Estate Commissioner of the State of California, makes this Accusation against Respondent in his official capacity and not otherwise.



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III

At all times herein mentioned, Respondent was and is licensed by the Department as a real estate broker, individually and doing business as D & G EQUITY MANAGEMENT and RUSSIAN RIVER VACATION HOMES.

IV

At least within the last three years, Respondent engaged in activities on behalf of others for which a real estate license is required, for or in expectation of compensation pursuant to Section 10131(b) of the Code, and leased or rented, offered to lease or rent, solicited prospective tenants, collected rents on, and/or managed certain real properties in California. Respondent also owned another business, under the name of D & G MAINTENANCE COMPANY, that provided real property repair and maintenance services to properties managed under his real estate license.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION (1996. AUDIT)

V

Beginning in about July of 1996, the Department conducted an audit of the business activities of Respondent for the time period from about January 1, 1995 through July 31, 1996 (hereafter the audit period). During the course of the property management activities described above, Respondent received and disbursed funds in trust on behalf of others, and deposited the trust funds into a bank account at West America Bank, Guerneville, California, account number 403-05261-6. in the name of D & G Equity Management Trust Account.



In connection with the receipt and disbursement of trust funds, Respondent failed to deposit and maintain the trust funds in a trust account or in a neutral escrow depository, or to deliver them into the hands of the owners of the funds as required by Section 10145 of the Code, in such a manner that as of July 31, 1996, there was a trust fund shortage in the approximate sum of \$1,213.33.

VII

In connection with the receipt and disbursement of trust funds as above alleged, Respondent:

- (a) Failed to maintain a written control record of all trust funds received and disbursed containing all information required by Section 2831 of Title 10, California Code of Regulations (hereafter the Regulations);
- (b) Failed to deposit trust funds into a trust account in the name of Respondent as trustee at a bank or other financial institution in conformance with Section 2832 of the Regulations; and,
- (c) Failed to obtain the prior written consent of the principals for the reduction of the aggregate balance of trust funds allocated to at least Accounts No. 1 and 2 to an amount less than the existing aggregate trust fund liability to the owners of said funds, in conformance with Section 2832.1 of the Regulations.



VIII

The authorized signatories on the above trust account were Respondent and Earnest McCulloh, a licensed real estate broker. At no time herein did Respondent have a written agreement with McCulloh pursuant to Sections 2726 and 2834 of Title 10, California Code of Regulations (hereafter the Regulations).

ΙX

In addition to property management fees charged to Respondent's property owners, Respondent also billed owners for labor and material costs incurred by Respondent for maintenance and repairs performed on the real properties on behalf of the owners. Respondent failed to disclose to such owners, including but not limited to Laura Wingate, that he marked up amounts charged to the owners for materials and supplies to amounts higher than actually incurred, in addition to a disclosed mark up of labor charges. Such undisclosed mark ups constitute Respondent's claiming or taking of secret or undisclosed amounts of compensation, commission or profit during the audit period or the failure of Respondent to reveal the full amount of such compensation, commission or profit to Respondent's clients.

Χ

The acts and/or omissions of Respondent as alleged above constitute grounds for disciplinary action under the following provisions:

(a) As to Paragraph VI, under Section 10145 of the Code in conjunction with Section 10177(d) of the Code;



(b) As to Paragraph VII(a), under Section 2831 of the Regulations in conjunction with Section 10177(d) of the Code;

- (c) As to Paragraph VII(b), under Section 10145 of the Code and Section 2832 (formerly 2830) of the Regulations in conjunction with Section 10177(d) of the Code;
- (d) As to Paragraph VII(c), under Section 2832.1 of the Regulations in conjunction with Section 10177(d) of the Code;
- (e) As to Paragraph VIII, under Sections 2726 and 2834 of the Regulations in conjunction with Section 10177(d) of the Code; and,
- (f) As to Paragraph IX, under Section 10176(a) and 10176(g) of the Code.

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION (1997 AUDIT)

XI

Beginning in about November of 1997, the Department conducted a follow-up audit of the business activities of Respondent for the audit period in order to obtain further documentation regarding Respondent's mark ups of labor and material costs to property owners as found in the 1996 audit alleged above.

XII

In connection with the audit, Respondent was requested to produce specified documents and records executed or obtained by



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him in connection with transactions for which a real estate license is required for the audit period. Said records include the following: "For the year 1997: A complete copy of the April 1997 accounting prepared for your client and property owner, John Michael, including statement(s) to owner, invoices from D & G Equity (front and back), original invoices from vendors, and information regarding labor charged to client versus labor costs actually incurred."

IIIX

Beginning in or about November of 1997, and continuing through the present, Respondent failed to retain and make available for examination and inspection by a designated representative of the Commissioner of the Department the records requested and described in Paragraph XII above.

VIX

The acts and/or omissions of Respondent as alleged above violate Section 10148 of the Code, and constitute grounds for disciplinary action under the provisions of Section 10177(d) of the Code.

PRIOR PROCEEDINGS

VX

Effective May 4, 1987, in Case No. H-5598 SF, the Real Estate Commissioner revoked the real estate salesperson license of Respondent and granted the right to a restricted salesperson license for violations of Sections 10130, 10137, 10145, and 10177(d) of the California Business and Professions Code.



IVX

Effective July 5, 1988, in Case No. H-5914 SF, the Real Estate Commissioner denied the application of Respondent for a real estate broker license for violations of Sections 480(a)(3), 10137, 10165, and 10177(d) of the California Business and Professions Code.

WHEREFORE, Complainant prays that a hearing be conducted on the allegations of this Accusation and that upon proof thereof a decision be rendered imposing disciplinary action against all licenses and license rights of Respondent under the Real Estate Law (Part 1 of Division 4 of the Business and Professions Code), and for such other and further relief as may be proper under other provisions of law.

Deputy Real Estate Commissioner

Dated at Oakland, California,

this 4th day of November, 1998

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