

2. Venue of this proceeding and this Motion is proper in this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1408 and 1409.

3. The statutory bases for the relief requested herein are sections 105(a), 107(b), and 1102 of the Bankruptcy Code.

Background

4. On March 2, 2016 (the “Petition Date”), the Debtors filed voluntary petitions with this Court under chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code. The Debtors are operating their business and managing their properties as debtors in possession pursuant to sections 1107(a) and 1108 of the Bankruptcy Code. No trustee or examiner has been appointed in these Cases.

5. On March 10, 2016, the United States Trustee for Region 3 (the “U.S. Trustee”) appointed the Committee to represent the interests of all unsecured creditors in these Cases pursuant to section 1102 of the Bankruptcy Code. The members appointed to the Committee are: (i) TCW/Crescent Mezzanine Partners *et al.*, (ii) New York Life Investment Management Mezzanine Partners, LP; (iii) Stitching Pensioenfonds ABP; (iv) Nike, Inc.; (v) Asics America Corp.; (vi) GGP Limited Partnership; and (vii) Realty Income Corp. The *Notice of Appointment of Committee of Unsecured Creditors* [Docket No. 262] was filed on March 10, 2016. On March 16, 2016, AlpInvest Partners, B.V., on behalf of Stitching Pensioenfonds ABP, resigned from the Committee.

Relief Requested

6. Section 1102(b)(3) of the Bankruptcy Code states, in relevant part, that a creditors’ committee appointed under section 1102(a) of the Bankruptcy Code shall “provide access to information for creditors who (i) hold claims of the kind represented by that committee;

and (ii) are not appointed to the committee.” 11 U.S.C. § 1102(b)(3)(A). However, section 1102(b)(3)(A) does not indicate how a creditors’ committee should provide “access to information” to creditors nor does the associated legislative history provide any guidance.

7. The lack of specificity in section 1102(b)(3)(A) creates significant issues for debtors and creditors’ committees. Typically, a debtor and other parties will share various confidential and other non-public proprietary information with a creditors’ committee (the “Confidential Information”).² Creditors’ committees then use this Confidential Information to assess, among other things, a debtor’s capital structure, opportunities for the restructuring of a debtor’s business in chapter 11, potential asset sales, potential litigation, the results of any revised operations of the debtor, and the debtor’s overall prospects for reorganization or liquidation under a chapter 11 plan. Section 1102(b)(3)(A) raises the question of whether a creditors’ committee could be required to share another party’s (including a debtor’s) Confidential Information with any creditor. In this case, the Committee expects the Debtors and other parties to provide, among other things, information about asset sales, valuations of properties, information pertaining to potential litigation claims, and historical financial and related information which may be confidential under section 107 of the Bankruptcy Code, Rule 9018 of the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedures and applicable state or federal law.

8. In this case, absent appropriate protections, the Debtors and other parties might be unwilling or unable to share Confidential Information with the Committee, thereby impeding the Committee’s ability to function effectively. As such, given the importance of the

² For purposes of this Motion, the term “Confidential Information” shall mean all confidential or proprietary information, documents, communications and matters of whatever nature and kind disclosed, including all summaries thereof or information derived therefrom, provided by the Debtors or any professionals employed by the Debtors to the Committee or any professionals employed by the Committee.

issue, the Committee seeks an order of the Court clarifying the requirement of the Committee to provide access to information to exclude Confidential Information.

9. Section 1102(b)(3)(A) could also be read to permit the disclosure of attorney-client privileged information (or information protected by any other applicable privilege or doctrine). Such a reading of the statute raises the question of whether the Committee could be required to disclose another party's or its own privileged information (collectively, the "Privileged Information").³ Clearly, any obligation to disseminate Privileged Information could hamstring Committee counsel's ability to effectively communicate with and advise the Committee. Thus, the Committee seeks an order of the Court clarifying that the Committee is not obligated under section 1102 to provide access to any Privileged Information. However, the Committee should be permitted, but not required, to provide access to Privileged Information to any party so long as (a) such Privileged Information was not Confidential Information, and (b) the relevant privilege was held and controlled solely by the Committee.

10. When a statute is clear and unambiguous, "the sole function of the courts is to enforce it according to its terms." *U.S. v. Ron Pair Enters., Inc.*, 489 U.S. 235, 241 (1989) (quoting *Caminetti v. United States*, 242 U.S. 470, 485 (1917)). However, in "rare cases [in which] the literal application of a statute will produce a result demonstrably at odds with the intention of its drafters . . . the intention of the drafters, rather than the strict language, controls." *Id.* at 242-43 (citing *Griffin v. Oceanic Contractors, Inc.*, 458 U.S. 564 (1982) (internal quotation omitted)).

³ For the purposes of this Motion, the term "Privileged Information" shall mean any information subject to the attorney-client or some other state, federal, or other jurisdictional law privilege (including attorney-work product), whether such privilege is solely controlled by the Committee or is a joint or common interest privilege with the Debtors or some other party.

11. The Committee respectfully submits that section 1102(b)(3)(A) is unclear and ambiguous. The statute simply requires a creditors' committee "to provide access to information," yet sets forth no guidelines as to the type, kind, and extent of the information to be provided. In its extreme, section 1102(b)(3)(A) could be read as requiring a creditors' committee to provide access to all information provided to it by any party, or developed through the exercise of its investigative function, regardless of whether the information is confidential, privileged, proprietary, or material non-public information and regardless of whether disseminating such information implicates securities laws disclosure requirements (where applicable). *See* 17 C.F.R. §§ 243.100 to 243.103 (2005).

12. The legislative history for section 1102 does not provide any further guidance on this point and merely reiterates that language of section 1102(b)(3). *See* H.R. Rep. No. 109-31, 109th Cong., 1st Sess. 87 (2005) ("Section 405(b) requires the committee to give creditors having claims of the kind represented by the committee access to information. In addition, the committee must solicit and receive comments from these creditors and, pursuant to court order, make additional reports and disclosures available to them."). As such, the Court should look to other sections of the Bankruptcy Code for guidance regarding whether Congress intended to require committees to disclose confidential information pursuant to section 1102(b)(3). Based on the terms of the Bankruptcy Code and Bankruptcy Rules, it is clear that Congress could not have intended for a creditors' committee to be required to provide unfettered access to every type and kind of information that a creditors' committee receives from another party. If this had been the intention, section 1102(b)(3) would then frustrate other provisions of the Bankruptcy Code and Bankruptcy Rules, such as section 107(b) of the Bankruptcy Code or Bankruptcy Rule 9018.

13. Section 107(b)(1) of the Bankruptcy Code provides that “on request of a party in interest, the bankruptcy court shall . . . protect an entity with respect to trade secret or confidential research, development, or commercial information.” The language of section 107(b)(1) is mandatory, not permissive. *Video Software Dealers Ass’n v. Orion Pictures Corp.*, 21 F.3d 24, 27 (2d Cir. 1994) (providing that the protections of section 107(b)(1) are mandatory upon request).

14. That any interpretation of section 1102(b)(3) must be in keeping with the mandatory provisions of section 107(b)(1) is further supported by Bankruptcy Rule 9018, which states, in relevant part, that “on motion or on its own initiative, with or without notice, the court may make any order which justice requires to protect the estate or any entity in respect of a trade secret or other confidential research, development, or commercial information.” Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9018. As a result, section 107(b)(1) of the Bankruptcy Code and Bankruptcy Rule 9018 strongly suggest that this Court should protect the Confidential Information and all Privileged Information from disclosure to general creditors.

15. In addition, section 105(a) of the Bankruptcy Code empowers the Court to “issue any order . . . that is necessary or appropriate to carry out the provisions of this title.” The Committee submits the requested relief is necessary for the Committee to fulfill its obligations as set forth under section 1103(c) of the Bankruptcy Code. Moreover, the requested relief is appropriate and within the Court’s authority.

16. The relief sought by the Committee is not only for the benefit of the Debtors and the Committee, but for the benefit of all constituents in that it ensures the proper functioning of the chapter 11 process. Further, the Committee needs the benefit of the relief sought in this Motion to ensure that it does not breach any confidentiality provisions in its

bylaws. A creditors' committee cannot be put in a position of either violating the statute or breaching a confidentiality agreement and thereby subjecting itself to suit by the Debtors and potentially other parties

17. Finally, the risk to the Committee of having to provide its constituency with access to Privileged Information creates obvious and serious problems. If the Committee believes that there could be a risk that Privileged Information would need to be turned over to such creditors, with the possible loss of the relevant privilege at that time, the entire purpose of such privilege would be eviscerated, and both the Debtors and the Committee would likely be unable to obtain the independent and unfettered advice and consultation that such privileges are designed to foster. Indeed, unless it is made clear that the risk of dissemination of Privileged Information does not exist, the estate representation structure envisioned by the Bankruptcy Code would become immediately dysfunctional.

18. Accordingly, bankruptcy courts in this district and across the country that have considered this issue have issued orders clarifying that creditors' committees are not required to provide access to confidential or privileged information. *See, e.g., In re Haggan Holdings*, Case No. 15-11874 (KG) (Bankr. D. Del. November 10, 2015); *In re Namco, LLC*, Case No. 13-10610 (PJW) (Bankr. D. Del. May 22, 2013); *In re Tri-Valley Corporation*, Case No. 12-12291 (MFW) (Bankr. D. Del. Oct. 17, 2012); *In re Contract Research Solutions Inc.*, Case No. 12-11004 (KJC) (Bankr. D. Del. June 6, 2012); *In re Coach America Holdings, Inc.*, Case No. 12-10010 (KG) (Bankr. D. Del. March 15, 2012); *In re SSI Group Holding Corp.*, Case No. 11-12917 (MFW) (Bankr. D. Del. Nov. 28, 2011); *In re Consolidated Horticulture Group, LLC*, Case No. 10-13308 (CSS) (Bankr. D. Del. Nov. 17, 2010); *In re Point Blank Solutions, Inc.*, Case No. 10-11255 (PJW) (Bankr. D. Del. May 12, 2010).

19. In order to carry out its statutory reporting obligations in an orderly manner, the Committee proposes the following protocol for providing access to information for creditors (the “Creditor Information Protocol”) in accordance with section 1102(b)(3)(A) and (B) of the Bankruptcy Code:

- a. Privileged and Confidential Information. The Committee shall not be required to disseminate to any entity (all references to “entity” herein shall be as defined in section 101(15) of the Bankruptcy Code, “Entity”) (i) without further order of the Court, Confidential Information, and (ii) Privileged Information. In addition, the Committee shall not be required to provide access to information or solicit comments from any Entity that has not demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Committee, in its sole discretion, or to the Court, that it holds claims of the kind described in section 1102(b)(3) of the Bankruptcy Code.
- b. Information Obtained Through Discovery. Any information received (formally or informally) by the Committee from any Entity in connection with an examination pursuant to Bankruptcy Rule 2004 or in connection with any formal or informal discovery in any contested matter, adversary proceeding, or other litigation shall not be governed by any order entered with respect to this Motion but, rather, by any order governing such discovery. Nothing herein shall obligate the Committee to provide any information the Committee obtains from third parties.
- c. Creditor Information Requests. If a creditor (the “Requesting Creditor”) submits a written request to the Committee (the “Information Request”) for the Committee to disclose information, pursuant to section 1102(b)(3)(A) of the Bankruptcy Code, the Committee shall, as soon as practicable, but no more than thirty (30) days after receipt of the Information Request, provide a response to the Information Request (the “Response”), including providing access to the information requested or the reasons the Information Request cannot be complied with. If the Response is to deny the Information Request because the Committee believes the Information Request implicates Confidential Information or Privileged Information that need not be disclosed (i) pursuant to the terms of this Order or otherwise under section 1102(b)(3)(A) of the Bankruptcy Code, (ii) because such disclosure is prohibited under applicable law, (iii) because such information was obtained by the Committee pursuant to an agreement to maintain it as

confidential, or (iv) that the Information Request is unduly burdensome, the Requesting Creditor may, after a good faith effort to meet and confer with an authorized representative of the Committee regarding the Information Request and the Response, seek to compel such disclosure for cause pursuant to a motion. Such motion shall be served and the hearing on such motion shall be noticed and scheduled. Nothing herein shall be deemed to preclude the Requesting Creditor from requesting (or the Committee objecting to such request) that the Committee provide the Requesting Creditor a log or other index of any information specifically responsive to the Requesting Creditor's request that the Committee deems to be Confidential Information or Privileged Information. Furthermore, nothing herein shall be deemed to preclude the Requesting Creditor from requesting that the Court conduct an in camera review.

- d. Release of Confidential Information of Third Parties. If the Information Request implicates Confidential Information of the Debtors (or any other Entity) and the Committee agrees that such request should be satisfied, or if the Committee on its own wishes to disclose such Confidential Information to creditors, the Committee may demand (the "Demand") for the benefit of the Debtors' creditors: (i) if the Confidential Information is information of the Debtors, by submitting a written request, each captioned as a "Committee Information Demand," to counsel for the Debtors, stating that such information will be disclosed in the manner described in the Demand unless the Debtors object to such Demand on or before fifteen (15) days after the service of such Demand; and, after the lodging of such an objection, the Committee, the Requesting Creditor, and the Debtors may schedule a hearing with the Court seeking a ruling with respect to the Demand and (ii) if the Confidential Information is information of another Entity, by submitting a written request to such Entity and its counsel of record, with a copy to Debtors' counsel, stating that such information will be disclosed in the manner described in the Demand unless such Entity objects to such Demand on or before fifteen (15) days after the service of such Demand; and, after the lodging of such an objection, the Committee, the Requesting Creditor, such Entity, and the Debtors, may schedule a hearing with the Court seeking a ruling with respect to the Demand.

20. The foregoing procedures are necessary, narrowly tailored rules designed to protect the interests of the Debtors, the Committee, and affected creditors.

21. The Committee, through its proposed counsel, will also establish and maintain a website, until the earliest to occur of (i) dissolution of the Committee, (ii) dismissal or conversion of these chapter 11 cases, (iii) a further order of the Court; and (iv) the effective date of any plan. For the sake of efficiency and economy and ease of access by creditors, the Committee proposes to keep creditors informed as required by the statute by directing them to the Committee's own web page at www.pszjlaw.com/sportsauthority.html to make non-confidential and non-privileged information available to unsecured creditors. The Committee website will contain links to the Court's ECF\CM website, posts of relevant pleadings, and provide creditors with the information necessary to email or contact Committee counsel. Further, in order to facilitate recognition and ease of access for creditors, the Committee further requests permission to use the Debtors' logo on the website during the period that these chapter 11 cases are active.

22. The potential disclosure of nonpublic or privileged information to creditors will not foster a reorganization of the Debtors but will likely cause serious harm to the Debtors' estates. Therefore, pursuant to sections 105(a), 107(b)(1), and 1102(b)(3)(A) of the Bankruptcy Code, in order to maximize the value of the estate, the Committee respectfully requests that the relief herein be granted.

No Prior Request

23. No previous motion for the relief requested herein has been made to this or any other court.

Notice

24. Notice of this Motion has been given to the following parties: (a) the Office of the United States Trustee for the District of Delaware; (b) Debtors; (c) counsel to the

Debtors; (d) Riemer & Braunstein LLP (Attn: Donald Rothman) as counsel for (i) Bank of America, N.A., in its capacity as Administrative Agent and Collateral Agent under the Second Amended and Restated Credit Agreement, dated as of May 17, 2012, and (ii) certain DIP Lenders under the Debtors' proposed postpetition financing facility; (e) Brown Rudnick LLP (Attn: Robert Stark and Bennett Silverberg) as counsel for (i) Wilmington Savings Fund Society, FSB as Administrative Agent and Collateral Agent under the Amended and Restated Credit Agreement, dated as of May 3, 2006 and amended and restated as of November 16, 2010 and (ii) certain Term Lenders under the Amended and Restated Credit Agreement, dated as of May 3, 2006 and amended and restated as of November 16, 2010; (f) Choate, Hall & Stewart LLP (Attn: Kevin Simard) as counsel for (i) Wells Fargo Bank, National Association, in its capacity as FILO Agent under the Second Amendment to Second Amended and Restated Credit Agreement, dated as of November 3, 2015, and (ii) certain DIP Lenders under the Debtors' proposed postpetition financing facility; (g) O'Melveny & Meyers LLP (Attn: John Rapisardi) as counsel for certain holders of 11.5% Senior Subordinated Notes Due February 19, 2018 under the Securities Purchase Agreement, dated as of May 3, 2006; (h) all holders of 11.5% Senior Subordinated Notes Due February 19, 2018 under the Securities Purchase Agreement, dated as of May 3, 2006; and (i) all parties that have filed a notice of appearance and request for service of papers pursuant to Bankruptcy Rule 2002. The Committee submits that, in light of the nature of the relief requested, no other or further notice need be given.

Conclusion

WHEREFORE, the Committee respectfully requests that this Court enter an order, substantially in the form attached hereto as **Exhibit A**, granting the relief requested therein, and such other and further relief as this Court deems appropriate.

Dated: April 1, 2016

PACHULSKI STANG ZIEHL & JONES LLP

Robert J. Feinstein (NY Bar No. 1767805)
Jeffrey N. Pomerantz (CA Bar No. 143717)
Bradford J. Sandler (DE Bar No. 4142)
Colin R. Robinson (DE Bar No. 5524)
919 North Market Street, 17th Floor
Wilmington, DE 19801
Telephone: (302) 652-4100
Facsimile: (302) 652-4400
Email: rfeinstein@pszjlaw.com
jpomerantz@pszjlaw.com
bsandler@pszjlaw.com
crobinson@pszjlaw.com

*[Proposed] Counsel to the Official Committee of
Unsecured Creditors*