



STATE OF MISSOURI
OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE

IN THE MATTER OF:)
)
ROBERT C. BRIDGFORTH, CRD) Case No.: AP-22-01
#1231858; ASHLEY R. WEGENER;)
DUSTIN M. RAYSIK; and)
BRYAN L. COCHRAN, CRD #5062915,)
)
Respondents.)

CONSENT ORDER

SUMMARY OF SECURITIES DIVISION’S ALLEGATIONS

1. The Enforcement Section of the Missouri Securities Division of the Office of Secretary of State (“**Enforcement Section**”), through Securities Enforcement Counsel Steven M. Kretzer, has alleged that Respondent Ashley R. Wegener (“**Wegener**”) violated Section 409.4-402(a) of the Missouri Securities Act of 2003 (the “**Act**”), Chapter 409 *et seq.*¹ by transacting business as an unregistered issuer agent. These violations constitute grounds to issue an order pursuant to Section 409.6-604.
2. Wegener and the Enforcement Section desire to settle the allegations and the matters raised by the Enforcement Section relating to Wegener’s alleged violations of Sections 409.4-402(a).²

CONSENT TO JURISDICTION

3. Wegener and the Enforcement Section stipulate and agree that the Missouri Commissioner of Securities (the “**Commissioner**”) has jurisdiction over Wegener and these matters pursuant to the Act.
4. Wegener and the Enforcement Section stipulate and agree that the Commissioner has authority to enter this Order pursuant to Section 409.6-604(h), which provides:

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all statutory citations refer to the 2016 edition of the Revised Statutes of Missouri updated by the 2021 Cumulative Supplement.

² This Consent Order does not resolve outstanding claims alleged against the other Respondents in this matter.

“The commissioner is authorized to issue administrative consent orders in the settlement of any proceeding in the public interest under this act.”

WAIVER AND EXCEPTION

5. Wegener waives his right to a hearing with respect to this matter.
6. Wegener waives any rights that he may have to seek judicial review or otherwise challenge or contest the terms and conditions of this Order. Wegener specifically forever releases and holds harmless the Missouri Office of Secretary of State, Secretary of State, Commissioner of Securities, and their respective representatives and agents from any and all liability and claims arising out of, pertaining to, or relating to this matter.
7. Wegener stipulates and agrees with the Enforcement Section that, should the facts contained herein prove to be false or incomplete, the Enforcement Section reserves the right to pursue any and all legal or administrative remedies at its disposal.

CONSENT TO COMMISSIONER’S ORDER

8. Wegener and the Enforcement Section stipulate and agree to the issuance of this Consent Order without further proceedings in this matter as they relate to Wegener, agreeing to be fully bound by the terms and conditions specified herein.
9. Wegener agrees not to take any action or to make or permit to be made any public statement creating the impression that this Order is without factual basis. Nothing in this paragraph affects Wegener’s (a) testimonial obligations; (b) right to take legal or factual positions in defense of litigation or in defense of other legal proceedings in which the Commissioner is not a party; or (c) right to make public statements that are factual.
10. Wegener agrees that he is not the prevailing party in this action since the parties have reached a good faith settlement.
11. Wegener neither admits nor denies the allegations made by the Enforcement Section, but consents solely for the purpose of this matter only and not for any other matter, to the Commissioner’s Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Order as set forth below solely for the purposes of resolving this proceeding as it related to Wegener and any proceeding that may be brought to enforce the terms of this Consent Order.

COMMISSIONER’S FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

I. FINDINGS OF FACT

12. Wegener is a forty-year-old Lone Jack, Missouri resident with mailing address of P.O. Box 125, Lone Jack, Missouri 64070.

13. Wegener is a licensed insurance producer in Missouri with license number 8412960, effective August 8, 2017 to the present. He is authorized to issue life, accident, health, and sickness insurance policies.
14. Wegener has never been registered in Missouri as an investment adviser representative, broker-dealer agent, or issuer agent.
15. At the ages of eighty-eight and eighty-five, married Warrensburg, Missouri residents, MR1 and MR2, invested in securities instruments (“**Instruments**”)³ offered by Respondent Robert C. Bridgforth (“**Bridgforth**”).
16. While employed with Midwest Health and Wealth, Wegener received a lead from a co-worker concerning insurance purchasing interest by MR1 and MR2.
17. Following a series of meetings and events, Wegener introduced Bridgforth to MR1 and MR2 at their residence in Missouri.
18. Wegener understood that Bridgforth had some “program” in mind for MR1 and MR2 and subsequently learned the program involved the offer and sale of the Instruments by Bridgforth.
19. As a result of Wegener’s introduction, Bridgforth sold six Instruments entitled “Silver Certificates” to MR1 and MR2 with the following terms: they purported to mature nine (9) years from the date of sale and permitted the note holder to redeem the certificate at that point for \$700,000. The six (6) certificates were dated June 25, 2018 and August 23, 2018 and bore the signature of Bridgforth.
20. MR1 and MR2 gave Bridgforth \$300,000 on or about June 21, 2018, for the Instruments offered and sold to them at their residence.
21. Unbeknownst to MR1 and MR2, Bridgforth paid Wegener at least \$30,000 in commissions for the investments made by MR1 and MR2 in the Instruments offered by Bridgforth.
22. Review of Bridgforth’s personal Central Bank account revealed that on June 21, 2018, Bridgforth deposited \$300,000 of MR1 and MR2’s money.
23. Bridgforth omitted material facts to MR1 and MR2 concerning his lack of registration for issuing of securities, the lack of registration of the Instruments purchased by MR1 and MR2, omitted prior regulatory sanctions against him, and omitted the fact that the company MR1 and MR2 was purportedly investing with, Liberty Gold and Silver, was not a real company.

³ As further described in the Petition, Bridgforth created his own form of securities instruments by drafting documents that claimed to be gold or silver certificates that bore official looking images and wording that purported to be secured by gold or silver when they were not. The terms were similar to those found in promissory notes and in subsequent recorded conversations provided to the Enforcement Section, Bridgforth referred to the certificates as notes.

24. Between June 21, 2018 and August 23, 2021, Bridgforth paid MR1 and MR2 an aggregate amount of \$84,000 in purported interest payments on the Instruments, but has not made any interest payments since, let alone return the original principal amounts despite multiple requests by MR2's son for Bridgforth to return the money.
25. Having ultimately invested \$350,000, MR1 and MR2's loss, excluding unpaid interest, is \$266,000 given the \$84,000 in payments already received.

II. CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

32. The Commissioner finds that Wegener acted as an unregistered issuer agent in the State of Missouri, in violation of Section 409.4-402(a), and that this conduct constitutes grounds to issue an order pursuant to Section 409.6-604.
33. The Commissioner, after consideration of the stipulations set forth above and on the consent of Wegener and the Enforcement Section, finds and concludes that the Commissioner has jurisdiction over Wegener and this matter and that the following order is in the public interest, necessary for the protection of public investors and consistent with the purposes intended by Chapter 409, RSMo.

III. ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby Ordered that:

34. Wegener, his agents, employees and servants, and all other persons participating in the above-described alleged violations with knowledge of this order are permanently enjoined and restrained from engaging in violations of Section 409.4-402(a).
35. Wegener shall disgorge commissions made by MR1 and MR2's investment in the amount of \$30,000. Wegener agrees to pay this amount by paying the full amount by July 1, 2022. This amount shall be made payable to the **Missouri Secretary of State's Investor Restitution Fund**, and the Commissioner will take reasonable and necessary actions to distribute such funds to MR1 and MR2. This amount shall be sent to the Securities Division at 600 W. Main Street, Jefferson City, Missouri 65101.
36. Wegener shall pay to the Missouri Secretary of State's Investor Education and Protection Fund the sum of \$85,000. This amount shall be payable to the **Missouri Secretary of State's Investor Education and Protection Fund**. This amount shall be sent to the Missouri Securities Division at 600 W. Main Street, Jefferson City, Missouri 65101. ***All obligations to pay this amount shall be and hereby are suspended, and shall be fully and finally waived when the disgorgement amounts described herein are paid in full.***
37. Should Wegener fail to comply with the terms of this consent order, all remaining payments shall become immediately due and payable upon operation of law, and such immediately due payments shall be in addition to all other penalties then available under the law.

38. Wegener shall pay his own costs and attorneys' fees with respect to this matter.

SO ORDERED:

WITNESS MY HAND AND OFFICIAL SEAL OF MY OFFICE AT JEFFERSON CITY,
MISSOURI THIS 9th DAY OF JUNE, 2022.

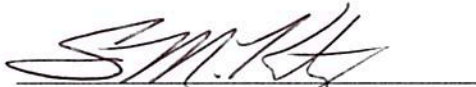
JOHN R. ASHCROFT
SECRETARY OF STATE



DAVID M. MINNICK
COMMISSIONER OF SECURITIES

Consented to by:

MISSOURI SECURITIES DIVISION



STEVEN M. KRETZER
Securities Enforcement Counsel




LOWELL PEARSON
Attorney for Respondent Wegener

ASHLEY R. WEGENER, Respondent

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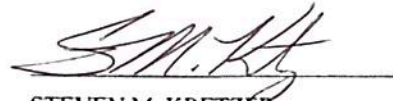


JOHN R. ASHCROFT
SECRETARY OF STATE

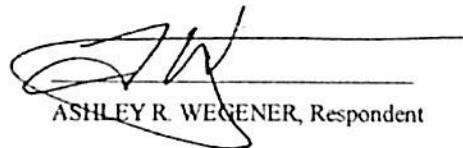

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