

Pearlman trustee goes after documents from 2nd law firm

Contributed by Lou Pearlman Writer
Tuesday, 25 September 2007

Jim Leusner and Sara K. Clarke | Sentinel Staff Writer 6:15 PM EDT, September 24, 2007 Attorneys for a U.S. Bankruptcy trustee, investigating the finances of jailed Orlando music executive Lou Pearlman, is trying to compel an Orlando defense lawyer to turn over documents in the case. But the defense attorney has refused, citing attorney-client privilege.

Less than a week after asking the bankruptcy court to find attorney Reza Rene Chamberlain in contempt of court for not turning over records, bankruptcy trustee Soneet Kapila is asking the court to compel defense attorney Robert Leventhal to comply with subpoenas and produce documents.

Leventhal, a well-known white-collar crime defense lawyer at the law firm Leventhal & Slaughter P.A., served as counsel to Pearlman and his companies on some IRS civil tax audits, according to a motion filed late last week in U.S. Bankruptcy Court. He has asked the trustee to get a judge to review the matter first so he doesn't violate any attorney-client privilege with Pearlman, who is in jail awaiting trial on federal fraud charges. Leventhal & Slaughter produced fewer than 1,000 documents out of more than 30 boxes in July, according to the motion. Kapila's lawyers have not heard back from the law firm since they sent a July 27 letter to Leventhal.

Leventhal said his firm does not have 30 boxes of records and never received a July 27 letter. He also said the firm will not release any more records without an order by a bankruptcy judge.

"We received correspondence from Pearlman's attorney that he is not waiving any [attorney-client] privilege," Leventhal said. "So, I just can't turn something over and find out that we violated someone's rights.

"We're caught in the crosshairs between someone's criminal counsel and the trustee."
Jim Leusner and Sara K. Clarke | Sentinel Staff Writer 6:15 PM EDT, September 24, 2007

See full-size image.

Attorneys for a U.S. Bankruptcy trustee, investigating the finances of jailed Orlando music executive Lou Pearlman, is trying to compel an Orlando defense lawyer to turn over documents in the case. But the defense attorney has refused, citing attorney-client privilege.

Less than a week after asking the bankruptcy court to find attorney Reza Rene Chamberlain in contempt of court for not turning over records, bankruptcy trustee Soneet Kapila is asking the court to compel defense attorney Robert Leventhal to comply with subpoenas and produce documents.

Leventhal, a well-known white-collar crime defense lawyer at the law firm Leventhal & Slaughter P.A., served as counsel to Pearlman and his companies on some IRS civil tax audits, according to a motion filed late last week in U.S. Bankruptcy Court. He has asked the trustee to get a judge to review the matter first so he doesn't violate any attorney-client privilege with Pearlman, who is in jail awaiting trial on federal fraud charges. Leventhal & Slaughter produced fewer than 1,000 documents out of more than 30 boxes in July, according to the motion. Kapila's lawyers have not heard back from the law firm since they sent a July 27 letter to Leventhal.

Leventhal said his firm does not have 30 boxes of records and never received a July 27 letter. He also said the firm will not release any more records without an order by a bankruptcy judge.

"We received correspondence from Pearlman's attorney that he is not waiving any [attorney-client] privilege," Leventhal said. "So, I just can't turn something over and find out that we violated someone's rights.

"We're caught in the crosshairs between someone's criminal counsel and the trustee."