

**BEFORE THE IOWA REAL ESTATE COMMISSION
1920 SE HULSIZER
ANKENY, IOWA**

IN RE:)	
)	CASE NUMBER: A10-011
Laura L. Westmark)	
Broker (B38861))	
)	COMBINED STATEMENT OF
Westmark's Great River Realty Co.)	CHARGES, INFORMAL
2627 University Avenue)	SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT
Dubuque, Iowa 52001)	AND CONSENT ORDER IN A
)	DISCIPLINARY CASE
Respondent.)	

The Iowa Real Estate Commission (Commission) and **Laura L. Westmark** (Respondent) enter into this Combined Statement of Charges, Informal Settlement Agreement, and Consent Order in a Disciplinary Case (Order) pursuant to Iowa Code Sections 17A.10(1) and 272C.3(4) (2009).

1. The Commission issued the Respondent real estate broker license number B38861 on January 2, 2004. Respondent's license is current and in full force and effect through December 31, 2012. At all times relevant to this matter, the Respondent was a licensed real estate broker officer assigned to Westmark's Great River Realty Company, a licensed firm, license number F04826 located in Dubuque, Iowa.
2. The Commission has jurisdiction of this disciplinary matter pursuant to Iowa Code chapters 17A, 272C, and 543B (2009). Licenses issued by the Commission are subject to the laws of the State of Iowa and to the administrative rules of the Commission.

STATEMENT OF CHARGES

COUNT I

3. Respondent is charged with engaging in practices harmful or detrimental to the public in violation of Iowa Code sections 543B.29(1)(c), 543B.29(1)(j), 543B.34, and 543B.46 (2009) by:
 - (a) Failing to maintain at all times a record of the Respondent's trust account. See 193E Iowa Admin. Code §§ 13.1(6) and 18.14(5)(e).
 - (b) Failing to maintain the general ledger, individual ledgers, and bank reconciliation to reflect accurate current balances. See 193E Iowa Admin. Code §§ 13.1(6), 18.14(5)(e).
 - (c) Failing to properly maintain individual ledgers for each real estate transaction. See 193E Iowa Admin. Code §§ 13.1(6)(b), 18.14(5)(e)(2).

- (d) Releasing funds from the Respondent's trust account prior to the closing of a transaction without the express written consent of all parties to the transaction. See Iowa Code § 543B.56(1); and 193E Iowa Admin. Code §§ 13.1(7) & 18.14(5)(f)(2).
- (e) Failing to exercise reasonable skill and care and skill in supervising an unlicensed employee charged with maintaining the Respondent's trust account. See 193E Iowa Admin Code §§ 7.13, 7.13(3), 7.13(4)(a)(9), and 18.14(5)(e) & (f).

CIRCUMSTANCES

- 4. On or about March 8, 2010, an audit of the Respondent's trust account and records was conducted.
- 5. The auditor found the Respondent did not have any bank reconciliations for 2010.
- 6. The auditor found that the Respondent is not properly creating and/or maintaining individual ledger accounts for each real estate transaction.
- 7. In reviewing the Respondent's bank statements, the auditor found that all receipts and disbursements were not being correctly recorded in the appropriate ledgers.
- 8. The auditor found non-sufficient funds in the Respondent's trust account for February 18, 2010 in the amount of \$4,273.96.
- 9. The auditor found that earnest funds were being removed from the trust account prior to closing without the express written consent of all parties to the transaction.
- 10. The Respondent had delegated responsibility to an employee to perform bookkeeping and other duties relating to the maintenance of the Respondent's trust account. The Respondent's failure to adequately supervise the work performed by this employee resulted in the above-detailed trust account deficiencies evading detection and correction for an unreasonable period of time.

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

- 11. Respondent admits each and every allegation in the above-stated Statement of Charges.
- 12. Respondent acknowledges that she has a right to receive notice of the above-stated charges and to request a hearing before the Commission on the merits of the charges. By freely and voluntarily entering into this Order, the Respondent waives her right to notice

and a hearing and all attendant rights, including the right to seek judicial review. This Order constitutes discipline against the Respondent, and is the final agency order in this contested case pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.10 and 193 Iowa Administrative Code 7.4.

13. Respondent agrees that the State's attorney and/or Commission staff may present this Order to the Commission and may have *ex parte* communications with the Commission while presenting it. Respondent waives any right of notice of this meeting or any right that the Respondent might have to participate in the discussion of this Order among the Commission, the Commission staff and the State's attorney.

14. This Order shall be part of the permanent record of Respondent and shall be considered by the Commission in determining the nature and severity of any future disciplinary action to be imposed in the event of any future violations of the laws and rules governing the practice of real estate by the Respondent.

15. Failure to comply with the terms of this Order shall be prima facie evidence of a violation of Iowa Code sections 543B.29(3), 543B.34(2) and 272C.3(2)(a) (2009) and shall be grounds for further disciplinary action. However, no action may be taken against the Respondent for violations of this Order without a hearing, or waiver of hearing.

16. This Order is not binding on the Iowa Real Estate Commission until it has been formally approved by a majority of the Commission members.

(a) In the event that this Order is rejected by the Commission it shall be of no force or effect to either party, and it shall not be admissible for any purpose in further proceedings in this matter.

(b) If the Commission approves this Order, it shall fully dispose of all issues in this case.

17. Upon acceptance by both the Commission and Respondent, this Combined Statement of Charges, Informal Settlement and Consent Order shall be a public record available for inspection and copying in its entirety in accordance with the requirements of Iowa Code chapter 22 (2009).

CONSENT ORDER

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

18. **REPRIMAND.** Pursuant to 193E Iowa Administrative Code section 18.14(1)(j), the Respondent is reprimanded.

19. **CIVIL PENALTY.** The Respondent shall pay a civil penalty to the Commission in the amount of \$2,500 no later than 30 calendar days after acceptance of this Order by the Commission. The civil penalty must come under a cover letter addressed to the Commission's Executive Officer and refer to case A10-011.

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20. CPA AUDIT. The Respondent shall hire an Iowa licensed Certified Public Accountant (CPA), at the Respondent's expense to audit and to establish trust account records following Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. The CPA's audit report shall specifically address the time frame beginning January 1, 2006 to present. When completed, a copy of the trust account records shall be promptly submitted to the Commission. The CPA's audit report demonstrating Respondent's compliance with applicable accounting standards, Iowa law, and Commission trust account rules must be submitted **no later than sixty (60) days** upon acceptance of this Order by the Commission. The audit must come under a cover letter addressed to the Commission's Executive Officer and refer to case A10-011.

21. EDUCATION. The Respondent shall attend the Commission approved eight (8) hour course "Trust Accounts." These hours shall be in addition to any real estate continuing education required by law for license renewal. The original certificate of attendance must be submitted to the Iowa Real Estate Commission within twelve (12) months of the signing of this agreement by the Commission and must come under a cover letter addressed to the Commission's Executive Officer and refer to case A10-011.

WHEREFORE, the terms of this Combined Statement of Charges, Informal Settlement Agreement, and Consent Order are agreed to and accepted by the Iowa Real Estate Commission and the Respondent.

FOR THE RESPONDENT:

Voluntarily agreed to and accepted by **Laura L. Westmark** on this 12th day of May, 2010.

[Redacted Signature]

By: **LAURA L. WESTMARK**, Respondent

State of IOWA)

County of Dubuque

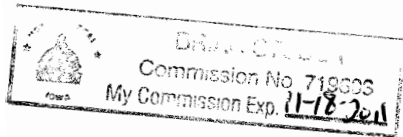
Signed and sworn to before me on this 12th day of May, 2010, by:

[Redacted Signature]

Notary Public, State of Iowa

Printed Name: BK. AN SIEMER

My Commission Expires: 11-18-2011



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FOR THE COMMISSION:

Voluntarily agreed to and accepted by the **IOWA REAL ESTATE COMMISSION**
on this 24 day of June, 2010.



LAURIE DAWLEY, Chair
Iowa Real Estate Commission