

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
COMPTROLLER OF THE CURRENCY

In the Matter of: John Sparks Former Executive Vice President Pickens Savings and Loan Association Pickens, South Carolina)))))	AA-EC-2013-103
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CONSENT ORDER

WHEREAS, the Comptroller of the Currency of the United States of America (“Comptroller”) intends to initiate cease and desist proceedings against John Sparks (“Respondent”) pursuant to 12 U.S.C. § 1818(b) on the basis of Respondent’s activities while he was Executive Vice President at Pickens Savings and Loan Association, Pickens, South Carolina (“Association”); and

WHEREAS, in the interest of cooperation and to avoid the costs associated with future administrative and judicial proceedings with respect to the above matter, Respondent, without admitting or denying any wrongdoing, desires to enter into this Consent Order (“Order”) issued pursuant to 12 U.S.C. § 1818(b);

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the above premises, it is stipulated by and between the Comptroller, through his duly authorized representative, and Respondent that:

ARTICLE I

JURISDICTION

(1) The Association is a “savings association” within the meaning of 12 U.S.C. § 1813(b). Accordingly, the Association is an “insured depository institution” as that term is defined in 12 U.S.C. § 1813(c)(2).

Initials: JS
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(2) Respondent was Executive Vice President of the Association and is an “institution-affiliated party” of the Association as that term is defined in 12 U.S.C. § 1813(u), having served in such capacity within six (6) years from the date hereof (see 12 U.S.C. § 1818(i)(3)).

(3) Pursuant to 12 U.S.C. § 1813(q), the Comptroller is the “appropriate Federal banking agency” to maintain an enforcement proceeding against institution-affiliated parties of the Association. Therefore, Respondent is subject to the authority of the Comptroller to initiate and maintain cease and desist proceedings against Respondent pursuant to 12 U.S.C. § 1818(b).

ARTICLE II

COMPTROLLER’S FINDINGS

Pursuant to the authority vested in him by the Federal Deposit Insurance Act, as amended, 12 U.S.C. § 1818, the Comptroller hereby finds, and Respondent neither admits nor denies, the following:

(1) While serving as the Association’s Executive Vice President, Respondent caused, brought about, participated in, counseled, or aided or abetted violations of 12 C.F.R. § 163.200 and engaged in unsafe or unsound banking practices in connection with a conflict of interest he had regarding one of the Association’s borrowers.

ARTICLE III

PERSONAL CEASE AND DESIST ORDER

Pursuant to the authority vested in him by the Federal Deposit Insurance Act, as amended, 12 U.S.C. § 1818, the Comptroller hereby ORDERS that:

(1) Whenever Respondent is employed by, or is offered employment at, a depository institution (as defined in 12 U.S.C. § 1813(c)(1)) or becomes an institution-affiliated party within the meaning of 12 U.S.C. § 1813(u), Respondent shall:

- (a) Comply fully with all laws, regulations, and policies applicable to any depository institution with which he is or may become affiliated;
- (b) Avoid engaging in any unsafe or unsound practices, as that term is used in Title 12 of the United States Code;
- (c) Fulfill the fiduciary duties of loyalty and care owed to any depository institution with which he is or may become affiliated and shall, at all times, avoid placing his own interests above those of the institution;
- (d) Not participate in, or seek to influence, any lending activity, including, but not limited to, loan document preparation, underwriting, approval, ongoing credit management, or collection for any extension of credit, including extensions or renewals, made by any depository institution to which Respondent is or may become affiliated;
- (e) Abstain from all discussions of the merits of the matter and recuse himself from all votes and decisions on any matter before the Board of Directors if Respondent may experience a direct or indirect benefit in connection with the matter, apart from the benefit experienced by directors, employees, or stockholders generally of the institution and take all reasonable steps to ensure that his disclosure, abstention and recusal are reflected in the board minutes of the depository institution;

- (f) Provide the Board of Directors of the depository institution of which Respondent is currently employed or an institution-affiliated party with a copy of this Order. Respondent shall provide written certification of compliance with this paragraph to the Director, Enforcement and Compliance Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, 400 7th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20219, within ten (10) days of execution of this Order; and
- (g) With respect to any future employment, prior to accepting employment at a depository institution or becoming an institution-affiliated party, provide the President or Chief Executive Officer of the depository institution with a copy of this Order. Respondent shall provide written notice of such acceptance to the Director, Enforcement and Compliance Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, 400 7th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20219, along with a written certification of his compliance with this paragraph within ten (10) days after acceptance of such position.

(2) If, at any time, Respondent is uncertain whether a situation implicates paragraph (1) of this Article, or if Respondent is uncertain about his duties arising from such paragraphs, he shall obtain, at his own expense, and abide by the written advice of counsel regarding his duties and responsibilities with respect to the matter. To comply with this paragraph, Respondent shall engage counsel who is in no way affiliated with the institution; and who has never been subject to any formal sanctions by any Federal banking agency, either by agency order or consent, as disclosed on the banking agencies' websites.

(3) This Order shall be enforceable to the same extent and in the same manner as an effective and outstanding order that has been issued and has become final pursuant to 12 U.S.C. § 1818(b).

ARTICLE IV

CLOSING

(1) By executing this Order, Respondent waives:

- (a) the right to the issuance of Notice of Charges for Issuance of an Order to Cease and Desist under 12 U.S.C. § 1818(b);
- (b) all rights to a hearing and a final agency decision pursuant to 12 U.S.C. § 1818(b) and 12 C.F.R. Part 19;
- (c) all rights to seek judicial review of this Order;
- (d) all rights in any way to contest the validity of this Order; and
- (e) any and all claims for fees, costs or expenses against the Comptroller, or any of his agents or employees, related in any way to this enforcement matter or this Order, whether arising under common law or under the terms of any statute, including, but not limited to, the Equal Access to Justice Act, 5 U.S.C. § 504 and 28 U.S.C. § 2412.

(2) Respondent shall not cause, participate in or authorize the Association (or any subsidiary or affiliate thereof) to incur, directly or indirectly, any legal (or other professional) expense relative to the negotiation and issuance of this Order except as permitted by 12 C.F.R. § 145.121 and Part 359; and Respondent shall not, directly or indirectly, obtain or accept any

indemnification (or other reimbursement) from the Association (or any subsidiary or affiliate thereof) with respect to such amounts except as permitted by 12 C.F.R. § 145.121 and Part 359.

(3) Respondent acknowledges that he has read and understands the premises and obligations of this Order and declares that no separate promise or inducement of any kind has been made by the Comptroller, his agents or employees to cause or induce Respondent to agree to consent to the issuance of this Order and/or to execute this Order.

(4) This Order constitutes a settlement of cease and desist proceedings arising out of the specific acts, omissions, or violations described in the Comptroller's Findings (Article II of this Order). However, the specific acts, omissions, or violations described in Article II may be used by the OCC in future enforcement actions to establish a pattern or practice of misconduct or the continuation of a pattern or practice of misconduct.

(5) This Order shall not be construed as an adjudication on the merits and, except as set forth above in paragraph (4), shall not inhibit, estop, bar, or otherwise prevent the Comptroller from taking any action affecting Respondent if, at any time, he deems it appropriate to do so to fulfill the responsibilities placed upon him by the several laws of the United States of America.

(6) Nothing herein shall preclude any proceedings brought by the Comptroller to enforce the terms of this Order, and that nothing herein constitutes, nor shall Respondent contend that it constitutes, a waiver of any right, power, or authority of any other representatives of the United States or agencies thereof, including the Department of Justice, to bring other actions deemed appropriate.

(7) This Order is intended to be, and shall be construed to be, a final order issued pursuant to 12 U.S.C. § 1818, and expressly does not form, and may not be construed to form, a contract binding the Comptroller or the United States. Respondent expressly acknowledges that

no officer or employee of the Comptroller has statutory or other authority to bind the United States, the United States Treasury Department, the Comptroller, or any other federal bank regulatory agency or entity, or any officer or employee of those entities, to a contract affecting the Comptroller's exercise of his supervisory responsibilities.

(8) This Order is "issued with the consent of . . . the institution-affiliated party concerned," pursuant to 12 U.S.C. § 1818(h)(2).

(9) The terms of this Order, including this paragraph, are not subject to amendment or modification by any extraneous expression, prior agreements, or prior arrangements between the parties, whether oral or written.

(10) The provisions of this Order are effective upon issuance by the Comptroller through his authorized representative whose hand appears below, and shall remain effective and enforceable, except to the extent that, and until such time as, any provisions of this Order shall have been amended, suspended, waived, or terminated in writing by the Comptroller, through his authorized representative.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, the undersigned has hereunto set his hand.

/s/ John Sparks
John Sparks

3/21/14
Date

IT IS SO ORDERED.

/s/ Kristina B. Whittaker
Kristina B. Whittaker
Deputy Comptroller
Special Supervision Division

5/15/14
Date