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7	IN THE UNITED ST	TATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
8	ΕΟΡ ΤΗΕ Ν	ISTRICT OF ARIZONA
9		ISTRICT OF ARIZONA
10	In re:)) Chapter 11
11	MORTGAGES LTD.,) Case No. 2:08-bk-07465-RJH
12	an Arizona corporation,	
13	Debtor.	JOINT PRETRIAL STATEMENT FOR EVIDENTIARY HEARING ON DLA
14) PIPER LLP (US)'S FIRST AND FINAL
15		 FEE APPLICATION FOR ALLOWANCE AND PAYMENT OF
16) FEES
17) Date: November 25, 2009
18		Time: 10:00, a.m Place: Courtroom 603
19 20		230 N. First Avenue Phoenix, AZ 85003
20)
21		
22		0, 2009 Minute Entry Order [Docket No. 2031] and
23	Local Rule 7016-1, DLA Piper LLP (US) ("DLA"), ML Manager LLC ("ML Manager"),
24	ML Liquidating Trust ("Liquidating"	Trust"), and G. Grant Lyon, in his capacity as duly
25	appointed Chapter 11 Trustee (")	RBLLC Trustee") for Radical Bunny, L.L.C.
26	("RBLLC")(collectively, the "Parties"), through their respective counsel, hereby file this
27	Joint Pretrial Statement for the eviden	tiary hearing (the "Hearing") on the First and Final
28	Fee Application for Allowance and Pa	ayment of Fees for Services Rendered and Expenses

Incurred by DLA Piper LLP (US), as Special Real Estate and Litigation Counsel for Debtor (the "Fee Application").¹

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A. Nature of Case

This Hearing concerns the allowance and approval of the Fee Application and the 4 objections to the Fee Application filed by ML Manager, the Liquidating Trust and the 5 RBLLC Trustee (collectively, the "Objectors"). From October 8, 2008 through July 20, 6 2009² ("Application Period"), DLA rendered time and legal services to the Debtor as 7 special real estate and litigation counsel. Through the Fee Application, DLA is seeking 8 fees in the amount of \$1,406,056.80 and expenses in the amount of \$83,459.26 for a total 9 of \$1,489,516.06 pursuant to sections 328, 330 and 503(b) of the Bankruptcy Code. 10 After the initial hearing on this matter on July 28, 2009, this Court set the Hearing. 11

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B. Uncontested Material Facts

The parties have agreed to the following uncontested material facts:

After the filing of the Bankruptcy, the Debtor sought to employ a law firm
 to pursue recovery of loan proceeds and other assets of the Debtor. This included the
 prosecution of claims against difficult borrowers and guarantors as well as the defense to
 counterclaims raised by Borrowers. DLA was selected for these purposes.

On October 23, 2008, the Debtor filed its Application for an Order
 Authorizing Employment and Retention of DLA Piper LLP (US) as Special Real Estate
 and Litigation Counsel ("DLA Retention Application")(Docket No. 864) together with
 the Affidavit of Mark Nadeau in support thereof ("Nadeau Declaration")(Docket No.
 865).

- 3. The Engagement Letter between the Debtor and DLA was attached to the
 Retention Application and stated that Mr. Nadeau's hourly rate was \$690.00 per hour for
 2008 and that other lawyers who may render services on the Debtor's behalf may have
 higher or lower hourly rates.
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¹ Reference to the Fee Application shall include time from June 20, 2009 through July 20, 2009 referenced by the Supplement to the Fee Application filed on July 27, 2009.

4. The Nadeau Declaration identified 3 partners and 2 associates as the principal attorneys at DLA who were anticipated at the time to render services on behalf of the Debtor with hourly rates between \$385 to \$725 per hour. The principal attorneys identified in the Nadeau Declaration had biographical information published on DLA's website at <u>www.dlapiper.com</u> and DLA was otherwise readily described in both internet and publically available documents.

5. The Nadeau Declaration specifically stated that the Debtor was retaining
DLA to, among other things, (a) negotiate with, collect from and litigate with problem
borrowers and guarantors of loans (but that routine foreclosure matters would continue to
be handled by foreclosure counsel), (b) investigate the sources and causes of Debtor's
losses and pursue avenues of recovery, including litigation, against appropriate parties,
and (c) represent the Debtor in the NRDP and PDG litigation matters, and in such other
litigation as the Debtor may request.

14 6. This Court entered the Order approving the Debtor's retention of DLA on
15 October 24, 2008. (Docket No. 873).

7. On January 21, 2009 the Court held a hearing on the October Cover Sheet
Application and the objections. The Court on January 27, 2009 entered its memorandum
decision allowing \$100,000 to be paid on an interim basis. (Docket No. 1320). DLA was
never paid the \$100,000 as provided in the memorandum decision.

8. DLA filed its Cover Sheet Applications for October 2008 through April
2009 on November 20, 2008, April 27, 2009, May 21, 2009 and June 4, 2009. (Docket
Nos. 1039, 1603,1604,1605, 1606, 1756, and 1772).

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9. In the OIC's objection to the October Cover Sheet Application, the OIC had reserved its objections for the final fee application process. The OIC never made any other objections and did not file objections to any other fee statements.

10. The OIC's First Amended Plan of Reorganization was confirmed by the
Court on May 20, 2009("Plan") (Docket No. 1755) and became effective June 15, 2009
("Effective Date") (Docket No.). Pursuant to the Plan, all professionals were to file their

final fee applications on or before July 6, 2009 (20 days after the Effective Date). 1 Section VII (b)(2) of the Disclosure Statement describing the Plan stated that Allowed 2 Administrative Claims would be paid from the Exit Financing. 3 DLA filed its Fee Application on July 2, 2009 (Docket No. 1873) and filed 11. 4 its Supplement on July 27, 2009 (Docket No. 2023). DLA is seeking payment of fees in 5 the amount of \$1,406,056 and expenses in the amount of \$83,459.26 6 C. **Contested Material Facts and Issues of Law** 7 1. **Contested Material Facts** 8 The following are contested material facts by DLA and the Objectors. 9 a. **DLA Contested Material Facts** 10 12. In or about August, 2008, the Debtor had a number of significant and 11 complex litigation claims against borrowers and guarantors, was served with several 12 lawsuits filed by borrowers against loan investors (including funds managed by Debtor) 13 and was seeking counsel to represent the Debtor in such matters. 14 13. In August 2008, Mark Nadeau ("Mr. Nadeau") was invited to a meeting at 15 the Debtor's offices among certain members of the Official Committee of Investors 16 ("OIC"), other members of an unofficial investor group and the Debtor's CEO and Board 17 of Directors. 18 14. The Debtor was seeking counsel to prosecute claims concerning substantial 19 loan and guaranty defaults and also to defend it against a number of actual and potential 20 litigation matters related to the Debtor's lending activities. 21 15. During the August meeting, Mr. Nadeau informed the Debtor and the 22 investors about the range of DLA's fees and the legal team he would construct to work on 23 the Debtor's litigation matters, which potentially included attorneys from outside of 24 Phoenix. 25 DLA is the largest law firm in the world with a sophisticated finance and 16. 26 real estate practice. 27 17. DLA was ranked in the top 5 of national real estate firms and has a 28

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1 sophisticated government affairs practice.

18. During many telephonic conferences in late August and during September
2008, the Debtor and others representing the OIC urged Mr. Nadeau to become counsel
to the Debtor. At a second meeting in early October 2008, the Debtor informed DLA that
it wanted DLA to be the lead advisor on all key litigation matters and that it would be
assigned the majority of the Debtor's troubled \$800 million loan portfolio.

No party had objected to the terms of the DLA retention application or the
Nadeau Declaration, or otherwise sought reconsideration of the Court's Order [Docket
No. 873] from the time the Order was entered.

10 20. DLA provided regular status reports to the Debtor on the matters assigned
11 to it.

12 21. Counsel to the OIC was offered opportunities in December and January to
 13 meet with DLA to discuss litigation strategies and declined to meet.

Following receipt of objections to the first fee statement of DLA, the law
firm and Debtor commenced discussions about a reduction in fees and/or scope of the
engagement to ease concerns raised by the objecting parties.

23. After lengthy internal meetings with the Debtor and its counsel, DLA 17 agreed to give a significant discount on total fees. The initial discount for November and 18 December 2008 and January and February 2009 represented the complete write off of 19 time for certain timekeepers no longer employed by DLA, a write off of all time for any 20 lawyer working on a file that is "brought up to speed", a 15% discount off the entire fees, 21 an additional 10% discount off the Case Administration category beyond earlier 22 agreements, and an additional 20% discount off the Professional Retention and Fee 23 Application category beyond earlier agreements ("Discount"). In addition to the 24 Discount, DLA agreed to bill the Debtor at 2008 rates and provide a continuing 15% 25 discount off all future fees through calendar year 2009. After the Debtor and DLA 26 agreed on the Discount, DLA filed its monthly fee statements for November 2008 27 through April 2009 and neither the OIC or Radical Bunny objected. 28

1 24. The litigation between the Debtor and the borrowers/guarantors was 2 complex with loan files that were sometimes incomplete and loans that had not been fully 3 funded. The loan defaults included both developed and undeveloped land as security for 4 borrowing in the tens of millions of dollars in value.

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25. DLA also provided consultation on existing claims against the Debtor and advised on settlement tactics intended to achieve loan modifications for a loan portfolio that was non-performing.

8 26. The Debtor and DLA suffered constant interference from the OIC who 9 independently met with borrowers and advised certain borrowers that the Debtor had no 10 authority to modify loans, and any settlement would only work if it was originated and 11 approved by the OIC.

12 27. The Debtor's bankruptcy case ("Bankruptcy Case") was one of the largest
13 bankruptcy cases in Arizona history, including 2,800 investors, 61 borrowers, 3 Court14 Appointed Committees, one unofficial committee and 91 mechanics liens holders.

15 28. The Debtor's case consistently received national media attention, and
16 interested investors were nationally and internationally based.

17 29. The Debtor and its counsel approved the involvement of DLA lawyers and
18 partners outside of Arizona.

19 30. Time related to general administrative categories was necessary and
20 reasonable at the time they were rendered.

31. Substantial administrative time for work associated with the Plan of
Reorganization, substitution of counsel, and the fee statements and Fee Application has
been incurred by Mr. Nadeau and his staff in Phoenix without charge to the Debtor. Mr.
Nadeau has incurred substantial administrative time related to this reorganization from
March to the date of the first hearing on the Fee Application and has billed none to the
estate.

32. Time billed to the TARP matter was considered necessary and critical to
prospects for a Debtor sponsored Plan of Reorganization and work performed by DLA

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1 was at the specific request of Debtor, it chief officers, the Board of Directors, and its
2 counsel (JSS).

3 33. The Debtor was informed that DLA was a busy law firm and Mr. Nadeau
and others assigned to the case would have to forego other work in order to focus on the
difficult issues presented.

6 34. DLA's blended hourly rate in this case, including paraprofessionals is
7 \$387.00 per hour.

8 35. Although the OIC plan was confirmed on May 20, 2009, DLA was required
9 to perform additional services for the Debtor until July 20, 2009 because counsel for ML
10 Manager delayed in advising DLA which of its litigation matters it would be substituting
11 in for and deadlines for responsive pleadings were approaching.

36. The amount of fees and expenses sought by DLA includes the supplemental
fees and expenses incurred because of the delay in substitution of counsel in the pending
civil actions and for fees incurred in prosecuting its administrative claim for payment in
light of the OIC, Liquidating Trust, ML Manager's failure to engage in settlement
negotiations regarding the Fee Application.

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Objectors Contested Material Facts

b.

37. DLA was employed to handle only a few collection and litigation matters.. 18 At the time of the discussions about and employment of DLA, Debtor already had Rule 19 9019 settlement motions on file for approximately \$400 million of the loans, including 20 Tempe Land Company, Grace Entities, Rightpath, and University and Ash entities. The 21 OIC had objected to each of the pending "settlements," which objections were pending 22 at the time of the retention of DLA. Debtor subsequently filed settlement motions for 23 another approximately \$70 million of settlements. The OIC also objected to these, 24 including the Sorenson entities, SOJAC and Bisontown settlements. The Rightpath, 25 Sorenson, SOJAC and Bisontown settlements were ultimately approved and implemented 26 by January 2009. The other settlement motions were not withdrawn by Debtor but were 27 taken off calendar after hostile reactions to the same by the OIC although the parties 28

continued to discuss settlement thereafter. All of the loans involved were secured by
Arizona real estate, invoked Arizona law, and involved Arizona Borrowers and
guarantors. Each of the loans involved multiple structures, some were single asset while
some were not, some involved various LLC entities or corporate structures and were
often guaranteed by sophisticated developers and others with multiple assets and tiered
financial statements.

38. Contrary to its Fee Application, DLA was not hired to handle the following
loans: (1) Arizona Commercial Land Acquisitions; (2) Tempe Land Company; (3)
Central & Monroe; (4) All State Associates XVI; (5) All State Associates IX; (6)
Roosevelt Gateway; (7) Roosevelt Gateway II; and (8) University & Ash. Any fees
charged for these matters should be disallowed. Objectors estimate those fees to be about
\$23,000. Further, the fees charged were unreasonable, unnecessary and duplicative of
services rendered by Debtor's other professionals.

39. The rates charged by DLA are not reasonable and are not the customary
compensation charged by comparably skilled practitioners in cases other than bankruptcy
cases in this market.

40. DLA asserts it incurred \$156,000 of fees in Case Administration such as
monitoring and reviewing pleadings and docket entries in the Bankruptcy Case. DLA was
not employed as general bankruptcy counsel and these services were duplicative of
Debtor's bankruptcy counsel, were not reasonably likely to benefit the estate and were
not necessary to the administration of the case. Moreover, these fees were not necessary
to allow DLA to complete the discrete tasks it was given. The fees in this category are
not reasonable and should be disallowed.

24 41. DLA asserts it incurred about \$70,000 (between the Fee Application and
25 Supplement) in its Retention and Fee Applications. This is not a reasonable amount of
26 fees for this task.

42. DLA charged the Debtor with \$11,303 of "nonworking travel" time. It
brought attorneys from its Chicago and Los Angeles offices for meetings and Court

appearances and charged the nonworking travel time to the Debtor. The fees in this
 category do not reasonably benefit the estate and were unnecessary. These amounts
 should be disallowed.

4 43. DLA charged \$63,026 in the category it calls "litigation strategy", \$50,483
5 in the category it calls "loan analysis" and \$39,361 in the category it calls "legal
6 research". None of the fees are identified to any of the files it set up for specific loans or
7 borrowers or guarantor litigation. That totals \$152,870 for general services not tied to
8 specific matters or files.

9 44. DLA charged \$39,489 for "meetings". The fees were not related to specific
10 matters because those were charged to those matters. These are in addition to the
11 meetings needed to perform the work on specific files. These fees for "meetings" are
12 duplicative, unnecessary, unreasonable and do not benefit the estate. These fees of
13 \$39,489 should be disallowed.

45. DLA incurred fees of \$67,026.03 in rendering services concerning the
"TARP Program". The descriptions in this category are vague, e.g. "monitoring"
proceedings. While some review and analysis of the TARP program may have been
appropriate to determine whether Debtor was eligible for this program, at some point
early in the review it was or should have been clear that further work in this area was not
going to benefit the estate and was not warranted or necessary. The fees should be
reduced to a much more reasonable number.

46. DLA was asked to handle the Cottonwood/Riverfront loan and bankruptcy
matter which involved a \$7.5 million loan. DLA asserts it incurred fees of about
\$294,000 in handling the matter. The matter has not been concluded. The fees incurred
are excessive and not reasonable.

47. OIC counsel's did not interfere in the Riverfront bankruptcy proceeding so
as to prevent successful results by DLA.

27 48. Debtor's counsel in the Riverfront bankruptcy seeks fees of \$75,000
28 according to its first interim fee application. DLA's fees for the same matter are

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excessive and not reasonable.

49. DLA was asked to handle the Foothills bankruptcy and guarantor litigation.
The loan is approximately \$25.7 million. DLA seeks fees of about \$143,000 in that case.
The matter has not been concluded. DLA's fees for this matter are excessive and
unreasonable.

50. By contrast, fees sought by the Debtor's counsel in the Foothills bankruptcy
(according to its interim fee application) are \$45,000. DLA's fees for the same matter are
excessive and unreasonable.

9 51. DLA was asked to defend the litigation brought by National Retail against
10 the MP Funds. DLA incurred fees of about \$170,000 on this \$5.2 million loan. While the
11 motion to dismiss the adversary was successful, Dax Watson incurred only \$80,000 for
12 the same services in this matter and the PDG Los Arcos matter combined.

52. DLA was asked to defend the litigation brought by PDG Los Arcos against
the MP Funds. DLA incurred fees of about \$190,000 on a \$23.9 million loan. The issues
were identical to the National Retail matter mentioned above. While the motion to
dismiss was successful, Dax Watson incurred only \$80,000 for the same services in this
matter and the National Retail matters combined. DLA incurred combined fees of
\$360,000 on these two matters. The DLA fees are excessive and not reasonable. The
DLA fees for these two loans should be significantly reduced.

20 53. The fees incurred on other individual files are not reasonable in light of the
21 services rendered and results achieved.

54. The OIC did not agree to the employment of DLA or make a request of the
Debtor that the Debtor hire DLA. Joseph Baldino (speaking only for himself) gave three
names to Richard Feldheim and suggested that the Debtor might need additional counsel
to pursue a few of the difficult borrowers or guarantors. Mr. Baldino provided the names
of Pat McGroeder of Gallagher & Kennedy, Leo Beus of Beus Gilbert, PLLC and Mark
Nadeau of DLA. Mr. Baldino did not attend a meeting with Mr. Feldheim and Mr.
Nadeau.

1	55. The OIC and its counsel did not interfere with the Debtor's negotiations
2	with borrowers and did not tell borrowers not to deal with the Debtor. On the contrary,
3	the OIC met with Rightpath, University & Ash, Tempe Land Company, and Grace
4	Entities with the express approval of and at the request of the Debtor. These Borrowers
5	were told that only the Debtor had the authority to enter into a settlement and file a
6	settlement motion. Clearly the OIC had the right and ability to object to settlements that it
7	did not believe were reasonable – as a creditors committee routinely does in any Chapter
8	11 case of consequence.
9	56. As reflected by emails to and from Cathy Reece and Forrest Lammiman of
10	DLA in December and in emails from Brad Stevens, Cathy Reece and Keith Hendricks
11	did engage in discussions in December 2008 and January 2009 with DLA attorneys.
12	2. Contested Issues of Law
13	The following are the contested issues of law material to the Hearing:
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15	Whether DLA is entitled to fees for services rendered and expenses incurred in the
16	total amount of \$1,489,516.06 pursuant to Sections 328, 330 and 503(b) of the
17	Bankruptcy Code.
18	a. <u>DLA Position</u>
19	This Bankruptcy Case was undeniably one of the largest bankruptcy cases in
20	Arizona's history. This case involved over \$950 million in loan assets and consistently
21	received national media attention from publications such as the Wall Street Journal, New
22	York Times, USA Today, Bankruptcy Law 360 and the Daily Deal. The litigation and
23	related issues arising out of this case were very complex with multiple deal structures and
24	very sophisticated borrowers and guarantors. DLA is one of the most highly ranked
25	firms (by the American Lawyer & Chambers) in terms of its Real Estate practice.
26	Likewise, each of the partners engaged on the Debtor's cases has significant experience
27	in the overlapping legal arenas impacting the cases handled by the firm. In real estate
28	lending, bankruptcy and financial litigation matters our litigation team was required to

defend and prosecute claims in state, federal, and bankruptcy court, while assuring 1 substantive and procedural issues were handled consistently amongst a variety of cases 2 and in front of a number of judges. In addition, DLA has a prominent government affairs 3 practice group, lead at the time of its retention by the former Senator George Mitchell 4 (also Global Chair of the firm), who is now the Middle East Envoy for our State 5 Department. DLA was specifically considered and chosen by the Debtor based upon 6 these qualifications and its ability to react immediately with a minimum of conflicts in 7 this region. Other major firms in Arizona, where DLA maintains an office doing work 8 for local, regional, national and international clientele, were already conflicted from 9 representing Debtor owing to existing clients adverse to the Debtor, or relationships 10 amongst various investor groups that prohibited oversight of multiple cases. Regardless, 11 the rates charged by DLA are consistent with other work performed by the firm for 12 private clients in Arizona. In fact, despite the accusations raised by ML Manager, the 13 investors themselves, many of whom comprise the ML Trust Board and were members of 14 the OIC interviewed DLA to handle the litigation issues facing the Debtor and 15 encouraged the Debtor, with the assistance of Fennemore Craig and its financial 16 consultants, to retain DLA. At all times prior to and after DLA's retention, the Debtor, 17 its counsel, ML Manager and RBLLC were well aware of DLA's hourly rates and how 18 they compared to those of other professionals employed in this case. Indeed, DLA was 19 retained even after it declined to give an initial discount requested by those who 20 interviewed DLA. 21

From the outset, DLA was required to vigorously defend the Debtor in two prominent cases receiving substantial press coverage and to immediately commence work in several additional loan matters wherein hundreds of millions of dollars were at stake. DLA was told it was to be the lead advisor on all litigation matters involving its loan portfolio. In addition, the work in PDG and NRDP alone consisted of more than collection work, but required responding to motions to remand, non-core determination and other similar pleadings that move beyond that of "simple collection matters." At the

behest of Debtor, DLA located counsel for the investors in cases where claims were made 1 against the investors and worked closely with those attorneys to minimize the expense of 2 said investors in defending claims made against them as individuals. DLA defeated all of 3 PDG and NRDP's motions in addition to prevailing on its initial motion to dismiss with 4 respect to the asserted tort claims. With respect to Foothills and Riverfront Commons, 5 the attorneys at DLA had to have in-depth knowledge and skill in bankruptcy to respond 6 to the Chapter 11 filings of those borrowers, again, more than just simple "collection" 7 work." 8

The Debtor specifically requested that DLA perform work (whether in the form of 9 litigation or consultation) in all of the matters set forth in the Fee Application and 10 contrary to the objectors, DLA provided status reports to the Debtor on a regular basis. 11 DLA was well on its way to achieving significant results in a majority of the pending 12 litigation when the OIC intervened and progress was stifled. Over objections of the 13 Debtor, the OIC commenced its own independent meetings with borrowers. Such 14 meetings allowed borrowers to constantly argue about "who was on first" and several 15 attorneys for borrowers suggested that there was no point in meeting with Debtor or its 16 counsel because the OIC said they "would control any settlement." As the OIC gained 17 momentum toward confirming their plan of reorganization, borrowers became unwilling 18 to settle with the Debtor. The borrowers all delighted in the extension of time on their 19 credits and hoped for an economic rebound leading to increased value of real estate 20 assets. Delay in payment or resolution benefitted most borrowers while it was clearly to 21 the disadvantage of the Debtor. The OIC consistently approached borrowers about 22 settlement, stating that the Debtor had no authority to settle. Borrowers became 23 "confused"³ and efforts at settlement or other recoveries were stymied. 24

Despite the interference by the OIC, DLA managed to have two \$100,000,000 cases against the investors dismissed, would have achieved summary judgment against the guarantors in the Cottonwood matter (if it weren't for the last minute tactics of

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³ This "confusion" was largely tactical and convenient to borrowers.

Fennemore Craig to derail the Debtor's progress), and would have successfully dismissed the Foothills bankruptcy (if only the Debtor would have had the funds to pay for a formal appraisal).

DLA submits that the appropriate market for considering the reasonableness of 4 DLA's fees is the national legal community. The complex facts of this "mega" 5 bankruptcy and large collateral lawsuits required the special counsel as approved in the 6 original DLA Retention Application. DLA should not have its fees dictated by a less 7 than full view of the local market but rather on the national market articulated by the 8 Arizona Bankruptcy Court in the In re First Magnus Financial Corporation (2008 WL 9 2233503) (Bankr. D. Ariz. May 22, 2008) case. When faced with the need for counsel 10 with skill in bankruptcy, real estate, litigation, loan work outs and government affairs, the 11 Debtor chose DLA. The Debtor's case was complex, and one with national significance. 12 Indeed, the investor population was international and many prominent people outside of 13 Arizona were stakeholders in the bankruptcy process. DLA brought in a team approved 14 by Debtor and its counsel (and certain investors) together in an effort to best serve the 15 Debtor and to serve in more than just a "collection" capacity. In doing so, DLA 16 ultimately charged the Debtor a significantly discounted rate, a rate even lower than that 17 earlier approved by this Court without objection. Moreover, the rates charged by DLA 18 were commensurate with the rates charged by the other high profile Phoenix litigators 19 that were considered by the Debtor for utilization as special counsel. 20

DLA is entitled to be paid its reasonable attorneys' fees and expenses for its work as special real estate and litigation counsel to the Debtor in the amount of \$1,489,516.06. DLA preserves all rights to seek additional fees and costs incurred since July 20, 2009 in connection with DLA's fee application and objections thereto.

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b. <u>Objectors' Positions</u>

The Objectors assert that DLA hourly rates are not reasonable or customary for services they rendered in the matters upon which they were engaged. Even the reduced rates asserted by DLA significantly exceed the hourly rates for other attorneys providing

legal services in this market and case. DLA relies on In re First Magnus Financial 1 Corporation, 2008 WL 2233503 (Bankr. D. Ariz. May 22, 2008) in claiming that 2 excessive hourly rates are justified in this case. In First Magnus, Judge Marlar was 3 addressing a truly national debtor with over 5,500 employees in virtually every state. In 4 this case, the Debtor's assets were about \$200 million and it had only 25 employees all 5 located in Phoenix. It managed a loan portfolio of assets located only in Arizona. As 6 reflected in one of the exhibits, the top 10 borrower groups made up 85% of the loans. 7 The loan documents were uniform, and invoked Arizona law. The loans were secured by 8 Arizona real estate and were made to Arizona borrowers and guarantors. Judge Marlar 9 recognized that the general rule for appropriate hourly rates is the prevailing market rates 10 in the community where the court sits. The general rule must be applied in this case 11 which is limited to Arizona. DLA cannot establish that local counsel was unavailable, 12 unwilling or unable to handle the authorized services provided by DLA that could justify 13 an exception to this general rule. The excessive requested rates cannot be awarded just 14 because DLA is the world's largest law firm when there are no relevant national or 15 international issues. 16

DLA exaggerates both the significance of this bankruptcy case and the 17 significance of DLA's involvement in this case. True, this is a large case, but no amount 18 of press clippings from around the country will convert it to a national case. It is Arizona 19 based, both in its assets and law. DLA was not the Debtor's general bankruptcy counsel, 20 but was authorized to be employed to provide discrete services to the Debtor in this case. 21 DLA spent excessive amounts of time reviewing the Debtor's standard loan 22 documentation for many loans, researching general issues and analyzing loans upon 23 which it were not employed. Debtor has other special litigation counsel Greenberg 24 Traurig employed to handle most of the largest loans, and had ordinary course counsel 25 Gust Rosenfeld to handle collections, foreclosures and guarantor law suits. 26

There is no question that this case generated media attention. The circumstances of Scott Coles' death, particularly in light of the ongoing financial challenges to the entire financial system of the Untied States, generated significant media interest. However
 media attention does not justify the award of unreasonable and excessive attorney's fees
 in a bankruptcy case.

The unreasonableness of the fees, whether they were necessary, the lack of benefit to the estate, the duplication of services when compared to the other professionals used by Debtor, and the extravagant rates, all dictate that DLA should not be allowed the fees in the amounts requested. The Objectors request that the Court look at the entire record of this case when evaluating the reasonableness of the requested fees.

9 The reasonableness of the expenses is also in question. DLA has not itemized its 10 expenses and has not sustained its burden to show that the expenses were necessary and 11 reasonable.

As for unauthorized work, DLA took on and charged for work it was never
authorized to handle. All such fees should be denied.

Duplicative services cannot be approved. DLA has the burden to show either that its services were not duplicative or that they were reasonable. DLA has not met and cannot meet its burden.

DLA charged additional fees of \$43,242.47 or 140.1 hours after the 17 Effective Date of June 15, 2009. After that date, DLA was supposed to stand down and 18 all matters were to be continued. This is what happened by and large. The fees charged 19 for this time were mostly on the pursuit of fees in the PDG Los Arcos (\$14,778.95 or 20 44.3 hours) and National Retail (\$12,917.88 or 37.8 hours) matters. DLA also charged 21 \$9,723.15 (34.1 hours) on preparing its fee application. Under applicable 9th Circuit law, 22 some time for preparation of fee applications is allowable, but not a figure near \$10,000. 23 The fees are excessive for the benefit obtained, generally unreasonable and subject to 24 reduction. 25

57. In its Supplement (Docket No. 2023) DLA requests additional fees of
\$43,242.47 and expenses of \$2,999.40 for time spent from June 20 through July 20, 2009.
It complains that Fennemore Craig "waited almost two months after its plan was

1	confirmed to advise DLA Piper it would indeed be substituting in as counsel of record "	
1	confirmed to advise DLA Piper it would indeed be substituting in as counsel of record."	
2	Of course the Plan did not become effective until June 15, 2009 and until that Effective	
3	Date ML Manager had no authority to replace DLA and Fennemore Craig was not in a	
4	position to substitute in of record. DLA was directed to seek continuances and standstills	
5	in all matters until the new ML Manager was up and running. By July 20 almost all the	
6	substitution of counsel pleadings were prepared and signed by the new client. There was	
7	no unreasonable delay during this 30 day period. DLA however continued to charge fees.	
8	Most of the fees appear to be in pursuit of their own fee application or in pursuit of the	
9	fees in the PDG Los Arcos and National Retail matters. While some time for a transition	
10	was appropriate, \$43,242.47 is not reasonable and should be reduced.	
11	D. List of Witnesses	
12	1. DLA's Witnesses	
13	DLA's expected witnesses that it will call are::	
14	(a) Mark Nadeau, partner of DLA.	
15	(b) Rob Odson, partner of DLA.	
16	(c) Richard Feldheim, prior President and Chief Executive Officer of the	
17	Debtor.	
18	(d) C. Taylor Ashworth, expert witness	
19	DLA's witnesses that it may call are:	
20	(e) Christine Zahedi, prior Chief Operating Officer of the Debtor.	
21	(f) Joseph Baldino, member of the OIC and a current member of the	
22	Liquidating Trust Board.	
23	(g) William Hawkins, member of the unofficial large investor committee and is	
24	a current member of the Board of Managers of ML Manager LLC.	
25	(h) Ed McDonough, member of Alvarez & Marsal which acted as financial	
26	advisor to the OIC.	
27	(i) Michael Tucker, member of FTI which was retained by the Debtor as	
28	financial advisor.	

(j) Chris Olson, former member of the Board of Directors of Debtor and was
 the CFO for the Debtor.

3

(k) George Everrett is a former member of the Board of Directors of Debtor.

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(1) Carolyn J. Johnsen, counsel to Debtor.

(m) Dax Watson, Mack Drucker & Watson, counsel to the non MLTD investors
in the PDG and NRDP litigation matters.

DLA's objections to Objectors' witnesses: DLA objects to witnesses not 7 specifically identified within the time provided by the applicable rules, including Local 8 Rule 7016-1, and Court Order. Without limiting the foregoing, DLA objects to the use of 9 the witnesses that were first identified at 4:45 p.m. on Wednesday, November 18, 2009, 10 Messrs. Olson, O'Brien, and Everette and Mesdames Petrauschkle and Martini. The 11 parties identified their respective witnesses when the Joint Pretrial Statement was 12 originally prepared in August. By substantially changing their witness list and adding 13 new witnesses on the evening of November 18, 2009, the Objectors have deprived DLA 14 of a reasonable opportunity to investigate, subpoena or depose these witnesses prior to 15 hearing. 16

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<u>Objectors' Witnesses</u>

- 18 (1) Joseph Baldino
- 19 (2) Nechelle Wimmer

2.

- 20 (3) Chris Olson
- 21 (4) Sean O'Brien
- 22 (5) Sarah Lisa Petrauschkle
- 23 (6) Laura Martini
- 24 (7) George Everette
- 25 (8) All witnesses listed by DLA.
 - E. Witness Declarations
- <u>DLA Declarations</u>--DLA offers the following witness declarations
 as evidence at the Hearing:

1	(a) Declaration of Christine Zahedi filed August 19, 2009 in this case no. 08-
2	07465 (Docket No. 2108).
3	(b) Declaration of Richard Feldheim filed August 19, 2009 in this case no. 08-
4	07465 (Docket No. 2109).
5	(c) Declaration of Michael Tucker filed in this case no. 08-07465 (Docket No.
6	2138).
7	(d) Declaration of Mark A. Nadeau filed July 27, 2009 in case no. 08-07465
8	(Docket No. 2016).
9	(e) Declaration of Mark A. Nadeau filed October 23, 2008 in case no. 08-
10	07465 (Docket No. 865).
11	(e) Declaration of Andrew D. Eskin filed July 27, 2009 in case no. 08-07465
12	(Docket No. 2017).
13	(f) Declaration of Allison Kierman filed July 27, 2009 in case no. 08-07465
14	(Docket No. 2018).
15	(g) Declaration of Robert J. Odson filed July 17, 2009 in case no. 08-07465
16	(Docket No. 1967).
17	(h) Declaration of Jennifer L. Nassiri filed July 17, 2009 in case no. 08-07465
18	(Docket No. 1968).
19	(i) Declaration of Brendan P. Collins filed July 17, 2009 in case no. 08-07465
20	(Docket No. 1969).
21	DLA incorporates the entire record before the Court, including any additional
22	declarations filed on DLA's behalf.
23	DLA is prepared to stipulate to the admissibility of declarations provided that such
24	a stipulation applies equally to both DLA and the Objectors. If the Objectors will not
25	stipulate to the admissibility of declarations, DLA objects to the Objectors' use of the
26	Declaration of Ed McDonough, or any other declarations used by the Objectors, if the
27	declarant is not available in the Courtroom at the Hearing for cross-examination by DLA.
28	DLA further objects to the Objectors use of declarations of Ed McDonough, Nechelle

Wimmer and Kevin O'Halloran as no copies of these declarations have been provided in 1 accordance with Local Rule 7016-1(a). DLA also objects to the use of declarations of 2 Ms. Wimmer and Mr. O'Halloran as they were not specifically identified within the time 3 provided by Local Rule 7016-1, and were identified for the first time on Wednesday, 4 November 18, 2009. At 4:45 p.m. 5

2. **Objectors' Declarations**—The Objectors do not anticipate using 6 any Declarations at the Hearing other than the Declarations of Ed McDonough, Nechelle 7 Wimmer and Kevin O'Hallaran, but reserve the right to use any of the DLA Declarations 8 listed above. However, the Objectors also object to DLA using any of the Declarations 9 listed above if the Declarant is not available in the Courtroom at the Hearing for cross-10 examination by the Objectors. The Objectors also may use Declarations previously used 11 in the Bankruptcy case for impeachment purposes without listing them in this Joint 12 Pretrial Statement. 13

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F.

List of Exhibits

DLA has delivered copies of its exhibits 1-54 to The Objectors. All Parties 15 reserve all objections to the various exhibits listed: 16

17 18

1. **DLA's List of Exhibits**

DLA intends to introduce the following exhibits at the Hearing. DLA's Fee Application. 1. 19 2. DLA's fee statements from October 2008 through April 30, 20 2009. 21 Fee Application Summary in Support of Fee Application. 3. 22 Supplement to Fee Application. 4. 23 5. Order dated July 2, 2009 filed in Liss, et al. v. Excel 24 Transportation Services, Inc., et al. Case No. CV-04-2001-PHX-SMM, United States 25 District Court for the District of Arizona. 26 6. Transcript of Record taken April 30, 2009, In re Riverfront 27

Commons, LLC, 2:09-BK-00122-RTBP. 28

1	7. Documents and other papers on file in every case in which	
2	DLA represented the Debtor in its Bankruptcy Case, including the multiple adversary	
3	proceedings in NRDP, PDG, Foothills, Dragoo, Cottonwood, and Riverfront Commons	
4	summarized by way of court dockets in those cases.	
5	8. Article dated June 26, 2008, from <u>Bloomberg.com</u> entitled	
6	Mortgages Ltd. Files Chapter 11 After CEO Commits Suicide.	
7	9. Article dated June 26, 2008, from <u>Daily Deal/The Deal</u>	
8	entitled Credit Crunch Hits Another Lender.	
9	10. Article dated July 16, 2008, from <u>The Wall Street Journal</u>	
10	entitled Hard Money: Real-Estate Financier's Death Hints At Trouble for Lenders.	
11	11. Article dated July 17, 2008, from <u>The Times (London)</u>	
12	entitled Suicide Suspected in Death of Property Loans Chief.	
13	12. Article dated July 17, 2008, from <u>The Wall Street Journal</u>	
14	(Europe) entitled Real-Estate Financier's Death Hints at Trouble for Lenders Mr.	
15	Coles' Firm Draws Attention to Condition of Commercial Market.	
16	13. Article dated July 24, 2008, from <u>The Wall Street Journal</u>	
17	entitled Coles' Death Ruled a Suicide.	
18	14. Article dated August 6, 2008, from Law 360 entitled	
19	Conversion Fight Over Mortgages Ltd. Rages On.	
20	15. Article dated August 7, 2008, from <u>Daily Deal/The Deal</u>	
21	entitled Mortgages Ltd. Gets New DIP.	
22	16. Article dated August 11, 2008, from <u>Daily Deal/The Deal</u>	
23	entitled Mortgages Ltd. Wins DIP.	
24	17. Article dated August 26, 2008, from Source Media, Inc.	
25	entitled Feldheim Joins Mtgs. Ltd.	
26	18. Article dated September 23, 2008, from <u>Law 360</u> entitled	
27	Mortgages Ltd. Investors Ask to Form Committee.	
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1	19. Article dated December 6, 2008, from <u>Wall Street Journal</u>	
2	entitled Tempe Land Files for Chapter 11.	
3	20. Article dated December 6, 2008, from <u>Associated Press</u>	
4	entitled Condo Developer Files for Chapter 11.	
5	21. Article dated December 11, 2008, from <u>Daily Deal/The Deal</u>	
6	entitled Tempe Land Creditor Files for Relief.	
7	22. Article dated December 12, 2008, from <u>USA Today</u> entitled	
8	Timing Proves Bad For Phoenix; Big Investments Made Just Before Economic Decline.	
9	23. Article dated January 7, 2009, from <u>Dow Jones Corporate</u>	
10	Filings Alert entitled Mortgages Ltd Investors Want Permission to File Rival Plan.	
11	24. Article dated January 26, 2009, from <u>Business Wire, Inc.</u>	
12	entitled Reeder, Lu & Green, LLP Launch New Law Firm; New Firm, Same Winning	
13	Team Offers Broad Based, Complex Commercial Litigation Expertise.	
14	25. Article dated January 29, 2009, from <u>Daily Deal/The Deal</u>	
15	entitled Mortgages Ltd. To Liquidate.	
16	26. Article dated March 3, 2009, from <u>Law 360</u> entitled	
17	Investors' Plan Draws Ire In Mortgages Ltd. Ch. 11.	
18	27. Article dated March 30, 2009, from <u>Bloomberg.com</u> entitled	
19	Mortgages Ltd. Plan Faces Motion for Conversion to Chapter 7.	
20	28. Article dated April 7, 2009, from <u>Daily Deal/The Deal</u>	
21	entitled Mortgages Moves to Confirmation.	
22	29. Article dated April 20, 2009, from <u>Daily Deal/The Deal</u>	
23	entitled Tempe Land Files Plan.	
24	30. Article dated May 4, 2009, from <u>Law 360</u> entitled <i>Creditors</i>	
25	Balk At Mortgages Ltd. Ch. 11 Plan.	
26	31. Article dated May 6, 2009, from <u>Law 360</u> entitled <i>Mortgages</i>	
27	Ltd. Asks to Sell Land to Pay Off Creditor.	
28		
I		

1	32. Article dated May 12, 2009, from <u>Law 360</u> entitled <i>Creditors</i>	
2	Object to Mortgages Ltd.'s Land Sale.	
3	33. Article dated May 13, 2009, from <u>Law 360</u> entitled	
4	Mortgages Ltd., Investors Offer Up 3rd Ch. 11 Plan.	
5	34. Article dated May 21, 2009, from <u>Daily Deal/The Deal</u>	
6	entitled Mortgages Ltd. Wins Plan Confirmation.	
7	35. Article dated July 5, 2009, from <u>The New York Times</u>	
8	entitled Ruins of the Second Gilded Age.	
9	36. Article dated July 28, 2009, from <u>Market Watch from Dow</u>	
10	Jones entitled SEC Sues Over Alleged \$197 Million Mortgage Fraud.	
11	37. Article dated July 29, 2009, from <u>The Wall Street Journal</u>	
12	entitled SEC Sues Four Over Real-Estate Deal The Agency Accuses Phoenix Firm's	
13	Officers of Fraud in Fund Raising.	
14	38. Article dated July 29, 2009, from <u>M2 Presswire</u> entitled US	
15	SEC: SEC Charges Four Arizona-Based Promoters in \$197 Million Mortgage Lending	
16	Scheme.	
17	39. Debtors Schedules and Statement of Financial Affairs.	
18	40. Various e-mails exchanged between DLA and OIC or others	
19	concerning requests for meetings and efforts to resolve fee disputes.	
20	41. Various phone records illustrating calls between DLA and	
21	Joseph Baldino regarding the hiring of DLA.	
22	42. All motions, oppositions and replies filed by DLA in the PDG	
23	(2:08-ap-00781-RJH and 2:08-ap-00831-RJH) and NRDP (2:08-ap-00780-RJH and 08-	
24	ap-00832-RJH) matters (including the draft motion to dismiss sent to Mack Drucker &	
25	Watson). (See, Exhibit 7)	
26	43. Joinders to DLA's multiple pleadings filed by Mack Drucker	
27	& Watson in the PDG and NRDP matters (See Exhibit 7)	
28	44. Employment Application filed by Fennemore Craig PC.	
	- 23 -	

1	45. Employment Application filed by Jennings Strouss & Salmon	
2	PLC.	
3	46. Employment Application filed by Greenberg Traurig LLP.	
4	47. Chart illustrating breakdown of fees between the Dragoo	
5	adversary proceeding, 2:08-ap-00881 RJH and Foothills Chapter 11 case, 2-09-bk-	
6	02482-RJH.	
7	48. Chart illustrating breakdown of fees between Cottonwood	
8	adversary proceeding, 2:08-ap-00906-RTB and Riverfront Chapter 11 case, 2-09-bk-	
9	00122-RTB.	
10	49. Chart illustrating various deadlines in the PDG, NRDP, and	
11	Foothills matters requiring DLA to continue to perform work during the Supplemental	
12	Fee Period of June 20, 2009 through July 20, 2009.	
13	50. Summary chart of DLA write-offs.	
14	51. Debtors' Application for an Order Authorizing Employment	
15	and Retention of DLA Piper LLP (US) as Special Real Estate and Litigation Counsel for	
16	Debtor Nunc Pro Tunc to October 8, 2008	
17	52. Affidavit of Mark A. Nadeau in Support of Debtor's	
18	Application for an OrderAuthorizing Retention of DLA Piper LLP (US) as Special Real	
19	Estate and Litigation Counsel for Debtor Nunc Pro Tunc to October 8, 2008	
20	53. Order Authorizing Employment and Retention of DLA Piper	
21	LLP (US) as Special Real Estate and Litigation Counsel for Debtor Nunc Pro Tunc to	
22	October 8, 2008	
23	54. November 4, 2009 correspondence from Barry R. Sadners to	
24	Michael O'Mara et al.	
25	55. All exhibits identified by the Objectors.	
26	56. All impeachment exhibits.	
27	DLA Objections to Objectors' List of Exhibits: In addition to the general reservation of	
28	objections set forth above, DLA specifically preserves objections based upon the	
	24	

Objectors' failure to comply with Local Rule 7016-1(a)(9) by exchanging or making 1 available its exhibits. DLA provided copies of its exhibits and declarations to Objectors 2 in advance of the deadline for the filing of the joint pretrial statement. As of 8:30 a.m. on 3 November 23, 2009, Objectors had not provided any copies of their exhibits to DLA. 4 Moreover, a number of Objectors' exhibits are described generically and do not 5 reasonably apprise DLA of the exhibits. 6 2. **Objectors' List of Exhibits** 7 1. All exhibits listed and used or identified by DLA. 8 Debtor's Schedule of Assets and Liabilities and Statement of 2. 9 Affairs and Monthly Operating Reports. 10 List of Borrower Loans listing amounts and grouped by related 3. 11 Borrower entities. 12 4. Copies of various Borrower Promissory Notes or Loan 13 Documents. 14 5. Fee Application and Billing Statements of Debtor's Ordinary 15 Course Counsel Gust Rosenfeld PLC ("Gust Rosenfeld"), including fee statements, 16 summaries and supplemental fee applications. 17 Summary comparisons of DLA and Gust Rosenfeld rates, 6. 18 attorney years in practice, legal services, fees and matters handled, and results achieved. 19 7. Fee Application of the Debtor's bankruptcy counsel Jennings 20 Strouss & Salmon PLC ("JSS"), including fee statements, summaries and supplemental 21 fee applications. 22 8. Fee Application of the Debtor's special counsel Greenberg 23 Traurig LLP, including fee statements, summaries and supplemental fee applications. 24 9. Fee Application of the Debtor's financial advisor FTI Consulting, 25 including fee statements, summaries and supplemental fee applications. 26 10. Fee Application of the OIC counsel, Fennemore Craig PC, 27 including fee statements, summaries and supplemental fee applications. 28

1	11. Fee Application of the Unsecured Creditors Committee's
2	counsel, Nussbaum & Gillis PC, including fee statements, summaries and supplemental
3	fee applications.
4	12. Summary comparison of the various fee applications of the
5	Debtor's professionals and the overlap and duplication of services.
6	13. Fee Application of the Mack Drucker & Watson in the
7	Bankruptcy case and Requests for fees in the National Retail adversary proceeding 2:08-
8	ap-00780-RJH and the PDG Los Arcos adversary proceeding 2:08-ap-00781-RJH and the
9	Court's order awarding fees, including fee statements, summaries and supplemental fee
10	applications.
11	14. Fee applications filed by debtor's counsel Polsinelli Shugart PC
12	in the Riverfront bankruptcy case 2:09-bk-00122 RTBP and the Foothills bankruptcy
13	proceeding 2:09-bk-002482-RJH.
14	15. Various Minute Entries and transcripts from the Riverfront
15	bankruptcy proceeding, including minute entries, memorandum decisions and pleadings,
16	including and without limitation, affidavits submitted by DLA.
17	16. Application to Employ DLA (Docket No. 864) and Nadeau
18	Declaration and the Engagement Letter (Docket No. 865).
19	17. Various emails to and from DLA and counsel for OIC about
20	discussions and proposals.
21	18. Various emails to and from DLA and counsel for ML Manager or
22	Liquidating Trust for turnover or delivery of files and substitution of counsel and copies
23	of various substitutions of counsel.
24	19. Various emails to and from DLA, the Debtor, its counsel and
25	counsel for the OIC concerning communications relevant to the issues raised in this
26	matter. (The applicable privilege is waived as to the emails described in paragraphs 17 –
27	19 on a limited basis and only as to the DLA fee request).
28	20. All impeachment exhibits.

1	Respectfully submitted this 24 th day of November, 2009.
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