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COURT FILE NUMBER 2301-04941  
COURT COURT OF KING'S BENCH OF ALBERTA  
IN BANKRUPTCY AND INSOLVENCY  
JUDICIAL CENTRE CALGARY  
IN THE MATTER OF THE RECEIVERSHIP OF  
WESTMOUNT PROJECTS INC.  
COM  
PLAINTIFF BANK OF MONTREAL August 4, 2023  
DEFENDANTS WESTMOUNT PROJECTS INC., 2218923 ALBERTA  
LTD., 1975874 ALBERTA LTD., ANDERSON &  
ASSOCIATES FINANCIAL CORP., IRONCLAD  
PROJECTS LTD., GORDAN D. ANDERSON, and  
DENI MARIO DANIEL ECHINO  
DOCUMENT **WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS OF DELOITTE  
RESTRUCTURING INC.**  
ADDRESS FOR SERVICE AND CONTACT INFORMATION OF PARTY  
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**WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS OF DELOITTE RESTRUCTURING INC., COURT-APPOINTED RECEIVER  
AND MANAGER**

In respect of an Application before the Honourable Justice Yamauchi  
to be heard August 4, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.

Prepared by:

DENTONS CANADA LLP

Lawyers for Deloitte Restructuring Inc., Court-appointed Receiver and Manager

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. These written submissions are provided on behalf of Deloitte Restructuring Inc., Court-appointed receiver and manager (the “**Receiver**”) pursuant to Orders granted in these proceedings on May 15, 2023 (the “**Receivership Orders**”), appointing the Receiver as receiver and manager over:
  - (a) all of the assets, properties, and undertakings of 2218923 Alberta Ltd. (“**221 Alberta**”);
  - (b) all of the assets, properties, and undertakings of 1975847 Alberta Ltd. (“**197 Alberta**”); and
  - (c) 3 specific real properties (the “**Mortgaged Property**” or “**Calgary Property**”) and certain personal property (and related property) of Westmount Projects Inc. (“**Westmount**”).
2. 221 Alberta and 197 Alberta each own a commercial property in Medicine Hat, Alberta, which are referred to collectively as the “**Medicine Hat Property**”.
3. The Calgary Property is comprised of three multi-family residential properties in Calgary, Alberta.
4. The Receiver seeks approval of a listing agreement (“**Listing Agreement**”) and sales processes (“**Sales Processes**”) for the Medicine Hat Property and Calgary Property. Given the differing nature of the Medicine Hat Property and Calgary Property, the Receiver is proposing a separate sales process for the Medicine Hat Property, on the one hand, and the Calgary Property, on the other hand. The same listing agent will be retained for each Sales Process.
5. The structure of each Sales Process is substantially similar, with the primary points of the Sales Processes being:
  - (a) the Receiver will engage a listing agent, who will market the Medicine Hat Property and Calgary Property for a period of time (approximately 60 days in the case of the Medicine Hat Property and approximately 30 days in the case of the Calgary Property) [para 8];
  - (b) bids may be made for all, or a portion, of the Medicine Hat Property and Calgary Property [paras 6 and 19] – parties do not need to make an *en bloc* bid;
  - (c) the Receiver may aggregate bids for different portions of the Medicine Hat Property and Calgary Property [para 21];
  - (d) parties must be satisfied as to diligence and have any financing in order before the bid deadline [para 19(e)];
  - (e) after the bid deadline, bids received for the property will be considered by the Receiver, and the Receiver may negotiate with bidders based on bids received [para 23(a)];
  - (f) the Receiver has the option to engage a “best and final” bid process, if it deems reasonable [para 25]; and
  - (g) the Receiver has no obligation to accept any bid [para 24].

6. In crafting the Sales Processes, the Receiver considered the nature of the property, the views of the proposed listing agent, and the views of interested stakeholders, and determined that the Listing Agreement and Sales Processes are reasonable, prudent, fair, and likely to maximize value for the property that is proposed to be marketed and sold. The Sales Processes are transparent Court-supervised processes, structured similarly to processes frequently approved in receivership proceedings.
7. The Receiver recommends and respectfully requests that this Honourable Court approve the Listing Agreement and Sales Processes.

## II. ANALYSIS

8. When a court appoints a Receiver, it does so with the intention that it will:
  - (a) rely on the Receiver's expertise and not its own;
  - (b) place confidence in the Receiver's actions and opinions;
  - (c) assume the Receiver has acted properly, unless the contrary is clearly shown; and
  - (d) avoid second-guessing, with the benefit of hindsight, the Receiver's business decisions.<sup>1</sup>
9. A court will not interfere with the recommendations of a Receiver, absent exceptional circumstances:

The court should not proceed against the recommendations of its Receiver except in special circumstances and where the necessity and propriety of doing so are plain. Any other rule or approach would emasculate the role of the Receiver and make it inevitable that the final negotiation of every sale would take place on the motion for approval.

...

It is equally clear, in my view, though perhaps not so clearly enunciated, that it is only in an exceptional case that the court will intervene and proceed contrary to the Receiver's recommendation if satisfied, as I am, that the Receiver has acted reasonably, prudently and fairly and not arbitrarily.<sup>2</sup>

10. As recently articulated by the Alberta Court of Appeal:

A receiver plays the lead role in receivership proceedings. They are officers of the court; their advice should therefore be given significant weight. To otherwise approach the proceedings would weaken the receiver's central purpose and function and erode confidence in those who

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<sup>1</sup>; *Lee v Geolyn Inc*, 2009 ABQB 261 at para 21, 54 CBR (5<sup>th</sup>) 301. **TAB A.**

<sup>2</sup> *Royal Bank of Canada v Soundair Corp* (1991), 4 OR (3d) 1 at para 58, 7 CBR (3d) 1 (CA) [*"Soundair"*], citations omitted. **TAB B.**

deal with them: *Crown Trust Co v Rosenberg*(1986), 39 DLR (4<sup>th</sup>) 526, 60 OR (2d) 87 (ONSC) at p 551.<sup>3</sup>

11. In determining whether to approve a sales process proposed by a Receiver, the Court “must keep the *Soundair* principles in mind and assess:
  - (a) the fairness, transparency and integrity of the proposed process;
  - (b) the commercial efficacy of the proposed process in light of the specific circumstances facing the receiver; and
  - (c) whether the sales process will optimize the chances, in the particular circumstances, of securing the best possible price for the assets up for sale.”<sup>4</sup>
  
12. The *Soundair* principles are well known in receivership proceedings:
 

... the test requires satisfaction of four factors:

  - i. Whether the Receiver has made a sufficient effort to get the best price and has not acted improvidently;
  - ii. Whether the interests of all parties have been considered, not just the interests of the creditors of the debtor;
  - iii. The efficacy and integrity of the sale process by which offers are obtained; and
  - iv. Whether there has been unfairness in the working out of the process.<sup>5</sup>
  
13. The Receiver respectfully submits that consideration of these factors supports approval of the Sales Processes.
  
14. The marketing process proposed by the Receiver will ensure a broad exposure of the properties to potentially interested buyers, both by leveraging the proposed listing agent’s existing networks and contacts and by broadly advertising to the public. This marketing strategy is appropriate and likely to optimize the chances of securing the best possible price given the nature of the properties.
  
15. The Sales Processes ensure a fair and level playing field by implementing a court-approved set of rules and deadlines, which will be disclosed to all interested parties. The rules and deadlines in the Sales Processes were crafted in consideration of the nature of the property and in taking into account feedback from the proposed listing agent and stakeholders.

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<sup>3</sup> *1705221 Alberta Ltd v Three M Mortgages Inc*, 2021 ABCA 144 at para 22, 2021 ABCA 144 (CanLII) [**“1705221”**]. **TAB C.**

<sup>4</sup> *Choice Properties Limited Partnership v Penady (Barrie) Ltd*, 2020 ONSC 3517 at para 16, 2020 ONSC 3517 (CanLII) citations omitted. **TAB D.**

<sup>5</sup> *1705221*, *supra* note 3 at para 19.

16. The Receiver views that the proposed Sales Processes will optimize the chances of securing the best possible price for the properties; however, the Receiver is not obligated to accept any bids, and if at the conclusion of the Sales Processes the Receiver views that additional or different efforts to market the properties are required, the Receiver can seek approval of these from the Court.
17. In all of the circumstances, the Receiver recommends approval of the Sales Processes.
18. Certain stakeholders, Gordon Anderson and Anderson & Associates Financial Corp. (collectively, “**Anderson**”) who the Receiver understands have provided guarantees in respect of certain of the receivership debtors, oppose the proposed Sales Processes and propose an alternate process (the “**Anderson Sale Process**”). Approval of the Anderson Sale Process is not before this Honourable Court; however, in forming its view that the Sales Processes are appropriate and recommending them for approval, the Receiver considered the Anderson Sale Process and the objections of Anderson to the Sales Processes. Ultimately, the Receiver concluded that the Anderson Sale Process is not viable and would not optimize the chances of achieving the best price for the properties.
19. The Receiver provides a detailed summary of its review of the Anderson Sale Process in its supplemental Reports, and notes among other issues that the Anderson Sale Process propose to:
  - (a) provide a list price for the properties, which the Receiver does not view as appropriate or likely to optimize sales given that there are numerous opinions of value and appraisals in respect of the properties, which generally vary by a significant amount, meaning there would be risk in attempting to set a listing price;
  - (b) accept bids that are conditional upon unperformed due diligence and financing, which brings increased uncertainty to the ability to close a bid and the potential for increased costs if conditions are not satisfied; and
  - (c) in the case of the Medicine Hat Property, give certain “inside” parties a right to match offers, which the Receiver views would bring unfairness into the sales process and would be likely to chill interest in the sale process, reducing the likelihood of obtaining the best possible price for the properties.
20. The Receiver considered in detail the evidence submitted by Anderson in opposing the Sales Processes and determined that the evidence was of limited assistance and ultimately did not cause the Receiver to change its assessment that the Sales Processes should be recommended to this Honourable Court.
21. It is particularly notable that the evidence of Gordon Anderson candidly admits that he was unable to find “any empirical evidence for Canadian residential or commercial property to show the benefits of MLS over tender (off MLS).”<sup>6</sup> There is no evidence to establish that the Anderson Sale Process is better, let alone to establish that the Sales Processes are unreasonable, improper, unfair, or unlikely to optimize the chances of obtaining the best price for the Calgary Property and Medicine Hat Property.

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<sup>6</sup> Affidavit of Gordon D. Anderson Sworn/Affirmed on July 26, 2023 at para 17.

22. While certain stakeholders may prefer a different process, the Receiver must balance the interests of all stakeholders. The Receiver has done this to the best of its ability and in doing so supports the Sales Processes, which it continues to view is reasonable, appropriate, and likely to optimize the chances of getting the best price for the properties in the specific circumstances of the receivership.
23. Moreover, approval of the Sales Processes prejudices no party. Approval of the Sales Processes effectively allows the Receiver to hang a “for sale” sign on the properties. This will allow the Receiver to begin the process of garnering interest in the property and permit interested parties to begin the due diligence process. The Receiver understands that Anderson will bring an application seeking approval of the Anderson Sale Process in the coming weeks, and it will be open to the Court at such an application to direct that the Sales Processes be terminated and the Anderson Sales Process be approved, should it determine this is appropriate. Marketing efforts taking place prior to and while such an application occurs are for the benefit of all parties, and will not be wasted. The Receiver has also ensured that the Listing Agreement provides that the listing agent will conduct the listing pursuant to whatever process is ordered by the Court, such that it would be relatively easy to “switch tack” if the Court orders substitution of a different sales process.

### III. CONCLUSION

24. The Receiver has considered the nature of the property and the positions of all interested stakeholders and respectfully recommends the Listing Agreement and Sales Processes be approved by this Honourable Court.

ALL OF WHICH IS RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED THIS 31 DAY OF JULY, 2023.

DENTONS CANADA LLP, Lawyers for Deloitte  
Restructuring Inc.

Per: 

John Regush

## TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

<u>TAB</u>	<u>Authority</u>
A.	<a href="#"><u><i>Lee v Geolyn Inc</i>, 2009 ABQB 261, 54 CBR (5<sup>th</sup>) 301.</u></a>
B.	<a href="#"><u><i>Royal Bank of Canada v Soundair Corp</i> (1991), 4 OR (3d) 1, 7 CBR (3d) 1 (CA)</u></a>
C.	<a href="#"><u><i>1705221 Alberta Ltd v Three M Mortgages Inc</i>, 2021 ABCA 144, 2021 ABCA 144 (CanLII).</u></a>
D.	<a href="#"><u><i>Choice Properties Limited Partnership v Penady (Barrie) Ltd</i>, 2020 ONSC 3517, 2020 ONSC 3517 (CanLII).</u></a>

**TAB A**

Royal Bank of Canada v. Soundair Corp., Canadian Pension  
Capital Ltd. and Canadian Insurers Capital Corp.

Indexed as: Royal Bank of Canada v. Soundair Corp.  
(C.A.)

4 O.R. (3d) 1  
[1991] O.J. No. 1137  
Action No. 318/91

ONTARIO  
Court of Appeal for Ontario  
Goodman, McKinlay and Galligan JJ.A.  
July 3, 1991

Debtor and creditor -- Receivers -- Court-appointed receiver accepting offer to purchase assets against wishes of secured creditors -- Receiver acting properly and prudently -- Wishes of creditors not determinative -- Court approval of sale confirmed on appeal.

Air Toronto was a division of Soundair. In April 1990, one of Soundair's creditors, the Royal Bank, appointed a receiver to operate Air Toronto and sell it as a going concern. The receiver was authorized to sell Air Toronto to Air Canada, or, if that sale could not be completed, to negotiate and sell Air Toronto to another person. Air Canada made an offer which the receiver rejected. The receiver then entered into negotiations with Canadian Airlines International (Canadian); two subsidiaries of Canadian, Ontario Express Ltd. and Frontier Airlines Ltd., made an offer to purchase on March 6, 1991 (the OEL offer). Air Canada and a creditor of Soundair, CCFL, presented an offer to purchase to the receiver on March 7, 1991 through 922, a company formed for that purpose (the 922 offer). The receiver declined the 922 offer because it contained an unacceptable condition and accepted the OEL offer. 922 made a

second offer, which was virtually identical to the first one except that the unacceptable condition had been removed. In proceedings before Rosenberg J., an order was made approving the sale of Air Toronto to OEL and dismissing the 922 offer. CCFL appealed.

Held, the appeal should be dismissed.

Per Galligan J.A.: When deciding whether a receiver has acted providently, the court should examine the conduct of the receiver in light of the information the receiver had when it agreed to accept an offer, and should be very cautious before deciding that the receiver's conduct was improvident based upon information which has come to light after it made its decision. The decision to sell to OEL was a sound one in the circumstances faced by the receiver on March 8, 1991. Prices in other offers received after the receiver has agreed to a sale have relevance only if they show that the price contained in the accepted offer was so unreasonably low as to demonstrate that the receiver was improvident in accepting it. If they do not do so, they should not be considered upon a motion to confirm a sale recommended by a court-appointed receiver. If the 922 offer was better than the OEL offer, it was only marginally better and did not lead to an inference that the disposition strategy of the receiver was improvident.

While the primary concern of a receiver is the protecting of the interests of creditors, a secondary but important consideration is the integrity of the process by which the sale is effected. The court must exercise extreme caution before it interferes with the process adopted by a receiver to sell an unusual asset. It is important that prospective purchasers know that, if they are acting in good faith, bargain seriously with a receiver and enter into an agreement with it, a court will not lightly interfere with the commercial judgment of the receiver to sell the asset to them.

The failure of the receiver to give an offering memorandum to those who expressed an interest in the purchase of Air Toronto did not result in the process being unfair, as there was no proof that if an offering memorandum had been widely

distributed among persons qualified to have purchased Air Toronto, a viable offer would have come forth from a party other than 922 or OEL.

The fact that the 922 offer was supported by Soundair's secured creditors did not mean that the court should have given effect to their wishes. Creditors who asked the court to appoint a receiver to dispose of assets (and therefore insulated themselves from the risks of acting privately) should not be allowed to take over control of the process by the simple expedient of supporting another purchaser if they do not agree with the sale by the receiver. If the court decides that a court-appointed receiver has acted providently and properly (as the receiver did in this case), the views of creditors should not be determinative.

Per McKinlay J.A. (concurring in the result): While the procedure carried out by the receiver in this case was appropriate, given the unfolding of events and the unique nature of the assets involved, it was not a procedure which was likely to be appropriate in many receivership sales.

Per Goodman J.A. (dissenting): The fact that a creditor has requested an order of the court appointing a receiver does not in any way diminish or derogate from his right to obtain the maximum benefit to be derived from any disposition of the debtor's assets. The creditors in this case were convinced that acceptance of the 922 offer was in their best interest and the evidence supported that belief. Although the receiver acted in good faith, the process which it used was unfair insofar as 922 was concerned and improvident insofar as the secured creditors were concerned.

Cases referred to

Beauty Counsellors of Canada Ltd. (Re) (1986), 58 C.B.R. (N.S.) 237 (Ont. Bkcy.); British Columbia Development Corp. v. Spun Cast Industries Inc. (1977), 5 B.C.L.R. 94, 26 C.B.R. (N.S.) 28 (S.C.); Cameron v. Bank of Nova Scotia (1981), 38 C.B.R. (N.S.) 1, 45 N.S.R. (2d) 303, 86 A.P.R. 303 (C.A.); Crown Trust Co. v. Rosenberg (1986), 60 O.R. (2d) 87, 22 C.P.C.

(2d) 131, 67 C.B.R. (N.S.) 320 (note), 39 D.L.R. (4th) 526 (H.C.J.); *Salima Investments Ltd. v. Bank of Montreal* (1985), 41 Alta. L.R. (2d) 58, 65 A.R. 372, 59 C.B.R. (N.S.) 242, 21 D.L.R. (4th) 473 (C.A.); *Selkirk (Re)* (1986), 58 C.B.R. (N.S.) 245 (Ont. Bkcy.); *Selkirk (Re)* (1987), 64 C.B.R. (N.S.) 140 (Ont. Bkcy.)

Statutes referred to

Employment Standards Act, R.S.O. 1980, c. 137

Environmental Protection Act, R.S.O. 1980, c. 141

APPEAL from the judgment of the General Division, Rosenberg J., May 1, 1991, approving the sale of an airline by a receiver.

J.B. Berkow and Steven H. Goldman, for appellants.

John T. Morin, Q.C., for Air Canada.

L.A.J. Barnes and Lawrence E. Ritchie, for Royal Bank of Canada.

Sean F. Dunphy and G.K. Ketcheson for Ernst & Young Inc., receiver of Soundair Corp., respondent.

W.G. Horton, for Ontario Express Ltd.

Nancy J. Spies, for Frontier Air Ltd.

GALLIGAN J.A.:-- This is an appeal from the order of Rosenberg J. made on May 1, 1991 (Gen. Div.). By that order, he approved the sale of Air Toronto to Ontario Express Limited and Frontier Air Limited and he dismissed a motion to approve an offer to purchase Air Toronto by 922246 Ontario Limited.

It is necessary at the outset to give some background to the dispute. Soundair Corporation (Soundair) is a corporation

engaged in the air transport business. It has three divisions. One of them is Air Toronto. Air Toronto operates a scheduled airline from Toronto to a number of mid-sized cities in the United States of America. Its routes serve as feeders to several of Air Canada's routes. Pursuant to a connector agreement, Air Canada provides some services to Air Toronto and benefits from the feeder traffic provided by it. The operational relationship between Air Canada and Air Toronto is a close one.

In the latter part of 1989 and the early part of 1990, Soundair was in financial difficulty. Soundair has two secured creditors who have an interest in the assets of Air Toronto. The Royal Bank of Canada (the Royal Bank) is owed at least \$65,000,000. The appellants Canadian Pension Capital Limited and Canadian Insurers Capital Corporation (collectively called CCFL) are owed approximately \$9,500,000. Those creditors will have a deficiency expected to be in excess of \$50,000,000 on the winding-up of Soundair.

On April 26, 1990, upon the motion of the Royal Bank, O'Brien J. appointed Ernst & Young Inc. (the receiver) as receiver of all of the assets, property and undertakings of Soundair. The order required the receiver to operate Air Toronto and sell it as a going concern. Because of the close relationship between Air Toronto and Air Canada, it was contemplated that the receiver would obtain the assistance of Air Canada to operate Air Toronto. The order authorized the receiver:

(b) to enter into contractual arrangements with Air Canada to retain a manager or operator, including Air Canada, to manage and operate Air Toronto under the supervision of Ernst & Young Inc. until the completion of the sale of Air Toronto to Air Canada or other person ...

Also because of the close relationship, it was expected that Air Canada would purchase Air Toronto. To that end, the order of O'Brien J. authorized the receiver:

(c) to negotiate and do all things necessary or desirable to complete a sale of Air Toronto to Air Canada and, if a sale

to Air Canada cannot be completed, to negotiate and sell Air Toronto to another person, subject to terms and conditions approved by this Court.

Over a period of several weeks following that order, negotiations directed towards the sale of Air Toronto took place between the receiver and Air Canada. Air Canada had an agreement with the receiver that it would have exclusive negotiating rights during that period. I do not think it is necessary to review those negotiations, but I note that Air Canada had complete access to all of the operations of Air Toronto and conducted due diligence examinations. It became thoroughly acquainted with every aspect of Air Toronto's operations.

Those negotiations came to an end when an offer made by Air Canada on June 19, 1990, was considered unsatisfactory by the receiver. The offer was not accepted and lapsed. Having regard to the tenor of Air Canada's negotiating stance and a letter sent by its solicitors on July 20, 1990, I think that the receiver was eminently reasonable when it decided that there was no realistic possibility of selling Air Toronto to Air Canada.

The receiver then looked elsewhere. Air Toronto's feeder business is very attractive, but it only has value to a national airline. The receiver concluded reasonably, therefore, that it was commercially necessary for one of Canada's two national airlines to be involved in any sale of Air Toronto. Realistically, there were only two possible purchasers whether direct or indirect. They were Air Canada and Canadian Airlines International.

It was well known in the air transport industry that Air Toronto was for sale. During the months following the collapse of the negotiations with Air Canada, the receiver tried unsuccessfully to find viable purchasers. In late 1990, the receiver turned to Canadian Airlines International, the only realistic alternative. Negotiations began between them. Those negotiations led to a letter of intent dated February 11, 1991. On March 6, 1991, the receiver received an offer from Ontario

Express Limited and Frontier Airlines Limited, who are subsidiaries of Canadian Airlines International. This offer is called the OEL offer.

In the meantime, Air Canada and CCFL were having discussions about making an offer for the purchase of Air Toronto. They formed 922246 Ontario Limited (922) for the purpose of purchasing Air Toronto. On March 1, 1991, CCFL wrote to the receiver saying that it proposed to make an offer. On March 7, 1991, Air Canada and CCFL presented an offer to the receiver in the name of 922. For convenience, its offers are called the 922 offers.

The first 922 offer contained a condition which was unacceptable to the receiver. I will refer to that condition in more detail later. The receiver declined the 922 offer and on March 8, 1991, accepted the OEL offer. Subsequently, 922 obtained an order allowing it to make a second offer. It then submitted an offer which was virtually identical to that of March 7, 1991, except that the unacceptable condition had been removed.

The proceedings before Rosenberg J. then followed. He approved the sale to OEL and dismissed a motion for the acceptance of the 922 offer. Before Rosenberg J., and in this court, both CCFL and the Royal Bank supported the acceptance of the second 922 offer.

There are only two issues which must be resolved in this appeal. They are:

- (1) Did the receiver act properly when it entered into an agreement to sell Air Toronto to OEL?
- (2) What effect does the support of the 922 offer by the secured creditors have on the result?

I will deal with the two issues separately.

#### I. DID THE RECEIVER ACT PROPERLY

IN AGREEING TO SELL TO OEL?

Before dealing with that issue there are three general observations which I think I should make. The first is that the sale of an airline as a going concern is a very complex process. The best method of selling an airline at the best price is something far removed from the expertise of a court. When a court appoints a receiver to use its commercial expertise to sell an airline, it is inescapable that it intends to rely upon the receiver's expertise and not upon its own. Therefore, the court must place a great deal of confidence in the actions taken and in the opinions formed by the receiver. It should also assume that the receiver is acting properly unless the contrary is clearly shown. The second observation is that the court should be reluctant to second-guess, with the benefit of hindsight, the considered business decisions made by its receiver. The third observation which I wish to make is that the conduct of the receiver should be reviewed in the light of the specific mandate given to him by the court.

The order of O'Brien J. provided that if the receiver could not complete the sale to Air Canada that it was "to negotiate and sell Air Toronto to another person". The court did not say how the receiver was to negotiate the sale. It did not say it was to call for bids or conduct an auction. It told the receiver to negotiate and sell. It obviously intended, because of the unusual nature of the asset being sold, to leave the method of sale substantially in the discretion of the receiver. I think, therefore, that the court should not review minutely the process of the sale when, broadly speaking, it appears to the court to be a just process.

As did Rosenberg J., I adopt as correct the statement made by Anderson J. in *Crown Trust Co. v. Rosenberg* (1986), 60 O.R. (2d) 87, 39 D.L.R. (4th) 526 (H.C.J.), at pp. 92-94 O.R., pp. 531-33 D.L.R., of the duties which a court must perform when deciding whether a receiver who has sold a property acted properly. When he set out the court's duties, he did not put them in any order of priority, nor do I. I summarize those duties as follows:

1. It should consider whether the receiver has made a sufficient effort to get the best price and has not acted improvidently.
2. It should consider the interests of all parties.
3. It should consider the efficacy and integrity of the process by which offers are obtained.
4. It should consider whether there has been unfairness in the working out of the process.

I intend to discuss the performance of those duties separately.

1. Did the receiver make a sufficient effort to get the best price and did it act providently?

Having regard to the fact that it was highly unlikely that a commercially viable sale could be made to anyone but the two national airlines, or to someone supported by either of them, it is my view that the receiver acted wisely and reasonably when it negotiated only with Air Canada and Canadian Airlines International. Furthermore, when Air Canada said that it would submit no further offers and gave the impression that it would not participate further in the receiver's efforts to sell, the only course reasonably open to the receiver was to negotiate with Canadian Airlines International. Realistically, there was nowhere else to go but to Canadian Airlines International. In doing so, it is my opinion that the receiver made sufficient efforts to sell the airline.

When the receiver got the OEL offer on March 6, 1991, it was over ten months since it had been charged with the responsibility of selling Air Toronto. Until then, the receiver had not received one offer which it thought was acceptable. After substantial efforts to sell the airline over that period, I find it difficult to think that the receiver acted improvidently in accepting the only acceptable offer which it had.

On March 8, 1991, the date when the receiver accepted the OEL offer, it had only two offers, the OEL offer which was acceptable, and the 922 offer which contained an unacceptable condition. I cannot see how the receiver, assuming for the moment that the price was reasonable, could have done anything but accept the OEL offer.

When deciding whether a receiver had acted providently, the court should examine the conduct of the receiver in light of the information the receiver had when it agreed to accept an offer. In this case, the court should look at the receiver's conduct in the light of the information it had when it made its decision on March 8, 1991. The court should be very cautious before deciding that the receiver's conduct was improvident based upon information which has come to light after it made its decision. To do so, in my view, would derogate from the mandate to sell given to the receiver by the order of O'Brien J. I agree with and adopt what was said by Anderson J. in *Crown Trust v. Rosenberg*, supra, at p. 112 O.R., p. 551 D.L.R.:

Its decision was made as a matter of business judgment on the elements then available to it. It is of the very essence of a receiver's function to make such judgments and in the making of them to act seriously and responsibly so as to be prepared to stand behind them.

If the court were to reject the recommendation of the Receiver in any but the most exceptional circumstances, it would materially diminish and weaken the role and function of the Receiver both in the perception of receivers and in the perception of any others who might have occasion to deal with them. It would lead to the conclusion that the decision of the Receiver was of little weight and that the real decision was always made upon the motion for approval. That would be a consequence susceptible of immensely damaging results to the disposition of assets by court-appointed receivers.

(Emphasis added)

I also agree with and adopt what was said by Macdonald J.A.

in *Cameron v. Bank of Nova Scotia* (1981), 38 C.B.R. (N.S.) 1, 45 N.S.R. (2d) 303 (C.A.), at p. 11 C.B.R., p. 314 N.S.R.:

In my opinion if the decision of the receiver to enter into an agreement of sale, subject to court approval, with respect to certain assets is reasonable and sound under the circumstances at the time existing it should not be set aside simply because a later and higher bid is made. To do so would literally create chaos in the commercial world and receivers and purchasers would never be sure they had a binding agreement.

(Emphasis added)

On March 8, 1991, the receiver had two offers. One was the OEL offer which it considered satisfactory but which could be withdrawn by OEL at any time before it was accepted. The receiver also had the 922 offer which contained a condition that was totally unacceptable. It had no other offers. It was faced with the dilemma of whether it should decline to accept the OEL offer and run the risk of it being withdrawn, in the hope that an acceptable offer would be forthcoming from 922. An affidavit filed by the president of the receiver describes the dilemma which the receiver faced, and the judgment made in the light of that dilemma:

24. An asset purchase agreement was received by Ernst & Young on March 7, 1991 which was dated March 6, 1991. This agreement was received from CCFL in respect of their offer to purchase the assets and undertaking of Air Toronto. Apart from financial considerations, which will be considered in a subsequent affidavit, the Receiver determined that it would not be prudent to delay acceptance of the OEL agreement to negotiate a highly uncertain arrangement with Air Canada and CCFL. Air Canada had the benefit of an "exclusive" in negotiations for Air Toronto and had clearly indicated its intention to take itself out of the running while ensuring that no other party could seek to purchase Air Toronto and maintain the Air Canada connector arrangement vital to its survival. The CCFL offer represented a radical reversal of this position by Air Canada at the eleventh hour. However, it

contained a significant number of conditions to closing which were entirely beyond the control of the Receiver. As well, the CCFL offer came less than 24 hours before signing of the agreement with OEL which had been negotiated over a period of months, at great time and expense.

(Emphasis added)

I am convinced that the decision made was a sound one in the circumstances faced by the receiver on March 8, 1991.

I now turn to consider whether the price contained in the OEL offer was one which it was provident to accept. At the outset, I think that the fact that the OEL offer was the only acceptable one available to the receiver on March 8, 1991, after ten months of trying to sell the airline, is strong evidence that the price in it was reasonable. In a deteriorating economy, I doubt that it would have been wise to wait any longer.

I mentioned earlier that, pursuant to an order, 922 was permitted to present a second offer. During the hearing of the appeal, counsel compared at great length the price contained in the second 922 offer with the price contained in the OEL offer. Counsel put forth various hypotheses supporting their contentions that one offer was better than the other.

It is my opinion that the price contained in the 922 offer is relevant only if it shows that the price obtained by the Receiver in the OEL offer was not a reasonable one. In *Crown Trust v. Rosenberg*, supra, Anderson J., at p. 113 O.R., p. 551 D.L.R., discussed the comparison of offers in the following way:

No doubt, as the cases have indicated, situations might arise where the disparity was so great as to call in question the adequacy of the mechanism which had produced the offers. It is not so here, and in my view that is substantially an end of the matter.

In two judgments, Saunders J. considered the circumstances in which an offer submitted after the receiver had agreed to a

sale should be considered by the court. The first is *Re Selkirk* (1986), 58 C.B.R. (N.S.) 245 (Ont. Bkcy.), at p. 247:

If, for example, in this case there had been a second offer of a substantially higher amount, then the court would have to take that offer into consideration in assessing whether the receiver had properly carried out his function of endeavouring to obtain the best price for the property.

The second is *Re Beauty Counsellors of Canada Ltd.* (1986), 58 C.B.R. (N.S.) 237 (Ont. Bkcy.), at p. 243:

If a substantially higher bid turns up at the approval stage, the court should consider it. Such a bid may indicate, for example, that the trustee has not properly carried out its duty to endeavour to obtain the best price for the estate.

In *Re Selkirk* (1987), 64 C.B.R. (N.S.) 140 (Ont. Bkcy.), at p. 142, McRae J. expressed a similar view:

The court will not lightly withhold approval of a sale by the receiver, particularly in a case such as this where the receiver is given rather wide discretionary authority as per the order of Mr. Justice Trainor and, of course, where the receiver is an officer of this court. Only in a case where there seems to be some unfairness in the process of the sale or where there are substantially higher offers which would tend to show that the sale was improvident will the court withhold approval. It is important that the court recognize the commercial exigencies that would flow if prospective purchasers are allowed to wait until the sale is in court for approval before submitting their final offer. This is something that must be discouraged.

(Emphasis added)

What those cases show is that the prices in other offers have relevance only if they show that the price contained in the offer accepted by the receiver was so unreasonably low as to demonstrate that the receiver was improvident in accepting it. I am of the opinion, therefore, that if they do not tend to

show that the receiver was improvident, they should not be considered upon a motion to confirm a sale recommended by a court-appointed receiver. If they were, the process would be changed from a sale by a receiver, subject to court approval, into an auction conducted by the court at the time approval is sought. In my opinion, the latter course is unfair to the person who has entered bona fide into an agreement with the receiver, can only lead to chaos, and must be discouraged.

If, however, the subsequent offer is so substantially higher than the sale recommended by the receiver, then it may be that the receiver has not conducted the sale properly. In such circumstances, the court would be justified itself in entering into the sale process by considering competitive bids. However, I think that that process should be entered into only if the court is satisfied that the receiver has not properly conducted the sale which it has recommended to the court.

It is necessary to consider the two offers. Rosenberg J. held that the 922 offer was slightly better or marginally better than the OEL offer. He concluded that the difference in the two offers did not show that the sale process adopted by the receiver was inadequate or improvident.

Counsel for the appellants complained about the manner in which Rosenberg J. conducted the hearing of the motion to confirm the OEL sale. The complaint was, that when they began to discuss a comparison of the two offers, Rosenberg J. said that he considered the 922 offer to be better than the OEL offer. Counsel said that when that comment was made, they did not think it necessary to argue further the question of the difference in value between the two offers. They complain that the finding that the 922 offer was only marginally better or slightly better than the OEL offer was made without them having had the opportunity to argue that the 922 offer was substantially better or significantly better than the OEL offer. I cannot understand how counsel could have thought that by expressing the opinion that the 922 offer was better, Rosenberg J. was saying that it was a significantly or substantially better one. Nor can I comprehend how counsel took the comment to mean that they were foreclosed from arguing that

the offer was significantly or substantially better. If there was some misunderstanding on the part of counsel, it should have been raised before Rosenberg J. at the time. I am sure that if it had been, the misunderstanding would have been cleared up quickly. Nevertheless, this court permitted extensive argument dealing with the comparison of the two offers.

The 922 offer provided for \$6,000,000 cash to be paid on closing with a royalty based upon a percentage of Air Toronto profits over a period of five years up to a maximum of \$3,000,000. The OEL offer provided for a payment of \$2,000,000 on closing with a royalty paid on gross revenues over a five-year period. In the short term, the 922 offer is obviously better because there is substantially more cash up front. The chances of future returns are substantially greater in the OEL offer because royalties are paid on gross revenues while the royalties under the 922 offer are paid only on profits. There is an element of risk involved in each offer.

The receiver studied the two offers. It compared them and took into account the risks, the advantages and the disadvantages of each. It considered the appropriate contingencies. It is not necessary to outline the factors which were taken into account by the receiver because the manager of its insolvency practice filed an affidavit outlining the considerations which were weighed in its evaluation of the two offers. They seem to me to be reasonable ones. That affidavit concluded with the following paragraph:

24. On the basis of these considerations the Receiver has approved the OEL offer and has concluded that it represents the achievement of the highest possible value at this time for the Air Toronto division of SoundAir.

The court appointed the receiver to conduct the sale of Air Toronto and entrusted it with the responsibility of deciding what is the best offer. I put great weight upon the opinion of the receiver. It swore to the court which appointed it that the OEL offer represents the achievement of the highest possible value at this time for Air Toronto. I have not been convinced

that the receiver was wrong when he made that assessment. I am, therefore, of the opinion that the 922 offer does not demonstrate any failure upon the part of the receiver to act properly and providently.

It follows that if Rosenberg J. was correct when he found that the 922 offer was in fact better, I agree with him that it could only have been slightly or marginally better. The 922 offer does not lead to an inference that the disposition strategy of the receiver was inadequate, unsuccessful or improvident, nor that the price was unreasonable.

I am, therefore, of the opinion that the receiver made a sufficient effort to get the best price and has not acted improvidently.

## 2. Consideration of the interests of all parties

It is well established that the primary interest is that of the creditors of the debtor: see *Crown Trust Co. v. Rosenberg*, *supra*, and *Re Selkirk* (1986, Saunders J.), *supra*. However, as Saunders J. pointed out in *Re Beauty Counsellors*, *supra*, at p. 244 C.B.R., "it is not the only or overriding consideration".

In my opinion, there are other persons whose interests require consideration. In an appropriate case, the interests of the debtor must be taken into account. I think also, in a case such as this, where a purchaser has bargained at some length and doubtless at considerable expense with the receiver, the interests of the purchaser ought to be taken into account. While it is not explicitly stated in such cases as *Crown Trust Co. v. Rosenberg*, *supra*, *Re Selkirk* (1986, Saunders J.), *supra*, *Re Beauty Counsellors*, *supra*, *Re Selkirk* (1987, McRae J.), *supra*, and *Cameron*, *supra*, I think they clearly imply that the interests of a person who has negotiated an agreement with a court-appointed receiver are very important.

In this case, the interests of all parties who would have an interest in the process were considered by the receiver and by Rosenberg J.

3. Consideration of the efficacy and integrity of the process by which the offer was obtained

While it is accepted that the primary concern of a receiver is the protecting of the interests of the creditors, there is a secondary but very important consideration and that is the integrity of the process by which the sale is effected. This is particularly so in the case of a sale of such a unique asset as an airline as a going concern.

The importance of a court protecting the integrity of the process has been stated in a number of cases. First, I refer to *Re Selkirk* (1986), *supra*, where Saunders J. said at p. 246 C.B.R.:

In dealing with the request for approval, the court has to be concerned primarily with protecting the interest of the creditors of the former bankrupt. A secondary but important consideration is that the process under which the sale agreement is arrived at should be consistent with commercial efficacy and integrity.

In that connection I adopt the principles stated by Macdonald J.A. of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court (Appeal Division) in *Cameron v. Bank of N.S.* (1981), 38 C.B.R. (N.S.) 1, 45 N.S.R. (2d) 303, 86 A.P.R. 303 (C.A.), where he said at p. 11:

In my opinion if the decision of the receiver to enter into an agreement of sale, subject to court approval, with respect to certain assets is reasonable and sound under the circumstances at the time existing it should not be set aside simply because a later and higher bid is made. To do so would literally create chaos in the commercial world and receivers and purchasers would never be sure they had a finding agreement. On the contrary, they would know that other bids could be received and considered up until the application for court approval is heard -- this would be an intolerable situation.

While those remarks may have been made in the context of a

bidding situation rather than a private sale, I consider them to be equally applicable to a negotiation process leading to a private sale. Where the court is concerned with the disposition of property, the purpose of appointing a receiver is to have the receiver do the work that the court would otherwise have to do.

In *Salima Investments Ltd. v. Bank of Montreal* (1985), 41 Alta. L.R. (2d) 58, 21 D.L.R. (4th) 473 (C.A.), at p. 61 Alta. L.R., p. 476 D.L.R., the Alberta Court of Appeal said that sale by tender is not necessarily the best way to sell a business as an ongoing concern. It went on to say that when some other method is used which is provident, the court should not undermine the process by refusing to confirm the sale.

Finally, I refer to the reasoning of Anderson J. in *Crown Trust Co. v. Rosenberg*, supra, at p. 124 O.R., pp. 562-63 D.L.R.:

While every proper effort must always be made to assure maximum recovery consistent with the limitations inherent in the process, no method has yet been devised to entirely eliminate those limitations or to avoid their consequences. Certainly it is not to be found in loosening the entire foundation of the system. Thus to compare the results of the process in this case with what might have been recovered in some other set of circumstances is neither logical nor practical.

(Emphasis added)

It is my opinion that the court must exercise extreme caution before it interferes with the process adopted by a receiver to sell an unusual asset. It is important that prospective purchasers know that, if they are acting in good faith, bargain seriously with a receiver and enter into an agreement with it, a court will not lightly interfere with the commercial judgment of the receiver to sell the asset to them.

Before this court, counsel for those opposing the confirmation of the sale to OEL suggested many different ways

in which the receiver could have conducted the process other than the way which he did. However, the evidence does not convince me that the receiver used an improper method of attempting to sell the airline. The answer to those submissions is found in the comment of Anderson J. in *Crown Trust Co. v. Rosenberg*, supra, at p. 109 O.R., p. 548 D.L.R.:

The court ought not to sit as on appeal from the decision of the Receiver, reviewing in minute detail every element of the process by which the decision is reached. To do so would be a futile and duplicitous exercise.

It would be a futile and duplicitous exercise for this court to examine in minute detail all of the circumstances leading up to the acceptance of the OEL offer. Having considered the process adopted by the receiver, it is my opinion that the process adopted was a reasonable and prudent one.

#### 4. Was there unfairness in the process?

As a general rule, I do not think it appropriate for the court to go into the minutia of the process or of the selling strategy adopted by the receiver. However, the court has a responsibility to decide whether the process was fair. The only part of this process which I could find that might give even a superficial impression of unfairness is the failure of the receiver to give an offering memorandum to those who expressed an interest in the purchase of Air Toronto.

I will outline the circumstances which relate to the allegation that the receiver was unfair in failing to provide an offering memorandum. In the latter part of 1990, as part of its selling strategy, the receiver was in the process of preparing an offering memorandum to give to persons who expressed an interest in the purchase of Air Toronto. The offering memorandum got as far as draft form, but was never released to anyone, although a copy of the draft eventually got into the hands of CCFI before it submitted the first 922 offer on March 7, 1991. A copy of the offering memorandum forms part of the record and it seems to me to be little more than puffery, without any hard information which a sophisticated

purchaser would require in order to make a serious bid.

The offering memorandum had not been completed by February 11, 1991. On that date, the receiver entered into the letter of intent to negotiate with OEL. The letter of intent contained a provision that during its currency the receiver would not negotiate with any other party. The letter of intent was renewed from time to time until the OEL offer was received on March 6, 1991.

The receiver did not proceed with the offering memorandum because to do so would violate the spirit, if not the letter, of its letter of intent with OEL.

I do not think that the conduct of the receiver shows any unfairness towards 922. When I speak of 922, I do so in the context that Air Canada and CCFL are identified with it. I start by saying that the receiver acted reasonably when it entered into exclusive negotiations with OEL. I find it strange that a company, with which Air Canada is closely and intimately involved, would say that it was unfair for the receiver to enter into a time-limited agreement to negotiate exclusively with OEL. That is precisely the arrangement which Air Canada insisted upon when it negotiated with the receiver in the spring and summer of 1990. If it was not unfair for Air Canada to have such an agreement, I do not understand why it was unfair for OEL to have a similar one. In fact, both Air Canada and OEL in its turn were acting reasonably when they required exclusive negotiating rights to prevent their negotiations from being used as a bargaining lever with other potential purchasers. The fact that Air Canada insisted upon an exclusive negotiating right while it was negotiating with the receiver demonstrates the commercial efficacy of OEL being given the same right during its negotiations with the receiver. I see no unfairness on the part of the receiver when it honoured its letter of intent with OEL by not releasing the offering memorandum during the negotiations with OEL.

Moreover, I am not prepared to find that 922 was in any way prejudiced by the fact that it did not have an offering memorandum. It made an offer on March 7, 1991, which it

contends to this day was a better offer than that of OEL. 922 has not convinced me that if it had an offering memorandum its offer would have been any different or any better than it actually was. The fatal problem with the first 922 offer was that it contained a condition which was completely unacceptable to the receiver. The receiver properly, in my opinion, rejected the offer out of hand because of that condition. That condition did not relate to any information which could have conceivably been in an offering memorandum prepared by the receiver. It was about the resolution of a dispute between CCFL and the Royal Bank, something the receiver knew nothing about.

Further evidence of the lack of prejudice which the absence of an offering memorandum has caused 922 is found in CCFL's stance before this court. During argument, its counsel suggested, as a possible resolution of this appeal, that this court should call for new bids, evaluate them and then order a sale to the party who put in the better bid. In such a case, counsel for CCFL said that 922 would be prepared to bid within seven days of the court's decision. I would have thought that, if there were anything to CCFL's suggestion that the failure to provide an offering memorandum was unfair to 922, it would have told the court that it needed more information before it would be able to make a bid.

I am satisfied that Air Canada and CCFL have, and at all times had, all of the information which they would have needed to make what to them would be a commercially viable offer to the receiver. I think that an offering memorandum was of no commercial consequence to them, but the absence of one has since become a valuable tactical weapon.

It is my opinion that there is no convincing proof that if an offering memorandum had been widely distributed among persons qualified to have purchased Air Toronto, a viable offer would have come forth from a party other than 922 or OEL. Therefore, the failure to provide an offering memorandum was neither unfair nor did it prejudice the obtaining of a better price on March 8, 1991, than that contained in the OEL offer. I would not give effect to the contention that the process adopted by the receiver was an unfair one.

There are two statements by Anderson J. contained in *Crown Trust Co. v. Rosenberg*, supra, which I adopt as my own. The first is at p. 109 O.R., p. 548 D.L.R.:

The court should not proceed against the recommendations of its Receiver except in special circumstances and where the necessity and propriety of doing so are plain. Any other rule or approach would emasculate the role of the Receiver and make it almost inevitable that the final negotiation of every sale would take place on the motion for approval.

The second is at p. 111 O.R., p. 550 D.L.R.:

It is equally clear, in my view, though perhaps not so clearly enunciated, that it is only in an exceptional case that the court will intervene and proceed contrary to the Receiver's recommendations if satisfied, as I am, that the Receiver has acted reasonably, prudently and fairly and not arbitrarily.

In this case the receiver acted reasonably, prudently, fairly and not arbitrarily. I am of the opinion, therefore, that the process adopted by the receiver in reaching an agreement was a just one.

In his reasons for judgment, after discussing the circumstances leading to the 922 offer, Rosenberg J. said this [at p. 31 of the reasons]:

They created a situation as of March 8, where the receiver was faced with two offers, one of which was in acceptable form and one of which could not possibly be accepted in its present form. The receiver acted appropriately in accepting the OEL offer.

I agree.

The receiver made proper and sufficient efforts to get the best price that it could for the assets of Air Toronto. It adopted a reasonable and effective process to sell the airline

which was fair to all persons who might be interested in purchasing it. It is my opinion, therefore, that the receiver properly carried out the mandate which was given to it by the order of O'Brien J. It follows that Rosenberg J. was correct when he confirmed the sale to OEL.

II. THE EFFECT OF THE SUPPORT OF THE 922 OFFER  
BY THE TWO SECURED CREDITORS

As I noted earlier, the 922 offer was supported before Rosenberg J., and in this court, by CCFL and by the Royal Bank, the two secured creditors. It was argued that, because the interests of the creditors are primary, the court ought to give effect to their wish that the 922 offer be accepted. I would not accede to that suggestion for two reasons.

The first reason is related to the fact that the creditors chose to have a receiver appointed by the court. It was open to them to appoint a private receiver pursuant to the authority of their security documents. Had they done so, then they would have had control of the process and could have sold Air Toronto to whom they wished. However, acting privately and controlling the process involves some risks. The appointment of a receiver by the court insulates the creditors from those risks. But insulation from those risks carries with it the loss of control over the process of disposition of the assets. As I have attempted to explain in these reasons, when a receiver's sale is before the court for confirmation the only issues are the propriety of the conduct of the receiver and whether it acted providently. The function of the court at that stage is not to step in and do the receiver's work or change the sale strategy adopted by the receiver. Creditors who asked the court to appoint a receiver to dispose of assets should not be allowed to take over control of the process by the simple expedient of supporting another purchaser if they do not agree with the sale made by the receiver. That would take away all respect for the process of sale by a court-appointed receiver.

There can be no doubt that the interests of the creditor are an important consideration in determining whether the receiver has properly conducted a sale. The opinion of the creditors as

to which offer ought to be accepted is something to be taken into account. But, if the court decides that the receiver has acted properly and providently, those views are not necessarily determinative. Because, in this case, the receiver acted properly and providently, I do not think that the views of the creditors should override the considered judgment of the receiver.

The second reason is that, in the particular circumstances of this case, I do not think the support of CCFL and the Royal Bank of the 922 offer is entitled to any weight. The support given by CCFL can be dealt with summarily. It is a co-owner of 922. It is hardly surprising and not very impressive to hear that it supports the offer which it is making for the debtors' assets.

The support by the Royal Bank requires more consideration and involves some reference to the circumstances. On March 6, 1991, when the first 922 offer was made, there was in existence an interlender agreement between the Royal Bank and CCFL. That agreement dealt with the share of the proceeds of the sale of Air Toronto which each creditor would receive. At the time, a dispute between the Royal Bank and CCFL about the interpretation of that agreement was pending in the courts. The unacceptable condition in the first 922 offer related to the settlement of the interlender dispute. The condition required that the dispute be resolved in a way which would substantially favour CCFL. It required that CCFL receive \$3,375,000 of the \$6,000,000 cash payment and the balance, including the royalties, if any, be paid to the Royal Bank. The Royal Bank did not agree with that split of the sale proceeds.

On April 5, 1991, the Royal Bank and CCFL agreed to settle the interlender dispute. The settlement was that if the 922 offer was accepted by the court, CCFL would receive only \$1,000,000 and the Royal Bank would receive \$5,000,000 plus any royalties which might be paid. It was only in consideration of that settlement that the Royal Bank agreed to support the 922 offer.

The Royal Bank's support of the 922 offer is so affected by

the very substantial benefit which it wanted to obtain from the settlement of the interlender dispute that, in my opinion, its support is devoid of any objectivity. I think it has no weight.

While there may be circumstances where the unanimous support by the creditors of a particular offer could conceivably override the proper and provident conduct of a sale by a receiver, I do not think that this is such a case. This is a case where the receiver has acted properly and in a provident way. It would make a mockery out of the judicial process, under which a mandate was given to this receiver to sell this airline, if the support by these creditors of the 922 offer were permitted to carry the day. I give no weight to the support which they give to the 922 offer.

In its factum, the receiver pointed out that, because of greater liabilities imposed upon private receivers by various statutes such as the Employment Standards Act, R.S.O. 1980, c. 137, and the Environmental Protection Act, R.S.O. 1980, c. 141, it is likely that more and more the courts will be asked to appoint receivers in insolvencies. In those circumstances, I think that creditors who ask for court-appointed receivers and business people who choose to deal with those receivers should know that if those receivers act properly and providently their decisions and judgments will be given great weight by the courts who appoint them. I have decided this appeal in the way I have in order to assure business people who deal with court-appointed receivers that they can have confidence that an agreement which they make with a court-appointed receiver will be far more than a platform upon which others may bargain at the court approval stage. I think that persons who enter into agreements with court-appointed receivers, following a disposition procedure that is appropriate given the nature of the assets involved, should expect that their bargain will be confirmed by the court.

The process is very important. It should be carefully protected so that the ability of court-appointed receivers to negotiate the best price possible is strengthened and supported. Because this receiver acted properly and providently in entering into the OEL agreement, I am of the opinion that

Rosenberg J. was right when he approved the sale to OEL and dismissed the motion to approve the 922 offer.

I would, accordingly, dismiss the appeal. I would award the receiver, OEL and Frontier Airlines Limited their costs out of the Soundair estate, those of the receiver on a solicitor-and-client scale. I would make no order as to the costs of any of the other parties or interveners.

MCKINLAY J.A. (concurring in the result):-- I agree with Galligan J.A. in result, but wish to emphasize that I do so on the basis that the undertaking being sold in this case was of a very special and unusual nature. It is most important that the integrity of procedures followed by court-appointed receivers be protected in the interests of both commercial morality and the future confidence of business persons in their dealings with receivers. Consequently, in all cases, the court should carefully scrutinize the procedure followed by the receiver to determine whether it satisfies the tests set out by Anderson J. in *Crown Trust Co. v. Rosenberg* (1986), 60 O.R. (2d) 87, 39 D.L.R. (4th) 526 (H.C.J.). While the procedure carried out by the receiver in this case, as described by Galligan J.A., was appropriate, given the unfolding of events and the unique nature of the assets involved, it is not a procedure that is likely to be appropriate in many receivership sales.

I should like to add that where there is a small number of creditors who are the only parties with a real interest in the proceeds of the sale (i.e., where it is clear that the highest price attainable would result in recovery so low that no other creditors, shareholders, guarantors, etc., could possibly benefit therefrom), the wishes of the interested creditors should be very seriously considered by the receiver. It is true, as Galligan J.A. points out, that in seeking the court appointment of a receiver, the moving parties also seek the protection of the court in carrying out the receiver's functions. However, it is also true that in utilizing the court process the moving parties have opened the whole process to detailed scrutiny by all involved, and have probably added significantly to their costs and consequent shortfall as a result of so doing. The adoption of the court process should in

no way diminish the rights of any party, and most certainly not the rights of the only parties with a real interest. Where a receiver asks for court approval of a sale which is opposed by the only parties in interest, the court should scrutinize with great care the procedure followed by the receiver. I agree with Galligan J.A. that in this case that was done. I am satisfied that the rights of all parties were properly considered by the receiver, by the learned motions court judge, and by Galligan J.A.

GOODMAN J.A. (dissenting):-- I have had the opportunity of reading the reasons for judgment herein of Galligan and McKinlay JJ.A. Respectfully, I am unable to agree with their conclusion.

The case at bar is an exceptional one in the sense that upon the application made for approval of the sale of the assets of Air Toronto two competing offers were placed before Rosenberg J. Those two offers were that of Frontier Airlines Ltd. and Ontario Express Limited (OEL) and that of 922246 Ontario Limited (922), a company incorporated for the purpose of acquiring Air Toronto. Its shares were owned equally by Canadian Pension Capital Limited and Canadian Insurers Capital Corporation (collectively CCFL) and Air Canada. It was conceded by all parties to these proceedings that the only persons who had any interest in the proceeds of the sale were two secured creditors, viz., CCFL and the Royal Bank of Canada (the Bank). Those two creditors were unanimous in their position that they desired the court to approve the sale to 922. We were not referred to nor am I aware of any case where a court has refused to abide by the unanimous wishes of the only interested creditors for the approval of a specific offer made in receivership proceedings.

In *British Columbia Development Corp. v. Spun Cast Industries Inc.* (1977), 5 B.C.L.R. 94, 26 C.B.R. (N.S.) 28 (S.C.), Berger J. said at p. 95 B.C.L.R., p. 30 C.B.R.:

Here all of those with a financial stake in the plant have joined in seeking the court's approval of the sale to Fincas. This court does not have a roving commission to decide what

is best for investors and businessmen when they have agreed among themselves what course of action they should follow. It is their money.

I agree with that statement. It is particularly apt to this case. The two secured creditors will suffer a shortfall of approximately \$50,000,000. They have a tremendous interest in the sale of assets which form part of their security. I agree with the finding of Rosenberg J., Gen. Div., May 1, 1991, that the offer of 922 is superior to that of OEL. He concluded that the 922 offer is marginally superior. If by that he meant that mathematically it was likely to provide slightly more in the way of proceeds it is difficult to take issue with that finding. If on the other hand he meant that having regard to all considerations it was only marginally superior, I cannot agree. He said in his reasons [pp. 17-18]:

I have come to the conclusion that knowledgeable creditors such as the Royal Bank would prefer the 922 offer even if the other factors influencing their decision were not present. No matter what adjustments had to be made, the 922 offer results in more cash immediately. Creditors facing the type of loss the Royal Bank is taking in this case would not be anxious to rely on contingencies especially in the present circumstances surrounding the airline industry.

I agree with that statement completely. It is apparent that the difference between the two offers insofar as cash on closing is concerned amounts to approximately \$3,000,000 to \$4,000,000. The Bank submitted that it did not wish to gamble any further with respect to its investment and that the acceptance and court approval of the OEL offer, in effect, supplanted its position as a secured creditor with respect to the amount owing over and above the down payment and placed it in the position of a joint entrepreneur but one with no control. This results from the fact that the OEL offer did not provide for any security for any funds which might be forthcoming over and above the initial downpayment on closing.

In *Cameron v. Bank of Nova Scotia* (1981), 38 C.B.R. (N.S.) 1, 45 N.S.R. (2d) 303 (C.A.), Hart J.A., speaking for the majority

of the court, said at p. 10 C.B.R., p. 312 N.S.R.:

Here we are dealing with a receiver appointed at the instance of one major creditor, who chose to insert in the contract of sale a provision making it subject to the approval of the court. This, in my opinion, shows an intention on behalf of the parties to invoke the normal equitable doctrines which place the court in the position of looking to the interests of all persons concerned before giving its blessing to a particular transaction submitted for approval. In these circumstances the court would not consider itself bound by the contract entered into in good faith by the receiver but would have to look to the broader picture to see that the contract was for the benefit of the creditors as a whole. When there was evidence that a higher price was readily available for the property the chambers judge was, in my opinion, justified in exercising his discretion as he did. Otherwise he could have deprived the creditors of a substantial sum of money.

This statement is apposite to the circumstances of the case at bar. I hasten to add that in my opinion it is not only price which is to be considered in the exercise of the judge's discretion. It may very well be, as I believe to be so in this case, that the amount of cash is the most important element in determining which of the two offers is for the benefit and in the best interest of the creditors.

It is my view, and the statement of Hart J.A. is consistent therewith, that the fact that a creditor has requested an order of the court appointing a receiver does not in any way diminish or derogate from his right to obtain the maximum benefit to be derived from any disposition of the debtor's assets. I agree completely with the views expressed by McKinlay J.A. in that regard in her reasons.

It is my further view that any negotiations which took place between the only two interested creditors in deciding to support the approval of the 922 offer were not relevant to the determination by the presiding judge of the issues involved in the motion for approval of either one of the two offers nor are

they relevant in determining the outcome of this appeal. It is sufficient that the two creditors have decided unanimously what is in their best interest and the appeal must be considered in the light of that decision. It so happens, however, that there is ample evidence to support their conclusion that the approval of the 922 offer is in their best interests.

I am satisfied that the interests of the creditors are the prime consideration for both the receiver and the court. In *Re Beauty Counsellors of Canada Ltd.* (1986), 58 C.B.R. (N.S.) 237 (Ont. Bkcy.) Saunders J. said at p. 243:

This does not mean that a court should ignore a new and higher bid made after acceptance where there has been no unfairness in the process. The interests of the creditors, while not the only consideration, are the prime consideration.

I agree with that statement of the law. In *Re Selkirk* (1986), 58 C.B.R. (N.S.) 245 (Ont. Bkcy.) Saunders J. heard an application for court approval for the sale by the sheriff of real property in bankruptcy proceedings. The sheriff had been previously ordered to list the property for sale subject to approval of the court. Saunders J. said at p. 246 C.B.R.:

In dealing with the request for approval, the court has to be concerned primarily with protecting the interests of the creditors of the former bankrupt. A secondary but important consideration is that the process under which the sale agreement is arrived at should be consistent with the commercial efficacy and integrity.

I am in agreement with that statement as a matter of general principle. Saunders J. further stated that he adopted the principles stated by Macdonald J.A. in *Cameron*, supra, at pp. 92-94 O.R., pp. 531-33 D.L.R., quoted by Galligan J.A. in his reasons. In *Cameron*, the remarks of Macdonald J.A. related to situations involving the calling of bids and fixing a time limit for the making of such bids. In those circumstances the process is so clear as a matter of commercial practice that an interference by the court in such process might have a

deleterious effect on the efficacy of receivership proceedings in other cases. But Macdonald J.A. recognized that even in bid or tender cases where the offeror for whose bid approval is sought has complied with all requirements a court might not approve the agreement of purchase and sale entered into by the receiver. He said at pp. 11-12 C.B.R., p. 314 N.S.R.:

There are, of course, many reasons why a court might not approve an agreement of purchase and sale, viz., where the offer accepted is so low in relation to the appraised value as to be unrealistic; or, where the circumstances indicate that insufficient time was allowed for the making of bids or that inadequate notice of sale by bid was given (where the receiver sells property by the bid method); or, where it can be said that the proposed sale is not in the best interest of either the creditors or the owner. Court approval must involve the delicate balancing of competing interests and not simply a consideration of the interests of the creditors.

The deficiency in the present case is so large that there has been no suggestion of a competing interest between the owner and the creditors.

I agree that the same reasoning may apply to a negotiation process leading to a private sale but the procedure and process applicable to private sales of a wide variety of businesses and undertakings with the multiplicity of individual considerations applicable and perhaps peculiar to the particular business is not so clearly established that a departure by the court from the process adopted by the receiver in a particular case will result in commercial chaos to the detriment of future receivership proceedings. Each case must be decided on its own merits and it is necessary to consider the process used by the receiver in the present proceedings and to determine whether it was unfair, improvident or inadequate.

It is important to note at the outset that Rosenberg J. made the following statement in his reasons [p. 15]:

On March 8, 1991 the trustee accepted the OEL offer subject to court approval. The receiver at that time had no other

offer before it that was in final form or could possibly be accepted. The receiver had at the time the knowledge that Air Canada with CCFL had not bargained in good faith and had not fulfilled the promise of its letter of March 1. The receiver was justified in assuming that Air Canada and CCFL's offer was a long way from being in an acceptable form and that Air Canada and CCFL's objective was to interrupt the finalizing of the OEL agreement and to retain as long as possible the Air Toronto connector traffic flowing into Terminal 2 for the benefit of Air Canada.

In my opinion there was no evidence before him or before this court to indicate that Air Canada with CCFL had not bargained in good faith and that the receiver had knowledge of such lack of good faith. Indeed, on this appeal, counsel for the receiver stated that he was not alleging Air Canada and CCFL had not bargained in good faith. Air Canada had frankly stated at the time that it had made its offer to purchase which was eventually refused by the receiver that it would not become involved in an "auction" to purchase the undertaking of Air Canada and that, although it would fulfil its contractual obligations to provide connecting services to Air Toronto, it would do no more than it was legally required to do insofar as facilitating the purchase of Air Toronto by any other person. In so doing Air Canada may have been playing "hard ball" as its behaviour was characterized by some of the counsel for opposing parties. It was nevertheless merely openly asserting its legal position as it was entitled to do.

Furthermore there was no evidence before Rosenberg J. or this court that the receiver had assumed that Air Canada and CCFL's objective in making an offer was to interrupt the finalizing of the OEL agreement and to retain as long as possible the Air Toronto connector traffic flowing into Terminal 2 for the benefit of Air Canada. Indeed, there was no evidence to support such an assumption in any event although it is clear that 922 and through it CCFL and Air Canada were endeavouring to present an offer to purchase which would be accepted and/or approved by the court in preference to the offer made by OEL.

To the extent that approval of the OEL agreement by Rosenberg

J. was based on the alleged lack of good faith in bargaining and improper motivation with respect to connector traffic on the part of Air Canada and CCFL, it cannot be supported.

I would also point out that, rather than saying there was no other offer before it that was final in form, it would have been more accurate to have said that there was no unconditional offer before it.

In considering the material and evidence placed before the court I am satisfied that the receiver was at all times acting in good faith. I have reached the conclusion, however, that the process which he used was unfair insofar as 922 is concerned and improvident insofar as the two secured creditors are concerned.

Air Canada had been negotiating with Soundair Corporation for the purchase from it of Air Toronto for a considerable period of time prior to the appointment of a receiver by the court. It had given a letter of intent indicating a prospective sale price of \$18,000,000. After the appointment of the receiver, by agreement dated April 30, 1990, Air Canada continued its negotiations for the purchase of Air Toronto with the receiver. Although this agreement contained a clause which provided that the receiver "shall not negotiate for the sale ... of Air Toronto with any person except Air Canada", it further provided that the receiver would not be in breach of that provision merely by receiving unsolicited offers for all or any of the assets of Air Toronto. In addition, the agreement, which had a term commencing on April 30, 1990, could be terminated on the fifth business day following the delivery of a written notice of termination by one party to the other. I point out this provision merely to indicate that the exclusivity privilege extended by the Receiver to Air Canada was of short duration at the receiver's option.

As a result of due diligence investigations carried out by Air Canada during the month of April, May and June of 1990, Air Canada reduced its offer to 8.1 million dollars conditional upon there being \$4,000,000 in tangible assets. The offer was made on June 14, 1990 and was open for acceptance until June

29, 1990.

By amending agreement dated June 19, 1990 the receiver was released from its covenant to refrain from negotiating for the sale of the Air Toronto business and assets to any person other than Air Canada. By virtue of this amending agreement the receiver had put itself in the position of having a firm offer in hand with the right to negotiate and accept offers from other persons. Air Canada in these circumstances was in the subservient position. The receiver, in the exercise of its judgment and discretion, allowed the Air Canada offer to lapse. On July 20, 1990 Air Canada served a notice of termination of the April 30, 1990 agreement.

Apparently as a result of advice received from the receiver to the effect that the receiver intended to conduct an auction for the sale of the assets and business of the Air Toronto Division of Soundair Corporation, the solicitors for Air Canada advised the receiver by letter dated July 20, 1990 in part as follows:

Air Canada has instructed us to advise you that it does not intend to submit a further offer in the auction process.

This statement together with other statements set forth in the letter was sufficient to indicate that Air Canada was not interested in purchasing Air Toronto in the process apparently contemplated by the receiver at that time. It did not form a proper foundation for the receiver to conclude that there was no realistic possibility of selling Air Toronto to Air Canada, either alone or in conjunction with some other person, in different circumstances. In June 1990 the receiver was of the opinion that the fair value of Air Toronto was between \$10,000,000 and \$12,000,000.

In August 1990 the receiver contacted a number of interested parties. A number of offers were received which were not deemed to be satisfactory. One such offer, received on August 20, 1990, came as a joint offer from OEL and Air Ontario (an Air Canada connector). It was for the sum of \$3,000,000 for the good will relating to certain Air Toronto routes but did not

include the purchase of any tangible assets or leasehold interests.

In December 1990 the receiver was approached by the management of Canadian Partner (operated by OEL) for the purpose of evaluating the benefits of an amalgamated Air Toronto/Air Partner operation. The negotiations continued from December of 1990 to February of 1991 culminating in the OEL agreement dated March 8, 1991.

On or before December, 1990, CCFL advised the receiver that it intended to make a bid for the Air Toronto assets. The receiver, in August of 1990, for the purpose of facilitating the sale of Air Toronto assets, commenced the preparation of an operating memorandum. He prepared no less than six draft operating memoranda with dates from October 1990 through March 1, 1991. None of these were distributed to any prospective bidder despite requests having been received therefor, with the exception of an early draft provided to CCFL without the receiver's knowledge.

During the period December 1990 to the end of January 1991, the receiver advised CCFL that the offering memorandum was in the process of being prepared and would be ready soon for distribution. He further advised CCFL that it should await the receipt of the memorandum before submitting a formal offer to purchase the Air Toronto assets.

By late January CCFL had become aware that the receiver was negotiating with OEL for the sale of Air Toronto. In fact, on February 11, 1991, the receiver signed a letter of intent with OEL wherein it had specifically agreed not to negotiate with any other potential bidders or solicit any offers from others.

By letter dated February 25, 1991, the solicitors for CCFL made a written request to the Receiver for the offering memorandum. The receiver did not reply to the letter because he felt he was precluded from so doing by the provisions of the letter of intent dated February 11, 1991. Other prospective purchasers were also unsuccessful in obtaining the promised memorandum to assist them in preparing their bids. It should be

noted that exclusivity provision of the letter of intent expired on February 20, 1991. This provision was extended on three occasions, viz., February 19, 22 and March 5, 1991. It is clear that from a legal standpoint the receiver, by refusing to extend the time, could have dealt with other prospective purchasers and specifically with 922.

It was not until March 1, 1991 that CCFL had obtained sufficient information to enable it to make a bid through 922. It succeeded in so doing through its own efforts through sources other than the receiver. By that time the receiver had already entered into the letter of intent with OEL. Notwithstanding the fact that the receiver knew since December of 1990 that CCFL wished to make a bid for the assets of Air Toronto (and there is no evidence to suggest that at any time such a bid would be in conjunction with Air Canada or that Air Canada was in any way connected with CCFL) it took no steps to provide CCFL with information necessary to enable it to make an intelligent bid and, indeed, suggested delaying the making of the bid until an offering memorandum had been prepared and provided. In the meantime by entering into the letter of intent with OEL it put itself in a position where it could not negotiate with CCFL or provide the information requested.

On February 28, 1991, the solicitors for CCFL telephoned the receiver and were advised for the first time that the receiver had made a business decision to negotiate solely with OEL and would not negotiate with anyone else in the interim.

By letter dated March 1, 1991 CCFL advised the receiver that it intended to submit a bid. It set forth the essential terms of the bid and stated that it would be subject to customary commercial provisions. On March 7, 1991 CCFL and Air Canada, jointly through 922, submitted an offer to purchase Air Toronto upon the terms set forth in the letter dated March 1, 1991. It included a provision that the offer was conditional upon the interpretation of an interlender agreement which set out the relative distribution of proceeds as between CCFL and the Royal Bank. It is common ground that it was a condition over which the receiver had no control and accordingly would not have been acceptable on that ground alone. The receiver did not, however,

contact CCFL in order to negotiate or request the removal of the condition although it appears that its agreement with OEL not to negotiate with any person other than OEL expired on March 6, 1991.

The fact of the matter is that by March 7, 1991, the receiver had received the offer from OEL which was subsequently approved by Rosenberg J. That offer was accepted by the receiver on March 8, 1991. Notwithstanding the fact that OEL had been negotiating the purchase for a period of approximately three months the offer contained a provision for the sole benefit of the purchaser that it was subject to the purchaser obtaining:

... a financing commitment within 45 days of the date hereof in an amount not less than the Purchase Price from the Royal Bank of Canada or other financial institution upon terms and conditions acceptable to them. In the event that such a financing commitment is not obtained within such 45 day period, the purchaser or OEL shall have the right to terminate this agreement upon giving written notice of termination to the vendor on the first Business Day following the expiry of the said period.

The purchaser was also given the right to waive the condition.

In effect the agreement was tantamount to a 45-day option to purchase excluding the right of any other person to purchase Air Toronto during that period of time and thereafter if the condition was fulfilled or waived. The agreement was, of course, stated to be subject to court approval.

In my opinion the process and procedure adopted by the receiver was unfair to CCFL. Although it was aware from December 1990 that CCFL was interested in making an offer, it effectively delayed the making of such offer by continually referring to the preparation of the offering memorandum. It did not endeavour during the period December 1990 to March 7, 1991 to negotiate with CCFL in any way the possible terms of purchase and sale agreement. In the result no offer was sought from CCFL by the receiver prior to February 11, 1991 and thereafter it put itself in the position of being unable to

negotiate with anyone other than OEL. The receiver, then, on March 8, 1991 chose to accept an offer which was conditional in nature without prior consultation with CCFL (922) to see whether it was prepared to remove the condition in its offer.

I do not doubt that the receiver felt that it was more likely that the condition in the OEL offer would be fulfilled than the condition in the 922 offer. It may be that the receiver, having negotiated for a period of three months with OEL, was fearful that it might lose the offer if OEL discovered that it was negotiating with another person. Nevertheless it seems to me that it was imprudent and unfair on the part of the receiver to ignore an offer from an interested party which offered approximately triple the cash down payment without giving a chance to the offeror to remove the conditions or other terms which made the offer unacceptable to it. The potential loss was that of an agreement which amounted to little more than an option in favour of the offeror.

In my opinion the procedure adopted by the receiver was unfair to CCFL in that, in effect, it gave OEL the opportunity of engaging in exclusive negotiations for a period of three months notwithstanding the fact that it knew CCFL was interested in making an offer. The receiver did not indicate a deadline by which offers were to be submitted and it did not at any time indicate the structure or nature of an offer which might be acceptable to it.

In his reasons Rosenberg J. stated that as of March 1, CCFL and Air Canada had all the information that they needed and any allegations of unfairness in the negotiating process by the receiver had disappeared. He said [p. 31]:

They created a situation as of March 8, where the receiver was faced with two offers, one of which was in acceptable form and one of which could not possibly be accepted in its present form. The receiver acted appropriately in accepting the OEL offer.

If he meant by "acceptable in form" that it was acceptable to the receiver, then obviously OEL had the unfair advantage of

its lengthy negotiations with the receiver to ascertain what kind of an offer would be acceptable to the receiver. If, on the other hand, he meant that the 922 offer was unacceptable in its form because it was conditional, it can hardly be said that the OEL offer was more acceptable in this regard as it contained a condition with respect to financing terms and conditions "acceptable to them".

It should be noted that on March 13, 1991 the representatives of 922 first met with the receiver to review its offer of March 7, 1991 and at the request of the receiver withdrew the inter-lender condition from its offer. On March 14, 1991 OEL removed the financing condition from its offer. By order of Rosenberg J. dated March 26, 1991, CCFL was given until April 5, 1991 to submit a bid and on April 5, 1991, 922 submitted its offer with the interlender condition removed.

In my opinion the offer accepted by the receiver is improvident and unfair insofar as the two creditors are concerned. It is not improvident in the sense that the price offered by 922 greatly exceeded that offered by OEL. In the final analysis it may not be greater at all. The salient fact is that the cash down payment in the 922 offer constitutes approximately two-thirds of the contemplated sale price whereas the cash down payment in the OEL transaction constitutes approximately 20 to 25 per cent of the contemplated sale price. In terms of absolute dollars, the down payment in the 922 offer would likely exceed that provided for in the OEL agreement by approximately \$3,000,000 to \$4,000,000.

In *Re Beauty Counsellors of Canada Ltd.*, supra, Saunders J. said at p. 243 C.B.R.:

If a substantially higher bid turns up at the approval stage, the court should consider it. Such a bid may indicate, for example, that the trustee has not properly carried out its duty to endeavour to obtain the best price for the estate. In such a case the proper course might be to refuse approval and to ask the trustee to recommence the process.

I accept that statement as being an accurate statement of the

law. I would add, however, as previously indicated, that in determining what is the best price for the estate the receiver or court should not limit its consideration to which offer provides for the greater sale price. The amount of down payment and the provision or lack thereof to secure payment of the balance of the purchase price over and above the down payment may be the most important factor to be considered and I am of the view that is so in the present case. It is clear that that was the view of the only creditors who can benefit from the sale of Air Toronto.

I note that in the case at bar the 922 offer in conditional form was presented to the receiver before it accepted the OEL offer. The receiver in good faith, although I believe mistakenly, decided that the OEL offer was the better offer. At that time the receiver did not have the benefit of the views of the two secured creditors in that regard. At the time of the application for approval before Rosenberg J. the stated preference of the two interested creditors was made quite clear. He found as a fact that knowledgeable creditors would not be anxious to rely on contingencies in the present circumstances surrounding the airline industry. It is reasonable to expect that a receiver would be no less knowledgeable in that regard and it is his primary duty to protect the interests of the creditors. In my view it was an improvident act on the part of the receiver to have accepted the conditional offer made by OEL and Rosenberg J. erred in failing to dismiss the application of the receiver for approval of the OEL offer. It would be most inequitable to foist upon the two creditors who have already been seriously hurt more unnecessary contingencies.

Although in other circumstances it might be appropriate to ask the receiver to recommence the process, in my opinion, it would not be appropriate to do so in this case. The only two interested creditors support the acceptance of the 922 offer and the court should so order.

Although I would be prepared to dispose of the case on the grounds stated above, some comment should be addressed to the question of interference by the court with the process and

procedure adopted by the receiver.

I am in agreement with the view expressed by McKinlay J.A. in her reasons that the undertaking being sold in this case was of a very special and unusual nature. As a result the procedure adopted by the receiver was somewhat unusual. At the outset, in accordance with the terms of the receiving order, it dealt solely with Air Canada. It then appears that the receiver contemplated a sale of the assets by way of auction and still later contemplated the preparation and distribution of an offering memorandum inviting bids. At some point, without advice to CCFL, it abandoned that idea and reverted to exclusive negotiations with one interested party. This entire process is not one which is customary or widely accepted as a general practice in the commercial world. It was somewhat unique having regard to the circumstances of this case. In my opinion the refusal of the court to approve the offer accepted by the receiver would not reflect on the integrity of procedures followed by court-appointed receivers and is not the type of refusal which will have a tendency to undermine the future confidence of business persons in dealing with receivers.

Rosenberg J. stated that the Royal Bank was aware of the process used and tacitly approved it. He said it knew the terms of the letter of intent in February 1991 and made no comment. The Royal Bank did, however, indicate to the receiver that it was not satisfied with the contemplated price nor the amount of the down payment. It did not, however, tell the receiver to adopt a different process in endeavouring to sell the Air Toronto assets. It is not clear from the material filed that at the time it became aware of the letter of intent, it knew that CCFL was interested in purchasing Air Toronto.

I am further of the opinion that a prospective purchaser who has been given an opportunity to engage in exclusive negotiations with a receiver for relatively short periods of time which are extended from time to time by the receiver and who then makes a conditional offer, the condition of which is for his sole benefit and must be fulfilled to his satisfaction unless waived by him, and which he knows is to be subject to

court approval, cannot legitimately claim to have been unfairly dealt with if the court refuses to approve the offer and approves a substantially better one.

In conclusion I feel that I must comment on the statement made by Galligan J.A. in his reasons to the effect that the suggestion made by counsel for 922 constitutes evidence of lack of prejudice resulting from the absence of an offering memorandum. It should be pointed out that the court invited counsel to indicate the manner in which the problem should be resolved in the event that the court concluded that the order approving the OEL offer should be set aside. There was no evidence before the court with respect to what additional information may have been acquired by CCFL since March 8, 1991 and no inquiry was made in that regard. Accordingly, I am of the view that no adverse inference should be drawn from the proposal made as a result of the court's invitation.

For the above reasons I would allow the appeal with one set of costs to CCFL-922, set aside the order of Rosenberg J., dismiss the receiver's motion with one set of costs to CCFL-922 and order that the assets of Air Toronto be sold to numbered corporation 922246 on the terms set forth in its offer with appropriate adjustments to provide for the delay in its execution. Costs awarded shall be payable out of the estate of Soundair Corporation. The costs incurred by the receiver in making the application and responding to the appeal shall be paid to him out of the assets of the estate of Soundair Corporation on a solicitor-and-client basis. I would make no order as to costs of any of the other parties or interveners.

Appeal dismissed.

**TAB B**

# Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta

**Citation:** Lee v. Geolyn Inc., 2009 ABQB 261

**Date:** 20090429  
**Docket:** 0803 04135  
**Registry:** Edmonton

Between:

**Lap-Keung Lee, a.k.a. Theo Lee**

Plaintiff

- and -

**Geolyn Inc.**

Defendant

- and -

**299401 Alberta Ltd.**

Appellant

- and -

**Cal Holland and Dustyridge Holdings Corporation**

Respondent

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**Memorandum of Decision  
of the  
Honourable Mr. Justice Brian R. Burrows**

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[1] The Receiver of Geolyn Inc. applied to the Master for an order accepting a bid made by 299491 Alberta Ltd. for the purchase of the assets of Geolyn Inc. The Master did not grant the order sought. Rather he ordered that the deadline for bids be extended. Cal Holland and Dustyridge Holdings Corp. submitted a bid higher than 299491 Alberta Ltd.'s bid during the extension period. 299491 Alberta Ltd. appeals the Master's decision.

[2] The employee of the Receiver responsible for the effort to dispose of the assets, Mr. Jeff K. M. Ruptash, filed an affidavit on the original application before the Master. A further affidavit sworn by Mr. Ruptash was filed on this appeal. Here is a summary of the evidence presented in those affidavits.

[3] The assets consist primarily of Geolyn's books and records, certain trailers, industrial and computer equipment, and interests in various intellectual property and software. The Receiver considered attempting to sell the assets by auction but concluded that given their unique character, the assets would not be of general interest. They would likely be of interest to no one other than parties who had been involved in Geolyn.

[4] The Receiver called for tenders in August 2008 however the offers received in response did not meet the estimated liquidation value.

[5] On August 21, 2008 the Receiver contacted some former employees of Geolyn and invited bids from them. The employees contacted included John Chad and his wife Deborah Porath, Cal Holland and Kenneth Lucas. No bids were received in response.

[6] On November 10, 2008 the Receiver invited bids from 10 individuals including John Chad, Cal Holland and Kenneth Lucas. The deadline for bids was set as November 14, 2008. Four bids were received. None of them was from Mr. Chad or Ms. Porath.

[7] The highest bid was from Cal Holland who offered to purchase the assets for \$50,000. The Receiver advised Mr. Holland that a 10% deposit would be required to support his bid before the Receiver could apply for court approval of the bid. Mr. Holland did not provide the deposit. Mr. Holland advised the Receiver that he was contemplating withdrawing his offer.

[8] The Receiver informed Mr. Holland on November 26, 2008 that if he did not confirm his offer the Receiver would move to the next highest bid. The same advice was communicated to Mr. Holland on November 27, 2008. In response, Mr. Holland advised the Receiver that he was withdrawing his bid.

[9] The Receiver then accepted the second highest bid of \$34,129.00 plus GST which had been submitted by 299401 Alberta Ltd., a company of which Kenneth Lucas is the principal. Upon 299401 paying a 10% deposit the Receiver applied to the Master for an order approving the sale to 299401 Alberta Ltd.

[10] In the affidavit filed in support of the application before the Master, Mr. Ruptash swore:

It is the Receiver's opinion that the Offer of 299401 Alberta Ltd. represents the highest and best offer that can be anticipated to be received for the assets of Geolyn Inc. at this time and that further marketing efforts of the assets of Geolyn Inc. are unlikely to result in a higher offer being received.

[11] The affidavit also indicated that the Canada Revenue Agency claimed priority to all other creditors for a debt of \$62,000. As a result the CRA would receive all of the net proceeds of the sale. The CRA had advised the Receiver that it was agreed that the sale to 299401 should proceed.

[12] The application came before the Master on January 29, 2009. John Chad, Deborah Porath and Cal Holland were present in Court. Mr. Rowan appeared for the Receiver in support of the application. A transcript of those proceedings was filed on this appeal.

[13] After hearing submissions from Mr. Rowan, the Master heard from Mr. Holland who made representations concerning the bid he had submitted. Though what he said was critical of the Receiver he acknowledged that he had “backed away” from his bid. However, he advised the Master that he was at the time of the application able to complete the sale according to his bid. Mr. Chad and Ms. Porath indicated that though they had not submitted a bid prior to the November 14 deadline set by the Receiver they were at the time of the application also interested in buying the assets. None of the representations made by Mr. Holland, Mr. Chad nor Ms. Porath were sworn.

[14] The Master held that the object of the proceeding was to get the best price for the creditors. He concluded that the amount of the 299401 Alberta Ltd. bid was not the best price. He concluded that the individuals before him were unhappy with the conduct of the trustee. He ordered that the bid process be reopened, that the assets would be sold as a unit and not be broken up, that offers with a deposit of less than 10% would not be considered, that offers would close at 4:00 p.m. on February 2, 2009, that the matter would come back to Court on February 3, 2009 and that the court approved sale would close on February 6, 2009.

[15] On January 30, 2009 Mr. Holland, through his company, Dustyridge Holdings Corporation, bid \$65,000 for the assets and paid a 10% deposit.

[16] On February 3, 2009 Binder J. stayed the operation of the Master’s order pending further order.

[17] Mr. Holland is a director of Geolyn Inc. As a director he is potentially personally liable for any portion of Geolyn’s debt to the Canada Revenue Agency that is not paid through the receivership.

[18] Mr. Holland filed an affidavit on this appeal. In it he appears to suggest that certain features of the process employed by the Receiver were deficient:

- The list of assets he received from Mr. Ruptash in July 2008 was not complete. This was the second list Mr. Holland had received. He does not say whether the first list was incomplete.

- He told Mr. Ruptash early on that he was interested in buying the assets for \$50,000 or \$10,000 each for some of the assets listed.
- He told Mr. Ruptash there would be a number of potentially interested parties. He is not aware of what efforts were made to contact them. He lists 5 companies he is aware would be interested. He does not say he told Mr. Ruptash of these. He identifies the parties who received notice of the sale in November. The 5 companies he identified are not on the list.
- The list of assets he received in November was not complete.
- He confirms that he advised Mr. Ruptash he was contemplating withdrawing his bid of \$50,000. He called Mr. Ruptash the following afternoon to advise he would proceed with his bid.

[19] Mr. Holland submits that the Master properly assessed the merits of the sale for which the Receiver sought approval. He determined there was a potential for higher bids than the one for which the Receiver sought approval and that it was in the interest of all parties that the sale process be reopened. He reopened the sale process. Dustyridge Holdings was the only party to submit a bid. Sale to it should be approved. The appeal should be dismissed.

[20] An appeal from the Master is *de novo*. The law does not call for the Court to defer to the decision of the Master. *364021 Alberta Inc. v. Burnet Duckworth & Palmer*, 2004 ABCA 329 at para. 7.

[21] In *Royal Bank v. Soundair Corp.* (1991) 83 D.L.R. (4<sup>th</sup>) 76, the Ontario Court of Appeal enunciated several principles which apply to an application for court approval of a sale proposed by a receiver. The case involved the sale of an airline as a going concern. The Court noted that a court which appoints a receiver should rely upon the expertise of the receiver, should place confidence in the actions and opinions of the receiver, should assume the receiver has acted properly unless the contrary is clearly shown, and should not second guess with the benefit of hindsight the considered business decisions of the receiver. It summarized the Court's duties on an approval application as follows:

1. It should consider whether the receiver has made a sufficient effort to get the best price and has not acted improvidently.
2. It should consider the interests of all parties.
3. It should consider the efficacy and integrity of the process by which offers are obtained.
4. It should consider whether there has been unfairness in the working out of the process.

[22] As to the integrity of the process, the third item on this list, the Court referred to the following statement of Macdonald J.A. of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court (Appeal Division) in *Cameron v. Bank of N.S.* (1981), 38 C.B.R. (N.S.) 1 at 11:

In my opinion if the decision of the receiver to enter into an agreement of sale, subject to court approval, with respect to certain assets is reasonable and sound under the circumstances at the time existing it should not be set aside simply because a later and a higher bid is made. To do so would literally create chaos in the commercial world and receivers and purchasers would never be sure they had a binding agreement. On the contrary, they would know that other bids could be received and considered up until the application for court approval is heard – this would be an intolerable situation.

[23] The Master determined on the basis of the unsworn representations of a bidder who had withdrawn his bid and another party who had never made a bid, who were also either former employees or directors of the debtor company, that a higher price than was being proposed could be obtained. There was no assessment of the efforts made by the Receiver to secure the offer for which approval was sought. It was not determined that those efforts were deficient.

[24] Even now, in my view, the evidence before me does not establish that the Receiver's efforts were deficient. The only party to bid in the reopened process is a party who bid in the original process and then withdrew his bid. There is no basis for concluding that the Receiver's efforts to secure offers were deficient. Indeed, in my view, the evidence supports the opposite conclusion.

[25] The effect of reopening the process has been to permit a party, who was the successful bidder in the original process but who withdrew his bid and declined to complete the sale within the reasonable time the Receiver set for him to do so, to attempt to restore himself to the position from which he withdrew. No doubt it occurred to Mr. Holland after he withdrew his bid and before the application before the Master that if he is at risk of having to pay Geolyn's debt to the CRA he would be better to acquire the company assets with his money, rather than just pay the CRA and have nothing to show for his money. In my view to permit Mr. Holland to restore himself to the position from which he voluntarily withdrew would be to do fundamental damage to the integrity and fairness of the receivership process.

[26] I allow the appeal. I approve the sale to 299401 Alberta Ltd. for which the Receiver originally sought approval.

Heard on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of March 2009.

**Dated** at the City of Edmonton, Alberta this 29<sup>th</sup> day of April 2009.

---

**Brian R. Burrows**  
**J.C.Q.B.A.**

**Appearances:**

Jessica Kwok  
for the Plaintiff

Kentigern A. Rowan  
for Browning Crocker Inc., court appointed Receiver of Geolyn Inc.

R. Reimer  
for Cal Holland and Dustyridge Holdings Corporation

Jeremy H. Hockin  
for 299401 Alberta Ltd.

**TAB C**

# In the Court of Appeal of Alberta

**Citation: 1705221 Alberta Ltd v Three M Mortgages Inc, 2021 ABCA 144**

**Date:** 20210421

**Docket:** 2003-0076AC;  
2003-0077AC

**Registry:** Edmonton

**Appeal No. 2003-0076AC**

**Between:**

**1705221 Alberta Ltd**

Appellant  
(Plaintiff)

- and -

**Three M Mortgages Inc and Avatex Land Corporation**

Respondents  
(Plaintiffs)

- and -

**Todd Oeming, Todd Oeming as the Personal Representative of the  
Estate of Albert Oeming and the Estate of Albert Oeming**

(Defendants)

- and -

**BDO Canada Limited**

Interested Party

- and -

**Shelby Fehr**

Interested Party

**Appeal No. 2003-0077AC**

**And Between:**

**Three M Mortgages Inc and Avatex Land Corporation**

Respondents  
(Plaintiffs)

- and -

**Todd Oeming, Todd Oeming as the Personal Representative of the  
Estate of Albert Oeming and the Estate of Albert Oeming**

Appellants  
(Defendants)

- and -

**BDO Canada Limited**

Interested Party

- and -

**Shelby Fehr**

Interested Party

**Restriction on Publication**

By Restricted Court Access Order dated February 27 and 28, 2020, by The Honourable Mr. Justice D.R. Mah, there shall be a temporary sealing and no publication of any information relating, without limitation, to the valuations and offers to purchase the subject lands, as contained in (a) either of the two unfiled affidavits, dated February 26 and 27, 2020 or (b) the first and/or second Confidential Supplement, until the sale of the subject lands has been completed in accordance with the Sale Agreement and the filing of a letter with the Clerk of the Court from the Receiver confirming the sale of same, or until such further Order of the Court.

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**The Court:**

**The Honourable Mr. Justice Jack Watson  
The Honourable Madam Justice Dawn Pentelchuk  
The Honourable Mr. Justice Kevin Feehan**

---

**Memorandum of Judgment**

Appeal from the Judgment by  
The Honourable Mr. Justice D.R. Mah  
Dated the 28th day of February, 2020  
Filed on the 2nd day of March, 2020

(Docket: 1603 02314)

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## Memorandum of Judgment

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### The Court:

### Overview

[1] These appeals involve challenges to a sale approval and vesting order granted by a chambers judge in the course of receivership proceedings. The appellant guarantors, Todd Oeming, Todd Oeming as Personal Representative of the Estate of Albert Oeming and the Estate of Albert Oeming (collectively, Oeming) seek to set aside the order approving the sale of lands to Shelby Fehr, as does an unsuccessful prospective purchaser, the appellant 1705221 Alberta Ltd (170).

[2] These appeals engage consideration of whether the Receiver, BDO Canada Limited, satisfied the well-known test for court approval outlined in *Royal Bank of Canada v Soundair Corp* (1991), 83 DLR (4th) 76, 4 OR (3d) 1 (CA) [*Soundair*]. The arguments of both appellants coalesce around the suggestion that the sale process lacked the necessary hallmarks of fairness, integrity and reasonableness.

[3] The chambers judge applied the correct test in deciding whether to approve the sale recommended by the Receiver; therefore, for either appeal to succeed, one or both appellants must demonstrate that the chambers judge erred in the exercise of his discretion in approving the sale. This attracts a high degree of deference. Since the chambers judge did not misdirect himself on the law, this Court will only interfere if his decision was so clearly wrong that it amounts to an injustice or where the chambers judge gave no or insufficient weight to relevant considerations: *Jaycap Financial Ltd v Snowdon Block Inc*, 2019 ABCA 47 at para 20.

[4] We have concluded that neither Oeming nor 170 has demonstrated any error that would warrant setting aside the order. For the reasons that follow, the appeals are dismissed.

### Background

[5] The genesis of this long-standing indebtedness is a loan granted by the Respondents, Three M Mortgages Inc and Avatex Land Corporation (the creditors) to Al Oeming Investments Ltd (Oeming Investments), which was secured by a mortgage on lands owned by Oeming Investments. The loan was guaranteed by Oeming.

[6] In March 2015, the creditors foreclosed on the Oeming Investments lands, obtaining a deficiency judgment in the sum of \$ 941,826.09. In February 2016, the creditors sued Oeming on the guarantees and in December 2018, obtained judgment in this amount.

[7] Oeming's assets included shares in Wild Splendor Development Inc, which company owned lands formerly known as the Alberta Game Farm, later Polar Park, in Strathcona County (the lands). These lands are the subject of the present appeals.

[8] The creditors enforced their judgment against Oeming by applying under the *Business Corporations Act*, RSA 2000, c B-9, the *Judicature Act*, RSA 2000, c J-2 and the *Civil Enforcement Act*, RSA 2000, c C-15, for the appointment of BDO Canada Limited as Receiver of Wild Splendor. The Receivership/Liquidation Order was granted in June 2019. The Receiver moved to sell the lands, obtaining an order on October 10, 2019, authorizing it to list the lands for sale with Avison Young Canada Inc at a price of \$1,950,000.

[9] Two parties were interested in purchasing the lands: 170 and Shelby Fehr, both adjacent landowners. 170 made an offer to purchase on January 11, 2020, but it was not in a form acceptable to the Receiver. 170 submitted a second offer on February 3, 2020 at a price slightly below what the Receiver advised it would accept. While 170 believed its offer would be accepted by the Receiver, it never was and 170 withdrew its offer on February 7, 2020 out of concern its offer was being "shopped".

[10] Fehr made an offer to purchase the lands on February 7, 2020. On Avison Young's recommendation of this "extremely strong offer", the Receiver promptly accepted it, subject to court approval.

[11] The Receiver filed an application for court approval of Fehr's offer, returnable February 27, 2020. On February 10, 2020, the Receiver invited 170 to submit an improved offer to purchase and to attend the upcoming application.

[12] At the application, spanning February 27-28, 2020, 170 raised concerns regarding the sale process. It urged the chambers judge to consider its third offer, dated February 18, 2020, or to establish a bid process to allow both Fehr and 170 to submit further offers.

[13] Oeming also opposed the application, seeking an adjournment on the basis that the County of Strathcona was scheduled in April 2020 to vote on a land use bylaw changing the zoning of the lands to seasonal recreational resort use, which Oeming said would dramatically increase the value of the lands. This re-zoning would in turn facilitate their ability to refinance. They also argued that the anticipated bylaw would result in Fehr experiencing a financial windfall. Oeming took issue with the appraisal relied on by the Receiver, suggesting the lands had been undervalued and the sale process rushed, all of which served to prejudice their interests.

### **Decision of the Chambers Judge**

[14] The chambers judge declined to adjourn the application, noting that the anticipated land use bylaw question had been raised previously, including before the chambers judge who granted

the order approving the sale process. He also observed that there was no certainty the bylaw would be passed or when the lands would ever be permissibly developed.

[15] The chambers judge next considered whether the process should be re-opened to allow bids from 170 and Fehr. He found the Receiver's sale process to be adequate and found nothing in the evidence to warrant permitting further bids. The chambers judge concluded that "If receivership and the exercise of receivership powers by officers of the court are to have meaning, the court itself must abide by the process it has set out". However, the chambers judge permitted 170 to present its third offer to the court and adjourned the proceedings to the following day to allow 170, Oeming and the Receiver to put forward affidavit evidence on whether the sale process was unfair.

[16] On February 28, 2020, after reviewing the affidavit evidence and hearing full submissions, the chambers judge made the following findings:

- 170's February 3, 2020 offer was never accepted;
- There was no consensus between 170 and the Receiver regarding the structure of the purchase price; this was being negotiated;
- There was no evidence 170's offer was shopped around beyond the normal course;
- 170, through its realtor, was aware of other potential purchasers;
- 170's suspicion something untoward had happened was not grounded in the evidence.

[17] The chambers judge concluded that allowing 170's offer to be considered "would be manifestly unfair and lend uncertainty to the process of sales under receiverships, which would be untenable in the commercial community and would erode trust in that community and its confidence in the court-supervised receivership process". The sale to Fehr was approved.

[18] The chambers judge later granted a stay of the order pending appeal.

### **The *Soundair* Test**

[19] Court approval of the sale requires the Receiver to satisfy the well-known test in *Soundair*. As this Court summarized in *Pricewaterhousecoopers Inc v 1905393 Alberta Ltd*, 2019 ABCA 433 at para 10 [*Pricewaterhousecoopers*], the test requires satisfaction of four factors:

- i. Whether the Receiver has made a sufficient effort to get the best price and has not acted improvidently;
- ii. Whether the interests of all parties have been considered, not just the interests of the creditors of the debtor;

iii. The efficacy and integrity of the sale process by which offers are obtained; and

iv. Whether there has been unfairness in the working out of the process.

[20] Although the grounds of appeal of 170 and Oeming differ, they all lead to the central question of whether the Receiver satisfied the *Soundair* requirements. 170 seeks to set aside the order and asks that a bid process involving 170 and Fehr be allowed, on the condition that neither party be allowed to submit an offer for less than their last and highest offer. Oeming asks that the order be set aside and that they be provided additional time to refinance or alternatively, that the lands be re-marketed for a minimum of six to nine months.

[21] We will address each of the four *Soundair* factors in turn, from the perspective of both 170 and Oeming.

*i. Sufficient Efforts to Sell*

[22] A court approving a sale recommended by a receiver is not engaged in a perfunctory, rubberstamp exercise. But neither should a court reject a receiver's recommendation on sale absent exceptional circumstances: *Soundair* at paras 21, 58. A receiver plays the lead role in receivership proceedings. They are officers of the court; their advice should therefore be given significant weight. To otherwise approach the proceedings would weaken the receiver's central purpose and function and erode confidence in those who deal with them: *Crown Trust Co v Rosenberg* (1986), 39 DLR (4th) 526, 60 OR (2d) 87 (ONSC) at p 551.

[23] Oeming argues that the chambers judge erred in relying on the Receiver's appraisal of the lands which was not appended to an affidavit and therefore constituted inadmissible hearsay. Oeming further alleges that the Receiver acted improvidently in listing the lands for sale at \$1,950,000, an amount they insist is significantly below property value. They point to their appraisal from Altus Group, appended to the appraiser's affidavit, in support of their claim that the lands are worth far more than the amount suggested by the Receiver.

[24] These arguments cannot succeed. Neither the Receivership/Liquidation Order nor the Order Approving Receiver's Activities and Sale Process required the Receiver to submit its reports by way of affidavit. To the contrary, the Receivership/Liquidation Order was an Alberta template order containing the following provision expressly exempting the Receiver from reporting to the court by way of affidavit:

28. Notwithstanding Rule 6.11 of the *Alberta Rules of Court*, unless otherwise ordered by this Court, the Receiver/Liquidator will report to the Court from time to time, which reporting is not required to be in affidavit form and shall be considered by this Court as evidence...

[25] The draft Altus Group appraisal (identical in form to the signed appraisal appended to the affidavit) and the Glen Cowan appraisal obtained by the Receiver were included in the Receiver's First Report that was before the chambers judge who issued the Order Approving Receiver's Activities and Sale Process. No one, least of all Oeming, took exception to the appraisals being considered in this form at that time.

[26] Further, the Receiver addressed the disparity in valuations in its First Report. Briefly, the Altus Group appraisal included two parcels of land that were not part of the sale process. Of the three lots to be sold, Altus had a higher value per acre on Lots 1 and 2 which the Receiver advised was intrinsically related to the purchase of Lot 3 for the purposes of commercial/recreational development, which was not the zoning then existing.

[27] The Receiver also advised it had requested proposals from eight realtors, receiving four. It set out why it was recommending that Avison Young's proposal (suggesting a list price of \$1,950,000) be accepted.

[28] The respondents argue this amounts to a collateral attack on this earlier-in-time order, which, notably, was never appealed. We agree. All of this information was before the chambers judge who granted the order approving the sale process. If his decision was unreasonable or amounted to a miscarriage of justice, Oeming should have appealed that order. It cannot now do so indirectly vis-à-vis the subsequent Sale Approval and Vesting Order.

[29] Before the chambers judge, 170 emphasized its perception that its second offer had been shopped, rendering the sale process unfair. This suggestion was roundly rejected by the chambers judge, who found no evidence that the amount of 170's offer had been disclosed, and any disclosure to Fehr that there was another interested party was in the normal course.

[30] For the first time on appeal, 170 focuses on Avison Young's listing proposal, found in the Confidential Supplement to the Receiver's First Report. It is unclear whether the Confidential Supplement was available to 170 when the chambers judge heard the application to approve the sale to Fehr, but it was requested by 170's appellate counsel and provided to him prior to these appeals. 170 argues the court-approved marketing proposal was not transparent and not followed by Avison Young and the Receiver, making the sale process unfair. 170 relies specifically on the following references found within the five-phase marketing strategy:

- Phase 2- Solicit Offers from Buyers (option to use template prior to bid date);
- Phase 3- Selection of preferred Buyer(s):
  - Potential to short list and request improved resubmission.

[31] 170 suggests the proposal *directed* a bid process and the opportunity to resubmit highest and best offers, similar to a formal tender process. As offers were not elicited through a bid process and no opportunity was given to the preferred buyers to resubmit a further, improved offer, 170 alleges the sale process was neither transparent, fair, nor commercially reasonable.

[32] Aside from concerns that this issue is raised for the first time on appeal, the argument fails on its merits. On a plain reading of the impugned portions of the marketing proposal, neither a bid process, nor the option to resubmit offers, is mandated; rather, they are framed as possible options Avison Young *could* employ. A receiver relies on the advice and guidance of the court-approved listing agent in how best to market and sell the asset in question and its own commercial expertise in accepting an offer subject to court approval. Avison Young's realtor deposed that in some circumstances, he will recommend a receiver seek "best and final offers" from interested purchasers. However, in this instance, given the nature of the lands, the present economy, the level of interest and the potential that the Fehr offer could be withdrawn at any moment, his advice to the Receiver was that the unconditional and irrevocable Fehr offer be accepted without delay.

[33] Second, prospective purchasers like 170 are not parties to the listing agreement. While 170 suggests it is entitled to the benefit of the marketing process, there are sound policy reasons militating against this proposition. The insolvency regime depends on expediency and certainty. It is untenable to suggest that a "bitter bidder" like 170 can, after another offer has been accepted, look to particulars of the agreement between the listing agent and the Receiver to mount an argument that the sale process was unfair. We agree with the chambers judge's conclusion that the court-approved sale process was followed and that there was nothing unfair about it.

[34] It must be remembered that the position of 170 as a bidder in this context is not analogous to the Contract A/Contract B reasoning in the law of tenders. Even if 170's disappointment stemming from its wishful optimism of being able to purchase the lands is understandable, this is not the same as 170 having an enforceable legal right arising from sales guidance of the listing agent. In any event, it would appear that 170 was not even aware of the guidance from the listing agent, which is now suggested to be a condition precedent to the Receiver accepting the Fehr offer.

[35] In this instance, it appears the chambers judge declined to consider 170's third offer in his determination of whether the sale to Fehr should be approved. On the present facts, we see no error in this approach. The Fehr offer was significantly better than 170's second offer and clearly reasonable given that it exceeded the appraised value of the lands. We are satisfied the Receiver demonstrated reasonable efforts to market the lands and did not act improvidently. Its acceptance of the Fehr offer was reasonable in the circumstances and unassailable.

ii. *Whether the Interests of All Parties Have Been Considered*

[36] This segues to the question of whether 170 has any standing to appeal. The Receiver raised this issue in its factum, but did not strenuously pursue it at the appeal hearing. We understand the Receiver's position is grounded by the fact the Receiver had invited 170 to participate in the

application to approve the sale and that 170's standing was not raised in the proceedings before the chambers judge, at least until the stay application pending appeal on March 12, 2020. 170 suggests its standing to appeal was given tacit approval.

[37] Given the position taken by the Receiver and the particular circumstances before us, we decline to comment on this issue at this time. However, we note that the issue of standing for an interested entity like 170 has not yet been decided by this Court and remains a live issue.

[38] We equally do not purport to define or delineate the scope of "party" for the purposes of determining whether a receiver has met the *Soundair* test. Under the current state of the law, what is and is not a "party" has yet to be resolved with absolute precision and clarity. Its definition is a matter of importance in the functionality of the four factors, and the conduct of receivership proceedings generally, and deserves proper debate best reserved for another day. As noted, the specific facts of this case have obviated the need to definitively and directly address this question.

[39] Nonetheless, it is helpful to examine the policy reasons why a prospective purchaser's ability to challenge a sale approval application should be closely circumscribed. As noted by the Ontario Court of Appeal in *Skyepharm PLC v Hyal Pharmaceutical Corp* (2000), 47 OR (3d) 234, 130 OAC 273 at paras 25-28, the prospective purchaser has no legal or proprietary right in the lands being sold. Normally, an examination of the sale process and whether the Receiver has complied with the *Soundair* principles, is focussed on those with a direct interest in the sale process, primarily the creditors.

[40] In that regard, the creditors acknowledge they will be paid in full through acceptance of either offer. It is the interests of Oeming that are front and center. Unfortunately, Oeming repeats the same themes they have raised throughout these proceedings. It may come to pass that the new land use bylaw will result in a dramatic increase in the land value but that is a speculative concept beyond this Court's proper consideration. The Receiver's decision to accept the Fehr offer must be assessed under the circumstances then existing: *Pricewaterhousecoopers* at para 14; *Soundair* at para 21. Challenges to a sale process based on after-the-fact information should generally be resisted.

[41] On the record before us, we agree with the chambers judge that the opportunity for Oeming to obtain refinancing has passed. While Oeming argues their efforts at refinancing have been hamstrung by the receivership proceedings, there is evidence the debt could have been paid through the Oeming estate, but decisions were made to distribute those funds elsewhere.

[42] Consideration must also be given to Fehr who negotiated an offer to purchase in good faith over a year ago, yet continues to live with uncertainty. Beyond affecting Fehr's interests, this also undermines the integrity of receivership proceedings generally. As neatly summarized in *Soundair* at para 69:

I have decided this appeal in the way I have in order to assure business people who deal with court-appointed receivers that they can have confidence that an agreement which they make with a court-appointed receiver will be far more than a platform upon which others may bargain at the court approval stage. I think that persons who enter into agreements with court-appointed receivers, following a disposition procedure that is appropriate given the nature of the assets involved, should expect that their bargain will be confirmed by the court.

iii. *The Efficacy and Integrity of the Sale Process*

[43] In obtaining an order approving the sale process, the Receiver satisfied the court of its efforts to engage an appraiser to value the lands for sale. The Receiver also satisfied the court of its efforts to determine the best sale process and why it was recommending Avison Young from the list of four realtors submitting proposals. As we have indicated, the marketing proposal outlined by Avison Young was followed.

[44] Oeming also argues the marketing period was unduly rushed. Avison Young's marketing efforts included contacting 407 individual prospective buyers and brokers. It fielded inquiries from 15 interested parties and toured the lands with three interested parties. Signage visible from Highway 14 was placed on the lands and the listing was placed on Avison Young's website. The only offers received were from the two adjacent landowners. Marketing an asset is an unpredictable exercise. It is pure speculation that a longer marketing period would have generated additional, let alone better, offers.

[45] We are not persuaded that the integrity of the sale process was compromised. It bears repeating that 170's second offer was *below* the amount the Receiver advised it would accept. 170 had full autonomy over that decision. Its offer was never accepted. While 170 may have believed its offer was going to be accepted, it chose to withdraw its offer, suspecting that same was being shopped around. As the chambers judge found, there is no evidence to support that suspicion.

[46] The Fehr offer was significantly higher than 170's. Since it exceeded the appraised value of the land, was irrevocable and unconditional, it is hardly surprising that Avison Young recommended its immediate acceptance.

iv. *Whether there was Unfairness in the Working Out of the Process*

[47] While courts should avoid delving "into the minutia of the process or of the selling strategy adopted by the receiver", courts must still ensure the process was fair: *Soundair* at para 49. The chambers judge afforded both Oeming and 170 the opportunity to make full submissions and tender further evidence before deciding to approve the sale to Fehr. Having concluded that both the sale process and the Fehr offer were fair and reasonable, there was no reason for the chambers judge to compare 170's third offer to the offer accepted, nor to enter into a new bid process.

**Conclusion**

[48] These proceedings have become long and unwieldy. Courts cannot lose sight of two of the overarching policy considerations that articulate bankruptcy and insolvency proceedings: urgency and commercial certainty. Delay fuels increased costs and breeds chaos and confusion, all of which risk adversely affecting the interests of parties with a direct and immediate stake in the sale process.

[49] The appeals are dismissed and the stay granted by order dated March 12, 2020 is lifted.

Appeal heard on April 1, 2021

Memorandum filed at Edmonton, Alberta  
this 21st day of April, 2021

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Watson J.A.

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Pentelchuk J.A.

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Feehan J.A.

**Appearances:**

D.R. Bieganeck, Q.C.  
for the Appellant, 1705221 Alberta Ltd

K.A. Rowan, Q.C.  
for the Respondents, Three M Mortgages Inc and Avatex Land Corporation

K.G. Heintz  
For the Respondents, Todd Oeming, Todd Oeming as the Personal Representative of the Estate of Albert Oeming, and the Estate of Albert Oeming

M.J. McCabe, Q.C.  
For the Interested Party, BDO Canada Limited

B.G. Doherty  
For the Interested Party, Shelby Fehr

**TAB D**

**CITATION:** Choice Properties Limited Partnership v. Penady (Barrie) Ltd., 2020 ONSC 3517  
**COURT FILE NO.:** CV-20-00637682-00CL  
**DATE:** 20200610

**ONTARIO**

**SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE**

**BETWEEN:** )  
)  
CHOICE PROPERTIES LIMITED ) *Michael De Lellis and Shawn Irving, for the*  
PARTNERSHIP, by its general partner, ) Applicant  
CHOICE PROPERTIES GP INC. )  
)  
Applicant )  
)  
**– and –** )  
)  
PENADY (BARRIE) LTD., PRC BARRIE ) *Tim Duncan and Michael Citak, for the*  
CORP. and MADY (BARRIE) INC. ) Respondents  
)  
Respondents ) *Eric Golden and Chad Kopach, for RSM*  
) *Canada Limited, in its capacity as Court-*  
) *appointed Receiver*  
)  
)  
) **HEARD:** June 2, 2020

**APPLICATION UNDER SECTION 243 OF THE *BANKRUPTCY AND INSOLVENCY ACT*, R.S.C., 1985, C. B-3, AS AMENDED, AND SECTION 101 OF THE *COURTS OF JUSTICE ACT*, R.S.O. 1990, C. C.43, AS AMENDED**

**ENDORSEMENT**

**MCEWEN J.**

[1] This motion is brought by RSM Canada Limited (the “Receiver”), in its capacity as the Court-appointed Receiver of all of the rights, title and interest of Penady (Barrie) Ltd. (“Penady”), PRC Barrie Corp. (“PRC”) and Mady (Barrie) Inc. (“MBI”) (collectively, the “Respondents”) for an order, amongst other things, approving the Sale Procedure outlined in the First Report of the Receiver which features an asset purchase agreement by way of a credit bid (the “Stalking Horse Agreement”) with the Applicant.

[2] The Applicant, Choice Properties Limited Partnership (“CHP”), by its general partner, Choice Properties GP Inc. (“Choice GP”), supports the Receiver’s motion. The Respondents oppose.

[3] The asset in question primarily consists of commercial rental property known as the North Barrie Crossing Shopping Centre (the “Barrie Property”). Penady is the registered owner of the Barrie Property. PRC and MBI are the beneficial owners. The Barrie Property essentially consists of a shopping centre with 27 tenants.

[4] Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the motion proceeded by way of Zoom video conference. It was held in accordance with the Notices to Profession issued by Morawetz C.J. and the Commercial List Advisory.

## **INTRODUCTION**

[5] Choice GP is the general partner of CHP. CHP is the senior secured lender to Penady. PRC and MBI provided a limited recourse guarantee, limited to their beneficial interest in the Barrie Property.

[6] CHP advanced funding to Penady to assist with the development of the Barrie Property. It subsequently assumed Penady’s indebtedness to the Equitable Bank, which previously held a first mortgage over the Barrie Property.

[7] Currently, Penady is indebted to CHP in the amount of approximately \$70 million with interest accruing monthly at the rate of approximately \$550,000.

[8] As a result of the foregoing, as noted, the Receiver brings this motion seeking approval of the Stalking Horse Agreement and Sale Procedure along with other related relief.

[9] I heard the motion on June 2, 2020 and granted, primarily, the relief sought by the Receiver. I incorporated some changes into the Order, with respect to the Sale Procedure, and approved a Sale Procedure, Stalking Horse Agreement, Receiver’s Reports and inserted a Sealing Order. At that time, I indicated that reasons would follow. I am now providing those reasons.

## **PRELIMINARY ISSUES**

[10] I begin by noting that I granted the Sealing Order sought by the Receiver, on an unopposed basis, with respect to the Unredacted Receiver’s Factum dated May 29, 2020 and Respondents’ Factum dated June 1, 2020, as well as the Respondents’ Confidential Application Record dated March 20, 2020 and the Supplemental Evaluation Information of Cameron Lewis dated March 23, 2020. The test for a sealing order is set out in the well-known decision of *Sierra Club of Canada v. Canada (Minister of Finance)*, 2002 SCC 41, [2002] 2 S.C.R. 522, at para. 53. The test is met in this case since the Sealing Order relates to appraisals concerning the Barrie Property and thus it is important that they remain confidential during the Sale Procedure.

[11] I also wish to deal with the issue of the affidavit filed by the Respondents that was prepared by Mr. Josh Thiessen. Mr. Thiessen is a Vice-President, in client management, at MarshallZehr Mortgage Brokerage. As I noted at the motion, the Respondents, in my view, were putting forward Mr. Thiessen as an expert witness to provide evidence on the issue of the Sale Procedure. The Respondents failed, however, to provide a curriculum vitae so that I could determine whether Mr. Thiessen had any experience in sale procedures in distress situations or insolvency proceedings. Further, no attempt was made to comply with the requirements of r. 53 of the *Rules of Civil Procedure*, R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 194, concerning experts' reports. Mr. Thiessen was also involved in a previous attempt to sell the Barrie Property and had a financial interest in that potential transaction. The Applicant submits that Mr. Thiessen's involvement makes him a partial witness.

[12] In all of the circumstances I advised the parties that while I had reviewed Mr. Thiessen's affidavit, I was giving it very limited weight. In short, however, I do not believe that much turns on Mr. Thiessen's affidavit since I granted relief to the Respondents with respect to most of Mr. Thiessen's concerns, for my own reasons.

[13] Last, the Respondents, in support of their position, sought to draw comparisons between the Barrie Property and a Brampton Property in which CHP has a 70 percent controlling interest. I accept the Receiver's argument that such a comparison is of little, if any, use given that the Brampton Property is vacant land, currently zoned as commercial, but being marketed with a potential to rezone for residential use. Further, it bears noting, that CHP has a sales process well underway with respect to the Brampton Property, which refutes the Respondents' submission that CHP has meaningfully delayed that sale.

## THE LAW

[14] The issue on this motion is whether the Sale Procedure is fair and reasonable.

[15] The parties agree that the criteria to be applied are set out in the well-known case of *Royal Bank of Canada v. Soundair Corp.* (1991), 4 O.R. (3d) 1 (C.A.), as follows:

- (a) whether the receiver has made a sufficient effort to get the best price and has not acted improvidently;
- (b) whether the interests of all parties have been considered;
- (c) the efficacy and integrity of the process by which offers are obtained; and
- (d) whether there has been an unfairness in the working out of the process.

[16] As further explained by D. Brown J. (as he then was) in *CCM Master Qualified Fund v. blutip Power Technologies*, 2012 ONSC 1750, 90 C.B.R. (5th) 74, the approval of a particular form of Sale Procedure must keep the *Soundair* principles in mind and assess:

- (a) the fairness, transparency and integrity of the proposed process;

(b) the commercial efficacy of the proposed process in light of the specific circumstances facing the receiver; and

(c) whether the sales process will optimize the chances, in the particular circumstances, of securing the best possible price for the assets up for sale.

## ANALYSIS

### Introduction

[17] Before I begin my review of the Sale Procedure, it bears noting that the Sale Procedure is being contemplated during the COVID-19 crisis. In this regard, however, it further bears noting that the financial difficulties encountered by Penady pre-date the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to the Receivership Order being granted, Penady had been attempting to sell or refinance the Barrie Property for approximately 16 months. It was in default on its indebtedness to CHP. There were also substantial unpaid realty taxes on the Barrie Property from late 2018 up until the time of the Receivership.

[18] At the time the COVID-19 crisis hit, there were 27 tenants at the Barrie Property. Since COVID-19, 16 tenants have temporarily suspended operations, with another 6 tenants offering limited services. The major Barrie Property tenants include TD, Tim Hortons, McDonalds, Dollarama, Cineplex, LA Fitness, and State & Main.

[19] It also bears noting that Penady had previously retained Mr. Cameron Lewis of Avison Young Commercial Real Estate (Ontario) Inc. (“AY”) to market and sell the Barrie Property. The Receiver agreed to retain Mr. Lewis to continue to market the Barrie Property. Mr. Lewis is well experienced in the area and his previous involvement will allow him to utilize the information he has gathered, including potential bidders. Similarly, the Receiver has retained the existing property manager, Penn Equity, to continue to manage the Barrie Property during the Receivership.

### The Disputes Between the Parties

[20] I will now deal with the various disputes between the parties, first dealing with the objections that the Respondents have with respect to the Stalking Horse Agreement and then with the Respondents’ complaints concerning the Sale Procedure.

#### The Stalking Horse Agreement

[21] The first complaint of the Respondents concerns the credit bid contained in the Stalking Horse Agreement as being significantly below appraisals obtained for the Barrie Property by the Respondents (all amounts are subject to the Sealing Order).

[22] I do not accept this argument. The Receiver has obtained an estimate on the Barrie Property from a reputable commercial real estate company, Cushman & Wakefield ULC (“CW”). The valuation was prepared by CW on March 25, 2020. It is comprehensive and

expressly factors into the valuation difficulties in collecting rental income due to the COVID-19 crisis, which rent collection issues have now materialized. Further, the credit bid contained in the Stalking Horse Agreement will be paid during the Sale Procedure while the valuation placed upon the Barrie Property by CW anticipates a marketing process which will culminate in a sale in approximately 12-18 months. Thus, there is the obvious benefit of having the quicker Sale Procedure undertaken, without the continued, approximately \$550,000 per month interest being incurred for another 12-18 months.

[23] The Respondents rely upon the two appraisals that they have received which place higher valuations on the Barrie Property. The difficulty with those appraisals is that neither deals with the ramifications of the COVID-19 crisis. Furthermore, it bears noting that Penady was unable to sell the Barrie Property over a protracted period of time leading up to the Receivership, which suggests, partially at least, that the price it was asking was too high.

[24] It also strikes me that if CW's valuation is, in fact, on the low-side, it could generate an auction in which the Applicant and others can bid, thus, driving up the price.

[25] The second issue that the Respondents have with the Stalking Horse Agreement is the \$400,000 Expense Reimbursement payable to the Applicant if it is unsuccessful, while an unsuccessful third-party bidder will receive no reimbursement for participating in the process.

[26] In my view, the Expense Reimbursement is very reasonable. It constitutes just 0.8 percent of the purchase price, which is well within the range that is typically accepted by this court. The Respondents submit that they require a breakdown of exactly what the Expense Reimbursement would cover. In light of the modest amount of the Expense Reimbursement and the opinion of the Receiver, it is my view that such an accounting is not required in this case. Expense reimbursement payments compensate Stalking Horse Agreement purchasers for the time, resources and risk taken in developing a Stalking Horse Agreement. In addition to the time spent, the payments also represent the price of stability and thus some premium over simply providing for expenses may be expected. Thus, the Expense Reimbursement claim of 0.8 percent is, in my view, justifiable.

[27] Third, the Respondents object to the required deposits of 3 percent and 7 percent at Phase I and II, respectively. They also object to a requirement that potential bidders secure financing at the end of Phase I. In my view, these are entirely reasonable requirements so that only legitimate would-be purchasers are engaged.

[28] Fourth, the Respondents object to the Minimum Overbid of \$250,000. In my view, the \$250,000 Minimum Overbid is reasonable and within the range that is typically allowed by this court concerning properties of significant value. I can see no detriment of having a modest overbid amount in place given the amount of the Applicant's credit bid. It is supported by the Receiver and will generate a sensible bidding process.

[29] Last, the Respondents object to the Applicant being involved in the proposed auction if a superior bid is obtained. Again, I disagree. Such auctions are commonplace and ensure a robust bidding process. In this regard, the Respondents also make vague complaints about the auction

process. I do not accept these arguments. The auction process proposed is in keeping with those generally put before this court.

### The Sale Procedure

[30] First, the Respondents complain that the Receiver is prepared to undertake the Sale Procedure without obtaining a valid environmental report, a valid building condition assessment report or any tenant estoppel certificates.

[31] The Receiver responds by submitting that there is an existing environmental report that is approximately one and one-half years old, the Barrie Property was recently constructed (2016), and that tenant estoppel certificates will be very difficult to obtain, given the current economic climate and the fact that some tenants are not operating and are seeking rent abatements. The Receiver further points out that Penady had neither an environmental report or building condition assessment when it attempted to sell the Barrie Property.

[32] While there is some merit in the submissions of the Receiver, it is my view that it would be preferable to obtain an environmental report, valid building condition assessment and tenant estoppel certificates from the seven major tenants. The Receiver, in an alternative submission, agreed to obtain the environmental report and building condition assessment report. It has recently determined that the environmental assessment report can be obtained in three to four weeks and the building condition assessment report in two to three weeks. Both can be obtained at a very modest cost. Normally such reports may not be necessary, given what I have outlined above. It is my view, however, that given the current economic condition, it is best to err on the side of caution and ensure that this information, which may enhance the Sale Procedure, is available to bidders. These reports can be obtained for a modest price, in short order.

[33] Similarly, it is reasonable to obtain tenant estoppel certificates from the seven major tenants. Bidders would likely be interested in this information. I accept that it would be more difficult to obtain the certificates from the minor tenants, many of whom are not fully operating at this time. The Receiver shall therefore use best efforts to obtain the tenant estoppel certificates from the seven major tenants as soon as reasonably possible.

[34] Second, the Respondents submit that a Sale Procedure should not be undertaken at this time given the COVID-19 crisis. While I have sympathy with the situation the Respondents now face, I do not agree.

[35] As noted above, this insolvency was not generated by the COVID-19 crisis. Penady was in financial difficulty for several months preceding the pandemic and had been unsuccessfully attempting to sell the Barrie Property for some time. I do not accept the argument that we should adopt a “wait and see” approach to determine if and when the economic crisis abates. The Applicant continues to see interest accrue, as noted, at approximately \$550,000 per month. There is no certainty that the economic situation will improve in any given period of time and it may continue to ebb and flow before it gets better. The Respondents did not adduce any evidence to suggest when the economy may improve, nor likely could they, given the uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 crisis.

[36] In fairness, the Respondents did not propose an indefinite period, but perhaps a 2-3 month pause. Without some certainty, however, I do not agree that this is reasonable given the accruing interest and the risk that the economy may not improve and could worsen.

[37] Alternatively, the Respondents seek to extend the timeline in the Sale Procedure. In my view, the timeline proposed by the Receiver for the Sale Procedure is a reasonable one and superior to the timeline Penady had in place when it attempted to sell the Barrie Property before the Receivership. The Receiver Sale Procedure includes a quicker ramp-up, a robust process, including the creation of a data room (which has been done), and overall provides for a longer marketing period than was included in the previous Penady sales process.

[38] In light of the fact, however, that I have ordered production of the aforementioned environmental and building condition assessment reports, as well as the tenant estoppel certificates, and in order to ensure that a fair timeline is put in place so as to maximize the chances of competitive bids being obtained (including bidders having an opportunity to secure financing), I am extending the Sale Procedure by two weeks. It is my view, though, that obtaining the aforementioned documentation will result in little, if any, delay in implementing the marketing process.

[39] It also bears repeating that the Receiver has acted reasonably in retaining Mr. Lewis of AY. Mr. Lewis has been in contact with prospective bidders given his previous retainer by Penady. The Receiver's retainer of Mr. Lewis allows him to continue on with his work as opposed to having a new commercial real estate agent embark on a learning process with respect to the Barrie Property. Further, Mr. Lewis's commission structure is designed so that he earns a larger commission if a buyer, other than the Applicant, is successful, thus incentivizing Mr. Lewis to ensure that a robust Sale Procedure is undertaken.

[40] The extension of the Phase I Bid Deadline to August 12, 2020 and the extension of the Phase II Bid Deadline to August 26, 2020, constitutes a fair and reasonable timetable which is longer than those usually sought and granted by this court. Further, and in any event, the Receiver can and should reappear before the court, if necessary.

## **DISPOSITION**

[41] It is my view that the above Sale Procedure complies with the principles set out in both *Soundair* and *CCM Master*. The Stalking Horse Agreement and Sale Procedure strike the necessary balance to move quickly and to address the deterioration of the value of the business, while at the same time setting a realistic timetable that will support the process.

[42] Based on the foregoing, at the conclusion of the hearing, with the above noted amendments, I granted the Receiver's Order authorizing the Stalking Horse Agreement and the Sale Procedure, and authorizing the Receiver to enter into the proposed listing agreement. Furthermore, I approved the First Report and the Supplementary First Report, the Receiver's conduct and activities described, as well as granted the Sealing Order.

[43] The parties approved the form and content of the Order which I signed on June 3, 2020.

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**McEwen J.**

**Released:** June 10, 2020

**CITATION:** Choice Properties Limited Partnership v. Penady (Barrie) Ltd., 2020 ONSC 3517  
**COURT FILE NO.:** CV-20-00637682-00CL  
**DATE:** 20200610

**ONTARIO**

**SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE**

**BETWEEN:**

CHOICE PROPERTIES LIMITED PARTNERSHIP, by  
its general partner, CHOICE PROPERTIES GP INC.

Applicant

– and –

PENADY (BARRIE) LTD., PRC BARRIE CORP. and  
MADY (BARRIE) INC.

Respondents

**APPLICATION UNDER SECTION 243 OF THE  
*BANKRUPTCY AND INSOLVENCY ACT, R.S.C.,  
1985, C. B-3, AS AMENDED, AND SECTION 101  
OF THE *COURTS OF JUSTICE ACT, R.S.O. 1990,  
C. C.43, AS AMENDED****

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**ENDORSEMENT**

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**McEwen J.**

**Released:** June 10, 2020