

BEFORE THE WEST VIRGINIA REAL ESTATE COMMISSION

WEST VIRGINIA REAL ESTATE COMMISSION,
Complainant,

V.

Formal Complaint No. 25-011-L

ROBERT KROP,
Licensed Real Estate Broker
License No. WV0030719

and

JOSEPH LAUMANN,
Licensed Real Estate Salesperson
License No. WVS230302814
Respondents.

CONSENT DECREE

Respondent Robert Krop (“Respondent Krop”), Respondent Joseph Laumann (“Respondent Laumann”), and the West Virginia Real Estate Commission (“Commission”) enter into the following Consent Decree for the purpose of resolving the above-styled complaint. As reflected in this Consent Decree, the parties have reached an agreement in which each Respondent agrees and stipulates to the Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and disposition of this matter. The Commission, having approved such agreement, does hereby Find and Order as follows:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Respondent Krop is a licensed real estate broker in the State of West Virginia, holding license number WV0030719.
2. Respondent Laumann is a licensed real estate salesperson in the State of West Virginia, holding license number WVS230302814.

3. At all times relevant, Respondent Krop served as the broker for Key City Property Management (“Key City”), located in Frederick, Maryland. Respondent Laumann, at all times relevant, practiced under Krop’s supervision as a salesperson in the brokerage.

4. On September 3, 2024, the Commission received a Formal Complaint filed against respondents by Gabrielle Williams. Ms. Williams was a licensed real estate salesperson with Keller Williams Realty Centre, but not Key City. Respondent Krop is the associate broker for Keller Williams Realty Centre.

5. Many of Ms. Williams’ allegations against respondents could not be substantiated. However, the Commission’s investigation revealed that Respondent Laumann failed to renew his West Virginia salesperson’s license before June 30, 2024, thus, his license expired on July 1, 2024.

6. Real estate licenses must be renewed annually, on or before June 30.

7. Respondent Laumann did not renew his license until September 30, 2024.

8. During the time in which Respondent Laumann’s license was expired (July 1 to September 30, 2024), he continued to practice real estate in the State of West Virginia, including but not limited to being advertised as a licensee on the Key City brokerage website, while not properly licensed.

9. Respondent Krop accepted the services of Respondent Laumann as a salesperson while Respondent Laumann’s license was expired.

10. The Commission’s investigation also revealed that Respondent Krop accepted the services of and paid commissions to Ms. Williams for property management services for clients of Key City, despite the fact that Ms. Williams was not licensed with Key City.

11. Additionally, the investigation revealed that Respondent Krop accepted the services of and paid commission to a Matt Raynor for property management services for Key City clients, despite the fact that Mr. Raynor is not licensed by the Commission to practice real estate.

12. Respondents submitted a response to the Formal Complaint denying any wrongdoing.

13. At its meeting on October 16, 2024, the Commission determined there was probable cause to conclude that both respondents violated the *West Virginia Real Estate License Act*, and authorized the proposal of a consent decree to resolve the matter.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Pursuant to the *West Virginia Real Estate License Act*, West Virginia Code § 30-40-1, et seq., the Commission is charged with the regulation of the practice of real estate brokerage in this State, and, thus, has jurisdiction over this Formal Complaint.

2. In relevant part, West Virginia Code § 30-40-7(l) authorizes the Commission to impose sanctions for violations of the *West Virginia Real Estate License Act*, including, but not limited to, an administrative fine not to exceed \$1,000 per day per violation; probation; revocation; suspension; restitution; additional education; denial of future license; downgrade of license; reprimand; and/or the return of compensation collected from an injured consumer.

3. West Virginia Code § 30-40-19(a)(19) authorizes the Commission to sanction a licensee if the licensee “[v]iolates any of the provisions of the *West Virginia Real Estate License Act*], any rule or order or final decision issued by the commission.” West Virginia Code § 30-40-17(a)(5) mandates that a real estate broker “[m]aintain in his or her custody and control the license of each associate broker and salesperson employed by him or her[.]”

4. West Virginia Code § 30-40-19(a)(23) authorizes the Commission to sanction a licensee if the licensee “[c]ontinues in the capacity of or accepts the services of any broker, associate broker, or salesperson who is not properly licensed[.]”

5. Also, with respect to a broker, West Virginia Code § 30-40-19(a)(30) authorizes the Commission to sanction a licensee if the licensee “[f]ails to adequately supervise all associate brokers and salespersons employed by him or her[.]”

6. By allowing Respondent Laumann to be advertised as a salesperson and engage in the practice of real estate while his license was expired, Respondent Krop violated West Virginia Code §§ 30-40-17(a)(5), 30-40-19(a)(23), and 30-40-19(a)(30).

7. Respondent Laumann violated West Virginia Code § 30-40-19(a)(23) by continuing in the capacity of a salesperson while not properly licensed to do so.

8. By allowing Ms. Williams and Mr. Raynor to practice real estate for Key City while neither Ms. Williams nor Mr. Raynor were properly licensed to do, Respondent Krop violated West Virginia Code §§ 30-40-17(a)(5), 30-40-19(a)(23), and 30-40-19(a)(30).

CONSENT

By signing below, each Respondent agrees to the following:

1. Respondents have had the opportunity to consult with counsel and executes this Consent Decree voluntarily, freely, without compulsion or duress and mindful that it has legal consequences. No person or entity has made any promise or given any inducement whatsoever to encourage either Respondent to make this settlement other than as set forth herein. Respondents acknowledge that they may pursue this matter through appropriate administrative proceedings and

are aware of their legal rights regarding this matter, but intelligently and voluntarily waive such rights.

2. Respondents acknowledge the Findings of Fact set forth above, admit that there is probable cause to conclude that the violations set forth above in the Conclusions of Law occurred, and consent to the entry of the following Order:

ORDER

On the basis of the foregoing, the Commission hereby ORDERS as follows:

1. Respondent Krop is hereby reprimanded and shall pay a fine in the amount \$1,000.00, payable to the State of West Virginia.

2. Respondent Laumann is hereby reprimanded and shall pay a fine in the amount \$1,000.00, payable to the State of West Virginia.

3. Within six (6) months of the entry of this Consent Decree, Respondent Krop shall complete 7 hours of continuing education on the subject of property management. The hours required in this Consent Decree are in addition to the hours required for annual renewal of Respondent's West Virginia real estate license(s).

4. Respondents shall pay an equal share of the Commission's costs associated with this matter, including its attorney fees, in the amount of \$560.00. Accordingly, each respondent shall pay costs in the amount of \$280.00.

5. Unless extended in writing by the Commission, the fines and costs shall be paid within thirty (30) days of the entry of this Consent Decree by the Commission by certified check made payable to the State of West Virginia and sent directly to the Commission's Office.

6. Any deviation from the requirements of this Consent Decree, without the prior written consent of the Commission, shall constitute a violation of an order of the Commission and may result in further disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, suspension of Respondents' licenses. The Commission shall immediately notify Respondents via certified mail of the alleged violation of the Consent Decree. In the event Respondents contest the alleged violation of the Consent Decree, Respondents are entitled to a hearing to challenge the alleged violation. Such hearing shall be scheduled and conducted in accordance with the provisions of W. Va. Code §§ 30-1-8 and 30-40-1 *et seq.* and any procedural rules promulgated by the Commission.

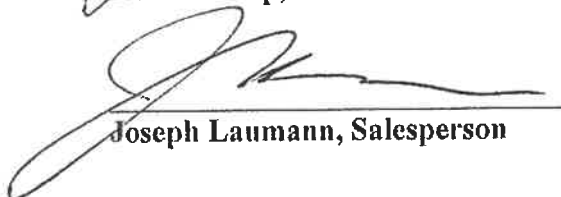
CONSENT DECREE AGREED TO BY:



Robert Krop, Broker

12/3/24

Date



Joseph Laumann, Salesperson


12/3/24

Date

ENTERED into the records of the Real Estate Commission this:

11th day of December, 2024.

WEST VIRGINIA REAL ESTATE COMMISSION,

By: 

Keri L. Ferro, Executive Director