Document 68

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Case 3:23-cv-05648-RS

1	PRELIMINARY APPROVAL ORDER
2	1) GRANTING PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF THE SETTLEMENT;
3	2) CERTIFYING SETTLEMENT CLASS FOR SETTLEMENT PURPOSES ONLY;
4	3) APPOINTING A SETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATOR;
5	4) APPOINT AN ESCROW AGENT;
<ul><li>6</li><li>7</li></ul>	5) ENJOINING CLASS MEMBERS FROM PURSUING ANY CLAIMS THAT ARISE OUT OF OR RELATE IN ANY WAY TO THE RELEASED CLAIMS PENDING FINAL APPROVAL OF THE SETTLEMENT;
8	6) DIRECTING NOTICE TO CLASS MEMBERS AND APPROVING THE FORM AND MANNER OF NOTICE;
10	7) APPROVING THE PLAN OF ALLOCATION;
11	8) SCHEDULING A FINAL APPROVAL HEARING; AND
12	9) SCHEDULING A HEARING ON CLASS COUNSEL'S FEE AND EXPENSE
13	APPLICATION AND PLAINTIFFS' REQUEST FOR CASE CONTRIBUTION AWARDS
14 15	The Court, having received and considered the Unopposed Motion for a Preliminary
	Approval Order (the "Motion") by Plaintiffs Daniel E. Nagy and Maria Romero ("Plaintiffs") in
16	the above-captioned action (the "Action") and the supporting papers, including the Settlement
17	Agreement and Release dated March 14, 2025 (the "Agreement") and the declaration of counsel,
18	having further considered the arguments of counsel and the pleadings and record in this case, and
19	finding good cause for granting the Motion,
20	IT IS HEREBY ORDERED AS FOLLOWS:
21	1. Capitalized terms not defined in this Order shall have the meaning ascribed to
22	them in Part I of the Agreement.
23	2. This Court has jurisdiction to consider the Motion and the relief requested therein
24	under 28 U.S.C. § 1331 and 29 U.S.C. § 1132(e)(1).
25	3. Venue before the Court is proper pursuant to 29 U.S.C. § 1132(e)(2).
26	4. The terms set forth in the Agreement are hereby preliminarily approved, subject to
27	further consideration at the hearing the Court will hold pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil
3	CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENTAGREEMENT AND RELEASE [PROPOSED] PRELIMINARY

Procedure 23(e) to determine whether the Settlement should receive final approval by the Court, as provided for below (the "Final Approval Hearing"). Having considered the terms of the Settlement and the submissions in support of preliminary approval, the Court determines, in accordance with Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(e)(1)(B), that it is likely that the Court will be able to grant final approval of the Settlement under Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(e)(2) following notice and a hearing. The Settlement Agreement is sufficiently within the range of reasonableness to warrant the preliminary approval of the Agreement, the scheduling of the Final Approval Hearing, and the mailing of Notice to Class Members, each as provided for in this Order.

- 5. The Settlement Class is certified for settlement purposes only. Plaintiffs are appointed as Class Representatives and Plaintiffs' Counsel is appointed as Class Counsel.
- 6. The Court approves the retention by Class Counsel of Rust Consulting as the Settlement Administrator.
- 7. The Court approves the retention by Class Counsel of Huntington Bank as the Escrow Agent.
- 8. In further aid of the Court's jurisdiction to review, consider, implement, and enforce the Settlement, the Court orders that Plaintiffs, all Class Members, and the Plan are preliminarily enjoined and barred from commencing, prosecuting, or otherwise litigating, in whole or in part, either directly, individually, representatively, derivatively, or in any other capacity, whether by complaint, counterclaim, defense, or otherwise, in any local, state, or federal court, arbitration forum, or in any agency or other authority or forum wherever located, any contention, allegation, claim, cause of action, matter, lawsuit, or action (including but not limited to actions pending as of the date of this Order), including, without limitation, any Unknown Claim, that arises out of or relates in any way to the Released Claims.
- 9. The Court approves the Notice to Class Members in substantially the form attached as Exhibit B to the Agreement.
- 10. The Court finds that the Plan of Allocation proposed by Plaintiffs and Class Counsel for allocating the Settlement Amount to Class Members is fair and reasonable.

**Manner of Giving Notice** 

- 11. The Company shall use reasonable efforts to cause the Plan Recordkeepers to provide to the Settlement Administrator, within thirty (30) calendar days of the entry of this Preliminary Approval Order, the participant data (including names, social security numbers, and last known addresses) sufficient to effectuate the Notice, implement the Plan of Allocation, and distribute the Settlement Fund on the terms provided for in the Agreement. The names and addresses provided to the Settlement Administrator pursuant to this Order shall be used solely for the purpose of providing Notice of this Settlement and distribution of the Settlement Fund, and for no other purpose and shall be treated as "Confidential" under the Protective Order governing this Action.
- 12. Within thirty (30) calendar days of the entry of this Order and no later than the first date that the mailing of the Notice occurs, the Settlement Administrator shall establish a website containing, at a minimum, the Complaint, the Notice, the Agreement, its exhibits, and this Order.
- 13. Within thirty (30) calendar days of the entry of this Order and no later than the first date that the mailing of the Notice occurs, the Settlement Administrator shall establish a toll-free telephone number to which Class Members can direct questions about the Settlement.
- 14. Within forty-five (45) calendar days after entry of this Order, or as may be modified by the Court, the Settlement Administrator shall cause copies of the Notice to be sent by first-class mail or electronic mail (if available) to all Class Members through the notice procedure described in the Agreement.
- 15. Not later than five (5) business days after sending the Notice to Class Members, the Settlement Administrator shall provide to Class Counsel and to Defendants' Counsel a declaration attesting to compliance with the sending of the Notice, as set forth above.
- 16. The Court finds that the Notice to be provided as set forth in this Order is the best means of providing notice to the Class Members as is practicable under the circumstances and, when completed, shall constitute due and sufficient notice of the Settlement and the Final Approval Hearing to all persons affected by or entitled to participate in the Settlement or the Final

of Civil Procedure.

17. All reasonable costs incurred by the Settlement Administrator for providing the Notice as well as for administering the Settlement shall be paid as set forth in the Agreement.

Approval Hearing, in full compliance with the requirements of due process and the Federal Rules

## **Final Approval Hearing**

- 18. The Court sets the Final Approval Hearing at 1:30 pm on October 16, 2025, in Courtroom 3 of the United States District Court for the Northern District of California, San Francisco Courthouse, 450 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102, for the following purposes: (a) to determine whether the proposed Settlement on the terms and conditions provided for in the Agreement is fair, reasonable, adequate, and in the best interests of the Class and should be finally approved by the Court; (b) to determine whether Class Counsel's Fee and Expense Application is reasonable and should be approved; (c) to determine whether Plaintiffs' request for Case Contribution Awards is reasonable and should be approved; (d) to determine whether a Final Approval Order and Judgment substantially in the form attached as Exhibit A to the Agreement should be entered dismissing with prejudice all claims asserted in the Action against Defendants; and (e) to consider any other matters that may properly be brought before the Court in connection with the Settlement. Notice of the Settlement and the Final Approval Hearing shall be given to Class Members as set forth in Paragraph 9 of this Order.
- 19. The Court may adjourn the Final Approval Hearing and approve the Settlement with such modification as the Parties may agree to, if appropriate, without further notice to the Class.
- 20. Not later than forty-five (45) calendar days before the Final Approval Hearing, Class Counsel shall submit their papers in support of final approval of the Agreement, and in support of Class Counsel's Fee and Expense Application and Plaintiffs' request for Case Contribution Awards.
- 21. Not later than thirty (30) calendar days before the Final Approval Hearing, the Independent Fiduciary shall submit its report pursuant to Section 2.7 of the Agreement.

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22. Not later than thirty (30) calendar days before the Final Approval Hearing, the Settlement Administrator shall submit its declaration pursuant to Section 2.8 of the Agreement.

#### **Objections to the Settlement**

- 23. The Court will consider written comments and objections to the Settlement, to the proposed Fee and Expense Application, and to Plaintiffs' request for Case Contribution Awards. Any objection to the proposed Settlement must be in writing, and must (a) clearly identify the case name and number (*Nagy et al. v. CEP America, LLC et al.*, Case No. 3:23-cv-5648-RS), and (b) be submitted to the Court either by mailing it to the Class Action Clerk, United States District Court for the Northern District of California, San Francisco Courthouse, 450 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102, or by filing it in person at any location of the United States District Court for the Northern District of California. Any Class Members' objections must be filed or postmarked on or before thirty (30) calendar days before the Final Approval Hearing. Any objections submitted by federal or state authorities must be filed no later than thirty (30) calendar days before the Final Approval Hearing.
- 24. Any Class Member who does not timely file and serve a written objection shall be deemed to have waived, and shall be foreclosed from raising, any objection to the Settlement Agreement, and any untimely objection shall be barred absent an order from the Court. The Plaintiffs or the Defendants may, bearing their own fees and costs, take discovery, including depositions, from anyone who files an objection with respect to any of the issues raised in the objection.
- 25. Any Class Member who files and serves a timely, written comment or objection in accordance with this Order may also appear at the Final Approval Hearing either in person or through qualified counsel retained at their own expense. Those Class Members or their attorneys intending to appear at the Final Approval Hearing must effect service of a notice of intention to appear setting forth, among other things, the name, address, and telephone number of the Class Member (and, if applicable, the name, address, and telephone number of that Class Member's attorney) on Class Counsel and Defendants' Counsel and file it with the Court Clerk by no later than thirty (30) calendar days before the Final Approval Hearing. Anyone who does not timely

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file and serve a notice of intention to appear in accordance with this paragraph shall not be permitted to appear at the Final Approval Hearing, except by Order of the Court for good cause shown. Any comment or objection that is timely filed will be considered by the Court even in the absence of a personal appearance by the Class Member or that Class Member's counsel.

26. The Parties may file written responses to any objections not later than five (5) days before the Final Approval Hearing.

### **Termination of Settlement**

27. This Order shall become null and void, ab initio, and shall be without prejudice to the rights of the Parties, all of whom shall be deemed to have reverted to their respective status in the Action as of February 28, 2025, if the Settlement is terminated in accordance with the terms of the Settlement Agreement.

#### **Use of Order**

28. This Order is not admissible as evidence for any purpose against the Defendant Released Parties in any pending or future litigation. This Order (a) shall not give rise to any inference of, and shall not be construed or used as an admission, concession, or declaration against any of the Defendant Released Parties of wrongdoing or liability in the Action or any other proceeding; (b) is not an admission of any liability of any kind, whether legal or factual; (c) shall not be used or received in evidence in any action or proceeding for any purpose, except in an action or proceeding to enforce the Agreement, whether affirmatively or defensively; (d) shall not be construed or used as an admission, concession, or declaration by or against Plaintiffs, the Plan, or the Class that their claims lack merit or that the relief requested in the Action is inappropriate, improper or unavailable; and (e) shall not be construed or used as an admission, concession, declaration or waiver by any Party of any arguments, defenses, or claims he, she, or it may have in the event that the Agreement is terminated. This Order and the Agreement and any proceedings taken pursuant to the Agreement are for settlement purposes only.

#### **Jurisdiction**

29. The Court hereby retains jurisdiction during the Three-Year Settlement Period for purposes of implementing the Agreement, and reserves the power to enter additional orders to

effectuate the fair and orderly administration and consummation of the Agreement as may from time to time be appropriate, and to resolve any and all disputes arising thereunder. SO ORDERED on May 23, 2025. The Honorable Richard Seeborg United States District Judge