

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

In the Matter of: Chris Elkins Former Senior Vice President and Commercial Lender Simmons First National Bank Pine Bluff, Arkansas)))))))	AA-EC-2019-29
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CONSENT ORDER

WHEREAS, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (“OCC”) intends to initiate cease and desist and civil money penalty proceedings against Chris Elkins (“Respondent”) pursuant to 12 U.S.C. § 1818(b) and (i) on the basis of Respondent’s activities while serving as senior vice president and commercial lender of Simmons First National Bank, Pine Bluff, Arkansas (“Bank”);

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

NOW, THEREFORE, it is stipulated by and between the OCC, through the duly authorized representative of the Comptroller of the Currency (“Comptroller”), and Respondent that:

ARTICLE I

JURISDICTION

(1) The Bank is an “insured depository institution” as that term is defined in 12 U.S.C. § 1813(c)(2).

(2) Respondent was an officer of the Bank and was an “institution-affiliated party” of the Bank as that term is defined in 12 U.S.C. § 1813(u), having served in such capacity within six (6) years from the date of this Order. *See* 12 U.S.C. § 1818(i)(3).

(3) The Bank was a national banking association within the meaning of 12 U.S.C. § 1813(q)(1)(A), and was chartered and examined by the OCC. *See* 12 U.S.C. § 1 *et seq.*

(4) The OCC is the “appropriate Federal banking agency” as that term is defined in 12 U.S.C. § 1813(q) and is therefore authorized to initiate and maintain this cease and desist and civil money penalty action against Respondent pursuant to 12 U.S.C. § 1818(b) and (i).

ARTICLE II

COMPTROLLER’S FINDINGS

The Comptroller finds, and Respondent neither admits nor denies, the following:

(1) In 2013 and 2014, Respondent served as loan officer and signed loan modifications for two loans to a relative that he had personally promised to repay and was repaying. Furthermore, the proceeds of the two loans had been used to purchase real estate that was gifted to Respondent in 2012.

(2) In October 2015, Respondent served as loan officer for a borrower who wanted a loan to purchase a primary residence. Respondent structured this loan as a commercial loan even though it had no commercial purpose. The loan did not go through automated underwriting as required by the Bank’s credit policy and avoided an origination fee.

(3) In December 2015, Respondent served as loan officer for a borrower who wanted a loan collateralized by a recreational vehicle. Respondent structured this loan as a commercial loan even though it had no commercial purpose. The borrower received the loan

even though he would not have qualified under the Bank's credit policy if it had been properly structured as a consumer loan.

(4) In January 2016, Respondent accepted a \$35,000 personal loan from a borrower for whom he served as loan officer and who had an active line of credit at the Bank. Respondent failed to disclose to the Bank that he was personally indebted to this borrower.

(5) By reason of the foregoing conduct, Respondent engaged in unsafe or unsound practices and breached his fiduciary duty to the Bank; which breaches were part of a pattern of misconduct and resulted in pecuniary gain to Respondent.

ARTICLE III

ORDER FOR CIVIL MONEY PENALTY

Respondent consents to, and it is ORDERED that:

(1) Respondent shall pay a civil money penalty in the amount of nine thousand five hundred dollars (\$9,500), which shall be paid in full upon Respondent's execution of this Order.

(2) Respondent shall make payment in full via pay.gov or wire transfer, in accordance with instructions provided by the OCC. The docket number of this case (AA-EC-2019-29) shall be referenced in connection with the submitted payment.

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

ARTICLE IV

ORDER TO CEASE AND DESIST

Respondent consents to, and it is ORDERED that:

(1) Whenever Respondent is employed by or is otherwise affiliated with any depository institution as defined in 12 U.S.C. § 1813(c)(1) or otherwise becomes an institution-affiliated party as defined in 12 U.S.C. § 1813(u), Respondent shall:

- (a) Comply fully with all laws and regulations applicable to the institution;
- (b) Not engage or participate in any unsafe or unsound practice, as that term is used in Title 12 of the United States Code;
- (c) Fulfill his fiduciary duties of loyalty and care and, at all times, avoid placing his own interests above those of the institution;
- (d) Adhere to the institution's written policies and procedures, or receive written permission from appropriate authorized individuals to do otherwise;
- (e) Ensure the accuracy of the loan documents for those credits for which he serves as loan officer;
- (f) Not serve as a loan officer for any borrower with whom he has any business or family relationship;
- (g) Not accept a loan from any borrower for whom he serves as a loan officer; and
- (h) Immediately disclose in writing to his supervisor any instance in which he receives a gift from a borrower for whom he serves as a loan officer that does not comply with the institution's policies and procedures.

(2) If Respondent is currently an institution-affiliated party, he shall provide the President or Chief Executive Officer of the institution with a copy of this Order within ten (10) days of execution of this Order.

(3) Prior to accepting any offer of a position that causes Respondent to become an institution-affiliated party, he shall provide the President or Chief Executive Officer of the institution with a copy of this Order.

(4) Within ten (10) days of satisfying the requirements of paragraphs (2) and/or (3) of this Article, Respondent shall provide written certification of his compliance to the OCC by mail to Director, Enforcement, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, 400 7th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20219 or by email to the address provided by the OCC.

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

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

ARTICLE V

CLOSING

- (1) By executing this Order, Respondent waives:
- (a) the right to a Notice of Charges for Issuance of an Order to Cease and Desist and a Notice of Civil Money Penalty Assessment under 12 U.S.C. § 1818(b) and (i);

- (b) all rights to a hearing and a final agency decision pursuant to 12 U.S.C. § 1818(b) and (i) and 12 C.F.R. Part 19;
- (c) all rights to seek judicial review of this Order;
- (d) all rights in any way to contest the validity of this Order; and
- (e) any and all claims for fees, costs, or expenses against the United States, the OCC, or any officer, employee, or agent of the OCC, related in any way to this enforcement matter or this Order, whether arising under common law or under the terms of any statute, including, but not limited to, the Equal Access to Justice Act, 5 U.S.C. § 504 and 28 U.S.C. § 2412.

(2) Respondent shall not cause, participate in, or authorize the Bank (or any subsidiary or affiliate of the Bank) to incur, directly or indirectly, any expense relative to the negotiation and issuance of this Order except as permitted by 12 C.F.R. § 7.2014 and Part 359. In addition, Respondent shall not, directly or indirectly, obtain or accept any indemnification (or other reimbursement) from the Bank (or any subsidiary or affiliate of the Bank) with respect to such amounts except as permitted by 12 C.F.R. § 7.2014 and Part 359; provided, however, Respondent may not obtain or accept such indemnification with respect to payment of the civil money penalty.

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

(4) This Order constitutes a settlement of any proceedings arising out of the facts, omissions, or violations described in the Comptroller's Findings (Article II of this Order). The

OCC agrees not to institute the proceedings referenced in the first whereas clause of this Order for the specific acts, omissions, or violations described in Article II of this Order unless such acts, omissions, or violations reoccur. However, the specific acts, omissions, or violations described in Article II may be used by the OCC in future enforcement actions to establish a pattern of misconduct or the continuation of a pattern of misconduct.

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

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

(7) This Order is intended to be, and shall be construed to be, a final order issued pursuant to 12 U.S.C. § 1818, and expressly does not form, and may not be construed to form, a contract binding on the United States, the OCC, or any officer, employee, or agent of the OCC. Respondent expressly acknowledges that no officer, employee, or agent of the OCC has statutory or other authority to bind the United States, the United States Treasury Department, the OCC, or any other federal bank regulatory agency or entity, or any officer, employee, or agent of those entities, to a contract affecting the OCC's exercise of its supervisory responsibilities.

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

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

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

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

/s/ Chris Elkins

7-17-19

Chris Elkins

Date

IT IS SO ORDERED.

/s/ Digitally Signed, Date: 2019.07.23

Michael R. Brickman
Deputy Comptroller for Special Supervision