

STATE OF MINNESOTA
BOARD OF ACCOUNTANCY

In the Matter of
Margaret M. Benson LLC
CPA Firm Permit No. 01222

STIPULATION AND
CONSENT ORDER
Board File 2018-183

The Minnesota Board of Accountancy is authorized pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 214.10 (2016); Minnesota Statutes section 326A.02, subdivisions 4 and 6 (2016); and Minnesota Statutes section 326A.08, subdivision 1 (2016) to review complaints against certified public accountants and to take disciplinary action whenever appropriate.

The Board received information concerning Respondent Margaret M. Benson LLC, 3470 Washington Drive Suite 209, Eagan, Minnesota 55122. The Board's Complaint Committee reviewed that information.

It is hereby stipulated and agreed by Respondent and the Committee that without trial or adjudication of any issue of fact or law and without any evidence or admission by any party with respect to any such issue:

1. For the purpose of this stipulation, Respondent waives all procedures and proceedings before the Board to which Respondent may be entitled under the United States and Minnesota constitutions, statutes, or the rules of the Board, including the right to dispute the allegations against Respondent and to dispute the appropriateness of discipline in a contested case hearing pursuant to Minn. Stat. ch. 14 (2016), and to dispute any civil penalty imposed by this stipulation and consent order. Respondent agrees that upon the *ex parte* application of the Committee, without notice to or appearance by Respondent, the Board may order the remedy specified in paragraph 7 below.

Respondent waives the right to any judicial review of the order by appeal, by writ of certiorari, petition for review, or otherwise.

2. This stipulation shall constitute the entire record of the proceedings herein upon which the consent order is based. All documents in the Board's files shall maintain the data classification to which they are entitled under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minn. Stat. ch. 13 (2016). They shall not, to the extent they are not already public documents, become public merely because they are referenced herein.

3. In the event the Board in its discretion does not approve this stipulation or a lesser remedy than specified herein, this stipulation and consent order shall be null and void and shall not be used for any purpose by either party. If this stipulation is not approved and a contested case hearing is initiated by the Committee pursuant to Minn. Stat. ch. 14 (2016), Respondent agrees not to object to the Board's initiation of the hearing and its hearing the case on the basis that the Board has become disqualified because of its review and consideration of this stipulation or of any records relating hereto.

FACTS

4. This stipulation is based upon the following facts. Respondent admits the facts referred to below and grants that the Board may, for the purpose of reviewing the record in paragraph 2 above, consider the following as true without prejudice to the Respondent in any current or future proceeding of the Board with regard to these or other allegations:

a. The Board issued a Certified Public Accountant Firm Permit ("CPA Firm Permit") to Respondent on October 30, 2000; Respondent currently holds a CPA Firm Permit from the Board. Respondent is subject to the jurisdiction of the Board with respect to the matters referred to in this stipulation and consent order.

b. During a review of the system of quality control of Respondent's accounting and auditing practice for the period ended June 30, 2013, significant deficiencies were found, which resulted in a peer review rating of "fail."

c. During a review of the system of quality control of Respondent's accounting and auditing practice for the period ended June 30, 2016, significant deficiencies were found, which resulted in a peer review rating of "fail."

d. The Respondent failed to correct the deficiency as the June 30, 2016 review contained the same deficiency as the June 30, 2013 review.

5. Respondent admits that the facts and conduct specified in paragraph 4 above constitute violations of Minn. Stat. § 326A.08, subd.5 (a)(1) (2016) and Minn. R. 1105.5600, subp. 1 C. (6) and 1 C. (7) (2017), are sufficient grounds for the remedy specified in paragraph 7 below, and that proof at hearing of any one or more of the allegations set forth would empower the Board to take disciplinary action pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 326A.08 (2016).

6. This stipulation shall not in any way or manner limit or affect the authority of the Board to proceed against Respondent by initiating a contested case hearing or by other appropriate means on the basis of any act, conduct, or admission of Respondent justifying disciplinary action which occurred before or after the date of this stipulation and that is not directly related to the specific facts and circumstances set forth herein.

REMEDY

7. Upon this stipulation and record, as set forth in paragraphs 2 and 4 above, and without any further notice of proceedings, the Committee and Respondent agree that the Board may, in its discretion, issue an order to Respondent requiring compliance with the following:

- a. Respondent's CPA Firm Permit is **CENSURED** and **REPRIMANDED**.

- b. Respondent shall pay to the Board a **CIVIL PENALTY** of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00). Respondent shall submit a Civil Penalty of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) by check to the Board within sixty (60) days of the Board's approval of this Stipulation and Consent Order.
- c. Respondent's peer review cycle SHALL BE reset, and Respondent's next peer review SHALL BE due for the period under review ending June 30, 2018.

8. Respondent hereby acknowledges that it has read, understands, and agrees to this stipulation and consent order and is freely and voluntarily signing the stipulation without threat or promise by the Board or any of its members, employees, or agents. When signing the stipulation, Respondent acknowledges that it is fully aware that the stipulation and consent order must be approved by the Board. The Board may approve the stipulation and consent order as proposed, approve the order subject to specified change, or reject it. If any changes proposed by the Board are unacceptable to Respondent or the Board rejects the stipulation, it will be of no effect except as specified herein.

9. Under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, this Stipulation is classified as public data upon its issuance by the Board. (Minn. Stat. § 13.41, subd. 5 (2016)). All documents in the record shall maintain the data classification to which they are entitled under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minn. Stat. ch. 13 (2016). They shall not, to the extent they are not already public documents, become public merely because they are referenced herein. A summary of this order will appear in the Board's newsletter. A summary will also be sent to the national discipline data bank pertaining to the practice of public accounting.

10. This stipulation contains the entire agreement between the parties. Respondent is not relying on any other agreement or representation of any kind, verbal or otherwise.

11. Respondent is aware that they may choose to be represented by legal counsel in this matter. Respondent knowingly waived legal representation.

12. If approved by the Board, a copy of this stipulation and consent order shall be served personally or by first class mail on Respondent. The order shall be effective and deemed issued when it is signed by the Board Chair or designee of the Chair.

13. Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 16D.17 (2016), after ninety days of the Board's approval of this stipulation and order, the Board may file and enforce any unpaid portion of the civil penalty imposed by this order as a judgment against the Respondent in district court without further notice or additional proceedings.

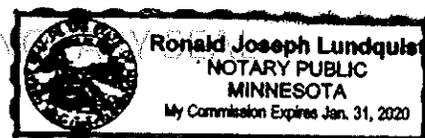
CONSENT:

RESPONDENT

Margaret M Benson
MARGARET M BENSON LLC
By: Margaret M Benson
Its: General Member
Dated: 6/12, 2018

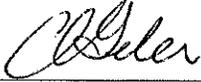
SUBSCRIBED and sworn to before me on
this the 12th day of June, 2018.

Ronald Joseph Lundquist
(Notary Public)



My Commission Expires: 1/31/20

COMPLAINT COMMITTEE



SHARON A. JENSEN, CPA

Chair

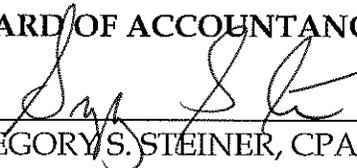
Dated: 7/19, 2018

ORDER:

Upon consideration of the foregoing stipulation and based upon all the files, records and proceedings, herein,

1. **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that all other terms of this stipulation and consent order are adopted and implemented this 19 day of July, 2018.

STATE OF MINNESOTA
BOARD OF ACCOUNTANCY


GREGORY S. STEINER, CPA
Chair

