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STATE OF OREGON DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND BUSINESS SERVICES DIVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATION

In the Matter of:

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BILL JOHN GRIGORIEFF, dba WEALTH PLANNING GROUP,

Respondent.

Case No. S-20-0056

FINAL ORDER TO CEASE AND DESIST AND FINAL ORDERS VOKING LICENSE, DENYING USE OF EXEMPTIONS, AND ASSESSING CIVIL PENALTIES,

On January 7, 2021, the Director of the Department of Consumer and Business Services for the State of Oregon (the "Director"), through the Division of Financial Regulation (the "Division"), properly served Bill John Grigorieff, dba Wealth Planning Group ("Grigorieff") an Order to Cease and Desist; Proposed Orders Revoking License, Denying Use of Exemptions, and Assessing Civil Penalties; and Notice of Right to a Hearing ("Notice Order") via regular and certified United States mail at his mailing and residence addresses of record and his business address of record at that time.

The Notice Order offered Grigorieff an opportunity for a hearing, if requested in writing within 20 days of service. The Notice Order further informed Grigorieff that if a hearing was not conducted because he did not timely request a hearing or otherwise defaulted, then the designated portion of Division's file, which includes all materials Grigorieff submitted, would automatically become part of the contested case record to prove a prima facie case.

On January 22, 2021, Grigorieff timely requested a hearing in writing. The Division referred this matter to the Office of Administrative Hearings ("OAH") on May 1, 2023. The OAH convened a prehearing conference on June 12, 2023. Both parties appeared. A

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350 Winter Street NE. Suite 410
Salem, OR 97301-3881
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hearing was set for November 1 through November 3, 2023.

On October 10, 2023, the Division properly served Grigorieff an Amended Order to Cease and Desist; Proposed Orders Revoking License, Denying Use of Exemptions, and Assessing Civil Penalties; and Notice of Right to Hearing via certified and regular United States mail at his mailing address of record and his business address of record at that time. That same day, the OAH assigned Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ") Samantha A. Fair to this matter.

On October 23, 2023, Grigorieff requested a continuance of the hearing, and the Division did not object. ALJ Fair rescheduled the hearing to February 6 through February 8, 2024.

On January 24, 2024, Grigorieff requested another continuance of the hearing. ALJ Fair convened a prehearing conference on January 26, 2024, to discuss the request. Both parties appeared. ALJ Fair rescheduled the hearing to May 1 through May 3, 2024.

On February 27, 2024, Grigorieff, after obtaining new legal counsel, requested a continuance of the hearing. By agreement, both parties requested that the hearing be rescheduled to May 29 through May 31, 2024. ALJ Fair granted the request.

On May 29, 2024, ALJ Fair convened a hearing via videoconference. The Division appeared and was represented by Senior Assistant Attorney General Jacob Gill. Justice Rillera, a financial enforcement officer for the Division, also appeared on behalf of the Division. Chris Aldrich, a former investigator for the Division, was present. Neither Grigorieff nor his legal counsel appeared. Accordingly, Grigorieff defaulted and a hearing was not held.

After considering the relevant portions of the Division's file in this matter, the Director finds that the record proves a *prima facie* case.

Now, therefore, the Director makes the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law and issues the following Orders.

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The Director FINDS that:

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¹ Capitalization and punctuation in the original.

² Grigorieff has since updated his website by removing the title, "Senior Advisor," from his profile and stating that he "has been in the financial industry and Insurance industry for over 20 years." He has also removed the profiles of the three other insurance producers from his website.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Respondent

- Grigorieff is a resident insurance producer who has been licensed in Oregon through the Division since May 2011. His National Producer Number is 3824390. At all times relevant, he was not licensed in Oregon as a securities broker-dealer, a securities salesperson, an investment adviser, or an investment adviser representative.
- 2. On his website, www.wealthplanninggroup.info, Grigorieff offered financial advice and services, stating: "We have a driving passion to help our Clients attain more Wealth, while sourcing the safest and best financial tools that are available! We believe it is EXTREMELY important to protect the Principal as the primary objective to growing wealth!" Throughout the website, Grigorieff made similar statements regarding the importance of wealth building and retention and how Grigorieff and his business employed various financial tools to help clients achieve these goals.
- 3. As of March 2020, Grigorieff's profile on his website showed him as holding the title of "Senior Advisor" and described him as someone who "has been in the financial industry for over 20 years." At the time, the website made no mention of his insurance experience or that he was a licensed insurance producer. The website also featured the profiles of three other insurance producers. One held the title, "Senior Advisor," while the two others held the title, "Associate Advisor." At all times relevant to this Order, none of these other insurance producers was licensed in Oregon as a securities broker-dealer, a securities salesperson, an investment adviser, or an investment adviser representative.² Further, all three insurance producers have had no business affiliation with Grigorieff in

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years.

4. At all times relevant, Grigorieff held himself out as an investment adviser, as described below.

Grigorieff's Offer and Sale of Global Securities

- 5. 1 Global Capital LLC, dba 1st Global Capital ("Global"), is a Florida limited liability company that provided alternative, short-term financing called merchant cash advances ("MCAs") to small- and medium-sized businesses. Global then collected a premium on the future business receivables of these businesses as payment for the MCAs.
- 6. Using a network of sales agents paid by commission, Global raised capital by selling securities ("Global Securities") that promised investors a percentage of the MCA payments. Through its marketing materials and sales agents, Global made various misrepresentations and omissions to investors, including telling them that most, if not all, investment money would be used to fund MCAs. However, Global used a substantial portion of the investment money to fund expenses other than MCAs, including operating expenses and Ruderman's personal expenses.³
- 7. Other than providing money, purchasers of the Global Securities ("Global Investors") had no role in the company's MCA enterprise.
- 8. The Global Securities were not registered with the SEC or any state securities regulatory agency.
 - 9. In or around 2015, Grigorieff became a sales agent for Global.

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³ This led to a shortage of money available to fund MCAs. In July 2018, Global voluntarily filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Florida. In August 2018, the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") filed civil fraud charges against the CEO of Global, Carl Ruderman ("Ruderman"), in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida in connection with Global's MCA scheme. In August 2019, Ruderman consented to entry of a final judgment that held him liable for disgorgement of over \$32.5 million plus interest and a civil penalty of \$15 million. In January 2020, the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida sentenced the CFO of Global, Alan Heide, to five years in prison for conspiracy to commit securities fraud in connection with Global's MCA scheme. In January 2020, the COO of Global, Steven A. Schwartz, pled guilty to conspiracy to commit wire and securities fraud before the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida in connection with Global's MCA scheme. He was later sentenced to 24 months in prison and ordered to pay investors over \$36 million in restitution.

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10. From approximately 2017 to 2018, Grigorieff offered or sold Global Securities to at least 17 Oregon consumers. Grigorieff received a commission or other compensation in connection with each sale of Global Securities.

Grigorieff's Offer and Sale of Woodbridge Securities

- 11. Woodbridge Mortgage Investment Fund 1, LLC ("Woodbridge Fund 1"); Woodbridge Mortgage Investment Fund 2, LLC ("Woodbridge Fund 2"); Woodbridge Mortgage Investment Fund 3, LLC ("Woodbridge Fund 3"); Woodbridge Mortgage Investment Fund 3A, LLC ("Woodbridge Fund 3A"); and Woodbridge Mortgage Investment Fund 4, LLC ("Woodbridge Fund 4") (collectively, the "Woodbridge Funds"), were Delaware companies that offered and sold promissory notes with 12- to 18-month terms described as first position commercial mortgages ("Woodbridge Securities").
- 12. The Woodbridge Funds pooled the money from the sale of the Woodbridge Securities and purportedly used it to fund commercial real estate loans to third-party borrowers. The Woodbridge Funds falsely represented that the loans would be secured by a first position in the real property purchased by those third-party borrowers and that investors in the Woodbridge Securities ("Woodbridge Investors") would have a fractional security interest in the real property in proportion to their investment.⁴

⁴ On or about May 4, 2015, the Massachusetts Securities Division issued an administrative order, Docket E-2015-0039, against Woodbridge Funds 1, 2, and 3 for offering and selling unregistered and non-exempt securities in the form of the Woodbridge Securities. On or about July 17, 2015, the Texas State Securities Board issued an emergency cease and desist order, Order No. ENF-15-CDO-1740, against Woodbridge Fund 3 and Robert H. Shapiro, the president and CEO of the Woodbridge Funds ("Shapiro"), among others. The order alleged, in relevant part, that they violated the Texas Securities Act by selling unregistered securities in the form of the Woodbridge Securities. On or about March 18, 2016, the Texas State Securities Board issued an administrative order, Order No. ENF-16-CDO-1743, concluding that Woodbridge Fund 3 and Shapiro, among others, violated the Texas Securities Act by selling unregistered securities in the form of the Woodbridge Securities. On or about October 4, 2016, the Arizona Corporation Commission issued a temporary cease and desist order, Docket No. S-20988A-16-0354, against Woodbridge Funds 1, 2, 3, and 3A, among others, alleging that they offered and sold unregistered securities in the form of the Woodbridge Securities.

The Woodbridge Funds were part of an elaborate, fraudulent Ponzi scheme engineered by Shapiro. On December 4, 2017, the Woodbridge Funds voluntarily filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Delaware. In December 2017, the SEC filed civil fraud charges against Shapiro, the Woodbridge Funds, and various affiliated companies in the United States District Court for the



| 13. | Other than providing | money, the | Woodbridge | Investors | had | no | role | in | the |
|----------|-------------------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----|----|------|----|-----|
| Woodbrid | ge Funds' lending busin | ess. | | | | | | | |

- 14. The Woodbridge Securities were not registered with the SEC or any state securities regulatory agency.
- 15. From approximately 2015 to 2017, Grigorieff offered and sold Woodbridge Securities to at least five Oregon consumers. Grigorieff received a commission or other compensation in connection with each of the sales.

Grigorieff's Offer and Sale of Conestoga Securities

- 16. Conestoga Settlement Trust ("Conestoga Trust") was a Delaware Trust that acquired life insurance policies via life settlement contracts ("Conestoga Life Settlements"). Conestoga International LLC ("Conestoga International"), a Puerto Rico limited liability company, sold fractional interests in the Conestoga Life Settlements (the "Conestoga Securities") to investors ("Conestoga Investors") through independent contractors.⁵
- 17. Other than providing money, the Conestoga Investors had no role in the enterprise.

Southern District of Florida. In December 2018, the court ordered the defendants to pay one billion dollars in disgorgement and civil penalties. On May 7, 2018, the Director issued an administrative order, Case No. S-17-0129, against the Woodbridge Funds for, among other things, selling unregistered securities, selling securities without a license, and misrepresenting and omitting material facts in connection with the sale of securities. In October 2019, the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida sentenced Shapiro to 25 years in prison for fraud and tax evasion in connection with the Woodbridge Ponzi scheme ⁵ On or about August 2, 2012, the Arkansas Securities Commissioner issued an administrative order, Order

No. S-12-0128-12-OR01, against Conestoga Trust for failing to file the Notice of Sale of Securities on SEC Form D within the 15 days of the sale of Conestoga Securities. On or about April 16, 2013, the Utah Division of Securities issued an administrative order against Conestoga Trust, Conestoga Settlement Services, LLC ("Conestoga Settlement"), and Michael C. McDermott ("McDermott"), the manager of Conestoga Settlement, among others, for unlicensed securities activity and omitting material facts in connection with the offer and sale of securities. On or about March 15, 2021, the Nevada Secretary of State, Securities Division issued an administrative order, File No. INV19-061, against Conestoga Settlement, Conestoga International, Conestoga Trust, and McDermott, for violations of Nevada's Uniform Securities Act. On or about August 21, 2020, the California Department of Business Oversight issued an administrative order against Conestoga Settlement, Conestoga International, and McDermott for offering and selling unregistered securities, engaging in unlicensed securities activity, and making material misrepresentations and omissions to California investors in connection with the offer and sale of Conestoga securities.

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| 18. | The | Conestoga | Securities | were | not | registered | with | the | SEC | or | any | state |
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| securities | regula | atory agency | 7. | | | | | | | | | |

- 19. In or around 2013, Grigorieff signed an "Independent Contractor Agreement" with Conestoga International.
- Grigorieff offered and sold Conestoga Securities to at least 18 Oregon 20. consumers. Grigorieff received a commission or other compensation in connection with each of the sales.

Grigorieff's Unlicensed Advisory Activities, Misstatements, and Omissions

- 21. From approximately 2012 to March 2020, Grigorieff provided investment advice to Oregon consumers BJ and NH. Grigorieff received compensation for the investment advice in the form of commissions and other compensation received by Grigorieff from the issuers, sellers, or promoters of the investment products purchased by BJ and RH on the advice and recommendation of Grigorieff.
- 22. Grigorieff misled BJ and NH by causing them to believe that he was licensed to sell securities and provide investment advice in Oregon. Grigorieff represented to BJ and NH that he was licensed, but he did not specify that he was licensed only as an insurance producer. Grigorieff did not inform BJ and NH that he was required to be separately licensed to sell securities or provide investment advice in Oregon, and Grigorieff did not inform BJ and NH that he was not licensed to sell securities or provide investment advice in Oregon.
- 23. In or around 2013, Grigorieff provided investment advice to Oregon consumers RH and JH in connection with their purchase of Conestoga Securities. Grigorieff received compensation for the investment advice in the form of commissions or other compensation received by Grigorieff from the issuer, seller, or promoter of the Conestoga Securities purchased by RH and JH on the advice and recommendation of Grigorieff.
 - 24. Grigorieff misled RH and JH by causing them to believe that he was licensed



to sell securities and provide investment advice in Oregon. Grigorieff did not disclose to them that he was an insurance producer who was only licensed to sell insurance products. Grigorieff did not inform RH and JH that he was required to be separately licensed to sell securities or provide investment advice in Oregon, and Grigorieff did not inform RH and JH that he was not licensed to sell securities or provide investment advice in Oregon.

- 25. Grigorieff assured RH and JH that their Conestoga Securities investment was safe. However, in addition to the money spent to purchase the Conestoga Securities, RH and JH have been required to pay premiums on the Conestoga Life Settlements underlying the Conestoga Securities. Grigorieff did not disclose this possibility to RH and JH. As of June 13, 2022, RH and JH have not received any money from their investment, and the undisclosed required additional premium payments likely ensure that RH and JH will suffer losses on their Conestoga Securities investment.
- 26. In or around 2018, Grigorieff provided investment advice to Oregon consumers WL and JL in connection with their purchase of Global Securities. Grigorieff received compensation for the investment advice in the form of commissions or other compensation received by Grigorieff from the issuer, seller, or promoter of the Global Securities purchased by WL and JL on the advice and recommendation of Grigorieff.
- 27. Grigorieff misled WL and JL by causing them to believe that he was licensed to sell securities and provide investment advice in Oregon. In response to an inquiry from WL as to whether he was licensed, Grigorieff informed WL that he was a licensed insurance agent and represented to WL that the insurance license was the only license he needed to sell Global Securities in Oregon. Grigorieff did not disclose to WL and JL that his insurance producer license only authorized him to sell insurance products. Grigorieff did not inform WL and JL that he was required to be separately licensed to sell securities or provide investment advice in Oregon, and Grigorieff did not inform WL and JL that he was not licensed to sell securities or provide investment advice in Oregon.

The Director CONCLUDES that:

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consumers were "securities" as defined in ORS 59.015(19)(a).

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The Global Securities were not registered under the Oregon Securities Law, and by offering and selling the unregistered Global Securities in Oregon, Grigorieff violated

The Global Securities that Grigorieff offered and sold to at least 17 Oregon

ORS 59.055.

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30. By representing or purporting to represent the issuer or owner of the Global Securities in effecting or attempting to effect transactions in the Global Securities,

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Grigorieff acted as a "salesperson" as defined in ORS 59.015(18).

31. By offering and selling the Global Securities to at least 17 Oregon consumers without being licensed as a salesperson, Grigorieff willfully transacted business in Oregon as salesperson in violation of ORS 59.165(1).

32. The Woodbridge Securities that Grigorieff offered and sold to at least five Oregon consumers were "securities" as defined in ORS 59.015(19)(a).

33. The Woodbridge Securities were not registered under the Oregon Securities Law, and by offering and selling the unregistered Woodbridge Securities in Oregon, Grigorieff violated ORS 59.055.

34. By representing or purporting to represent the issuer or owner of the Woodbridge Securities in effecting or attempting to effect transactions in the Woodbridge Securities, Grigorieff acted as a "salesperson" as defined in ORS 59.015(18).

35. By offering and selling the Woodbridge Securities to at least five Oregon consumers without being licensed as a salesperson, Grigorieff willfully transacted business in Oregon as salesperson in violation of ORS 59.165(1).

The Conestoga Securities that Grigorieff offered and sold to at least 18 Oregon consumers were "securities" as defined in ORS 59.015(19)(a).



| | 37. | The Conestoga Securities were not registered under the Oregon Securities Law |
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| and | l by of | ffering and selling the unregistered Conestoga Securities in Oregon, Grigorief |
| vio | lated (| ORS 59.055. |

- 38. By representing or purporting to represent the issuer or owner of the Conestoga Securities in effecting or attempting to effect transactions in the Conestoga Securities, Grigorieff acted as a "salesperson" as defined in ORS 59.015(18).
- 39. By offering and selling the Conestoga Securities to at least 18 Oregon consumers without being licensed as a salesperson, Grigorieff willfully transacted business in Oregon as salesperson in violation of ORS 59.165(1).
- 40. By engaging in the business of advising others, for compensation, as to the value of securities or as to the advisability of investing in, purchasing, or selling securities, Grigorieff acted as a "state investment adviser" as defined by ORS 59.015(20)(a).
- 41. By holding himself out as an investment adviser and providing investment advice to Oregon consumers, including BJ and NH, RH and JH, and WL and JL, Grigorieff willfully transacted business in Oregon as a state investment adviser without a license in violation of ORS 59.165(6).
- 42. By causing BJ and NH to believe that he was a licensed investment adviser and by failing to inform BJ and NH that he did not hold the licenses required to sell securities and provide investment advice in Oregon, Grigorieff:
- A. Made untrue statements of material fact or omitted to state a material fact, in violation of ORS 59.135(2);
- B. Engaged in an act, practice, or course of business which operates or would operate as a fraud or deceit upon a person, in violation of ORS 59.135(3); and
- C. Engaged in a dishonest practice or demonstrated untrustworthiness in the conduct of business in this state or elsewhere, in violation of ORS 744.074(1)(h).
 - 43. By causing RH and JH to believe that he was a licensed investment adviser, by



| failing to inform RH and JH that he did not hold the licenses required to sell securities and |
|---|
| provide investment advice in Oregon, by assuring RH and JH that their investment in |
| Conestoga Securities was safe, and by failing to inform RH and JH that they may have to |
| pay substantial additional premiums on the Conestoga Life Settlements underlying the |
| Conestoga Securities, Grigorieff: |

- A. Made untrue statements of material fact or omitted to state a material fact, in violation of ORS 59.135(2);
- B. Engaged in an act, practice, or course of business which operates or would operate as a fraud or deceit upon a person, in violation of ORS 59.135(3); and
- C. Engaged in a dishonest practice or demonstrated untrustworthiness in the conduct of business in this state or elsewhere, in violation of ORS 744.074(1)(h).
- 44. By causing WL and JL to believe that he was authorized to act as an investment adviser, by representing to WL and JL that his insurance producer license was the only license he needed to sell Global Securities to WL and JL, and by failing to inform RH and JH that he did not hold the licenses required to sell securities and provide investment advice in Oregon, Grigorieff:
- A. Made untrue statements of material fact or omitted to state a material fact, in violation of ORS 59.135(2);
- B. Engaged in an act, practice, or course of business which operates or would operate as a fraud or deceit upon a person, in violation of ORS 59.135(3); and
- C. Engaged in a dishonest practice or demonstrated untrustworthiness in the conduct of business in this state or elsewhere, in violation of ORS 744.074(1)(h).
- 45. ORS 744.074(1)(h) authorizes the Director to revoke Grigorieff's resident insurance producer license for engaging in dishonest or fraudulent practices or demonstrating untrustworthiness in the conduct of business in this state or elsewhere.
 - 46. Because the Director has reason to believe Grigorieff violated ORS 59.055,

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A.

Global Securities;



NOTICE OF RIGHT TO JUDICIAL REVIEW

Judicial review of final orders in contested cases is governed by ORS 183.482. Respondents may request judicial review by filing a petition with the Court of Appeals in Salem, Oregon, within 60 days of the date this Order is served.

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