

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA

DALE E. PUHL, INDIVIDUALLY,
Appellant,
vs.
MICHAEL PIVAR, INDIVIDUALLY, AND
GERALDINE PIVAR, INDIVIUDALLY,
Respondents.

No. 52764

FILED

JAN 23 2009

TRACIE K. LINDEMAN
CLERK OF SUPREME COURT
BY: *[Signature]*
DEPUTY CLERK

ORDER DISMISSING APPEAL

This is a proper person appeal from a district court order awarding attorney fees. Eighth Judicial District Court, Clark County; Michael Villani, Judge.

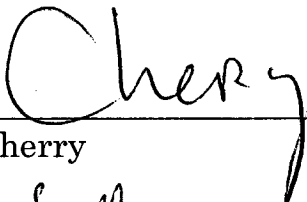
On December 22, 2008, this court received notice that appellant Dale E. Puhl, filed a Chapter 7 bankruptcy petition on November 25, 2008, in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Nevada (Case No. BK-S-08-24083-BAM). The filing of a bankruptcy petition operates to stay, automatically, the "continuation" of any "judicial . . . action . . . against the [bankruptcy] debtor." 11 U.S.C. § 362(a)(1). An appeal, for purposes of the automatic bankruptcy stay, is considered a continuation of the action in the trial court. See, e.g., Ingersoll-Rand Financial Corp. v. Miller Min. Co., 817 F.2d 1424 (9th Cir. 1987). Consequently, an appeal is automatically stayed if the debtor was the defendant in the underlying trial court action. Id. A review of the district court documents submitted to this court pursuant to NRAP 3(e) reveals that appellant was the defendant in the action below. Accordingly, the automatic bankruptcy stay applies to this appeal.


Given the applicability of the automatic stay, this appeal may linger indefinitely on this court's docket pending final resolution of the bankruptcy proceedings. Accordingly, we conclude that judicial efficiency

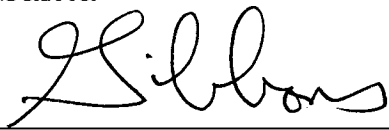
will be best served if this appeal is dismissed without prejudice to appellant's right to move to reinstate this appeal upon the lifting of the bankruptcy stay. Because a dismissal without prejudice will not require this court to reach the merits of this appeal and is not inconsistent with the primary purposes of the bankruptcy stay—to provide protection for debtors and creditors—we further conclude that such a dismissal will not violate the bankruptcy stay. See Dean v. Trans World Airlines, Inc., 72 F.3d 754, 756 (9th Cir. 1995) (holding that a post-bankruptcy dismissal will violate the automatic stay “where the decision to dismiss first requires the court to consider other issues presented by or related to the underlying case”); see also IUFA v. Pan American, 966 F.2d 457, 459 (9th Cir. 1992) (holding that the automatic stay does not preclude dismissal of an appeal so long as dismissal is “consistent with the purpose of [11 U.S.C. §362(a)]”).

Accordingly, we dismiss this appeal. This dismissal is without prejudice to the parties' right to move for reinstatement of this appeal upon either the lifting of the bankruptcy stay or final resolution of the bankruptcy proceedings, if such a motion is deemed appropriate at that time.

It is so ORDERED.


_____, J.
Cherry


_____, J.
Saitta


_____, J.
Gibbons

cc: Hon. Michael Villani, District Judge
Dale E. Puhl
Jones Vargas/Las Vegas
Larson & Stephens
Eighth District Court Clerk