

January 14, 2020

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE
11TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND
FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

GENERAL JURISDICTION DIVISION

CASE NO. 2017-006245 CA 01

CARLTON McEKRON and MONNETTE McEKRON,

Plaintiffs,

vs.

SECURITY FIRST INSURANCE COMPANY,

Defendant.

/

One S.E. Third Avenue
Miami, Florida
January 14, 2020
Tuesday, 10:30 a.m.

DEPOSITION OF CHRISTOPHER AGUIRRE, ESQUIRE

Taken before Theresa M. Cohen, Florida
Professional Reporter and Notary Public in and for the
State of Florida at Large, pursuant to Notice of Taking
Deposition filed in the above cause.

- - -

1 appreciative of that I had some ideas, was having a team
2 that was able to pretty much stop the bleeding when it
3 came to potential sanctions or missed deadlines.

4 That was really important, and so essentially
5 daily I would have the discovery department report to me
6 with their metrics and I would keep a binder, and they
7 would come to me and say -- I would know how many court
8 orders they were reviewing, and eventually we got it down
9 to where they were doing it, you know, within the 30-day
10 deadline, but obviously that takes work and that takes
11 time so that's why I had to manage and oversee and keep
12 track of the discovery and the discovery department.

13 Q When you said that in that role as a litigation
14 manager you'd also review cases and manage attorneys, what
15 do you mean by that?

16 A Can we split that question?

17 Q Absolutely. When you said you used to manage
18 attorneys, what does that mean?

19 A I would manage their daily coverage. I would
20 review their cases.

21 I would go through the system and see what needed
22 movement, what cases were causing us trouble.

23 I had direct contact with the paralegals so they
24 were very much more in the know of what was going on in
25 the office receiving the pleadings.

1 The attorneys were out of the office a lot so I
2 was a good buffer for them as far as helping me manage
3 those issues as they came up.

4 Q Did you manage all of the attorneys in the
5 office?

6 A Yes, that was one of my responsibilities.

7 Q So when you started it looks like you became the
8 litigation manager pretty fast.

9 How did you elevate from litigation associate to
10 litigation manager in under a year?

11 A It happened because obviously the caseload I
12 noticed was voluminous and I still believed in the firm
13 and our ability to do what we were doing.

14 I just knew we needed some tweaks, so I took it
15 upon myself to draft up several plans and a presentation
16 for Mr. Strems on how we can improve processes.

17 Q When you say improve, what needed to improve?

18 A Simply our response time to discovery, the way we
19 were handling deadlines, the way we were responding to
20 opposing counsel.

21 Making sure that we actually were looking at the
22 cases, having the time to look at cases and having the
23 capability to react accordingly.

24 Q Were you facing sanctions at that time?

25 A Yes.

1 Q You personally or the Strems Law Firm?

2 A Well, on cases I had, yes, there were sanctions
3 as well and the Strems Law Firm, but they weren't directed
4 towards me personally.

5 They were cases, you know, filed on behalf of the
6 Strems Law Firm.

7 Q So that kind of prompted you to want to set up
8 some protocols?

9 A Yes, it did.

10 Q How many cases did the Strems Law Firm have in
11 2017?

12 A I couldn't tell you.

13 Q Do you have a guess on that?

14 A I know at one point we were approaching 10,000.

15 Q At one point. Would that be in 2017 or 2018?

16 A It might have been the end of 2017 or at the
17 beginning of 2018. I can't recall.

18 Q And while you were the litigation manager and
19 while you were at the Strems Law Firm were you aware of
20 the practices and procedure over the office?

21 A Yes. When it came to litigation, absolutely.

22 Q I'm only talking about the litigation and how
23 cases were handled.

24 A Right.

25 Q So because there were more than 10,000 cases is

1 it fair to say you were more reactive than proactive?

2 A I think that's a very precise description. My
3 goal was to be efficiently reactive.

4 Q What does that mean?

5 A That means because of the caseload and even
6 though we were hiring more attorneys it was just difficult
7 to be proactive and attacking as much as we wanted to.

8 Now, that's not saying we weren't proactive on
9 cases, but for the most part the majority of the time the
10 Strems Law Firm -- well, it was my goal that if we can't
11 be proactive, we can at least be efficiently reactive.

12 So if we receive a motion, we can react with
13 expediency and in the proper way. Hence, the use of the
14 calendaring deadline system.

15 Q Do you understand what I mean by the difference
16 between being reactive versus proactive on a case?

17 A I think I do.

18 Q And reactive means you're kind of waiting for
19 stuff to come in and you're responding versus proactive
20 means you're brainstorming and actually making movement on
21 a case proactively?

22 A Correct.

23 Q And is it your characterization while you were
24 there in 2016, '17 and part of '18 that it was more
25 reactive than proactive?

1 A That is accurate.

2 Q Did you stay as the litigation manager until you
3 left the Strems Law Firm?

4 A I was managing litigation, yes, until I left.

5 Q Did you ever have a job title change?

6 A I did have one more job title change.

7 Q What was that?

8 A Managing partner.

9 Q When did that happen?

10 A That happened, I want to say, probably the middle
11 of 2017.

12 Q Who made the decision to make you the managing
13 partner? Do you know?

14 A I know who told me I'm the managing partner.

15 Q Who told you?

16 A Scot Strems.

17 Q Were you the only managing partner at the time?

18 A Yes.

19 Q Was it the same situation where you reported
20 directly to Mr. Strems and you were the buffer between Mr.
21 Strems and all the other attorneys?

22 A That is accurate.

23 Q What did you do as the managing partner?

24 A The same duties as when I was litigation manager.
25 I think it might have just carried more weight with the

1 associates, and obviously the role and scope of my job
2 duties expanded because the firm had grown exponentially
3 between the time I was named litigation manager and
4 managing partner.

5 Q How many attorneys did you grow to at the time
6 that you were managing partner?

7 A Could you rephrase that?

8 Q While you were managing partner how many
9 attorneys were there at the Strems Law Firm?

10 A That number fluctuated. While I was managing
11 partner we had between twenty and thirty, I want to say.

12 Q Twenty to thirty other attorneys?

13 A Correct, but that's during the timeframe of the
14 entirety of me as managing partner.

15 Q Were you in the office every day as the managing
16 partner?

17 A Not every day, but most days.

18 Q How many days a week would you say you were in
19 the office?

20 A Most weeks I was in the office every day, but
21 there were occasions in which I wasn't there.

22 I did take some time off.

23 Q Other than that. But generally you were in the
24 office more than you were going to court?

25 A That is accurate.

CERTIFICATE OF OATH

STATE OF FLORIDA)

: SS

COUNTY OF DADE)

I, the undersigned authority, certify that
CHRISTOPHER AGUIRRE, ESQUIRE personally appeared
before me and was duly sworn.

WITNESS my hand and official seal
this 15th day of January 2020.



Theresa M. Cohen
Notary Public-State of Florida
Commission #GG 174339
Expires March 28, 2022