

FILED September 5, 2019 (Date)
JRE
Board / Commission
M. L.
Signature, Executive Officer

**BEFORE THE IOWA REAL ESTATE COMMISSION
200 EAST GRAND, SUITE 350
DES MOINES, IOWA 50309**

IN RE:)	
)	CASE NUMBER: 18-177
Timothy H. Ellefson)	
Broker (B04140000))	COMBINED STATEMENT OF
)	CHARGES, INFORMAL
Leonard Realty)	SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT,
1300 Edgington Avenue, PO Box 466)	AND CONSENT ORDER IN A
Eldora, IA 50627)	DISCIPLINARY CASE
)	
RESPONDENT)	

The Iowa Real Estate Commission (Commission) and **Timothy H. Ellefson** (Respondent) enter into this Combined Statement of Charges, Informal Settlement Agreement, and Consent Order in a Disciplinary Case (Order) pursuant to Iowa Code Sections 17A.10(1) and 272C.3(4) (2019).

1. The Commission issued the Respondent real estate broker license number B44138000 on February 11, 1977. Respondent’s license is current and in full force and effect through December 31, 2020. At all times relevant to this matter, the Respondent was a licensed real estate sole-proprietor broker operating as Leonard Realty, a licensed real estate trade name, license number T04732000, located in Eldora, Iowa.

2. The Commission has jurisdiction of this disciplinary matter pursuant to Iowa Code chapters 17A, 272C, and 543B (2018). Licenses issued by the Commission are subject to the laws of the State of Iowa and to the administrative rules of the Commission.

STATEMENT OF CHARGES

COUNT I

3. Respondent is charged with engaging in a practice harmful or detrimental to the public and/or failing to diligently exercise reasonable skill and care in providing brokerage services to all parties to a transaction by failing to properly effectuate the terms of an executed purchase agreement and failing to deposit earnest payments received by the broker in an Iowa real estate trust account in violation of Iowa Code sections 543B.29(1)(d), 543B.29(1)(k), 543B.34(1), 543B.46, 543B.56(1)(b) (2018). See 193E Iowa Administrative Code sections 12.3(1)(a), 12.3(1)(b), 13.1, 13.1(1).

COUNT II

4. Respondent is charged with engaging in practices harmful or detrimental to the public and/or failing to diligently exercise reasonable skill and care in providing real estate brokerage services to a client in violation of Iowa Code sections 543B.29(1)(d), 543B.34(1), 543B.56(1)(b), 543B.57(1), 543B.57(2) (2018) by failing to have a written disclosure of agency acknowledged by the signatures of all parties to the transaction prior to the presentation of an offer. See 193E Iowa Administrative Code sections 12.2(1), 12.2(3), 12.2(14), 18.2(2), 18.14(5)(s).

CIRCUMSTANCES

5. As designated broker of the real estate broker sole-proprietorship, the Respondent is responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable rules and regulations governing the sole-proprietorship's operations in the state of Iowa, including maintenance of the trust account used by the broker sole-proprietorship.

6. On July 26, 2018, an onsite examination of the Respondent's Iowa real estate trust account and transaction records was conducted by the Commission auditor (auditor).

7. In a random sampling of transaction files, the auditor discovered one (1) real estate transaction for a property located in Eldora, Iowa, in which the earnest money deposit was deposited into the Homestead Realty Trust Account.

8. In reviewing the aforementioned real estate transaction file for the subject property, the auditor discovered that the executed purchase agreement nonetheless provided that the earnest money was to be held in trust by Leonard Realty Trust Account, not into Homestead Realty Trust Account. By depositing the earnest money funds with Homestead Realty Trust Account, the Respondent failed to properly effectuate the terms of an executed purchase agreement and failed to deposit trust funds received in an Iowa real estate trust account.

9. In a random sampling of transaction files, the auditor discovered two (2) real estate transactions for properties located in Eldora, Iowa, in which the Respondent was the selling broker; the aforementioned files did not include a buyer agency agreement.

10. Consequently, by failing to have a buyer agency agreement signed by all parties to the transaction, the Respondent failed to properly identify which party he represented in the respective transactions.

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

11. Respondent admits each and every allegation in the above-stated Statement of Charges. This case shall constitute one violation for purposes of Iowa Code section 543B.29(4) (2019).

12. Respondent acknowledges that he has a right to receive notice of the above-stated charges and to request a hearing before the Commission on the merits of the charges. By freely and voluntarily entering into this Order, the Respondent waives his right to notice and a hearing and all attendant rights, including the right to seek judicial review. This Order constitutes discipline against the Respondent, and is the final agency order in this contested case pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.10 and 193 Iowa Administrative Code 7.4.

13. Respondent agrees that the State's attorney and/or Commission staff may present this Order to the Commission and may have *ex parte* communications with the Commission while presenting it. Respondent waives any right of notice of this meeting or any right that the Respondent might have to participate in the discussion of this Order among the Commission, the Commission staff and the State's attorney.

14. This Order shall be part of the permanent record of Respondent and shall be considered by the Commission in determining the nature and severity of any future disciplinary action to be imposed in the event of any future violations of the laws and rules governing the practice of real estate by the Respondent.

15. Failure to comply with the terms of this Order shall be prima facie evidence of a violation of Iowa Code sections 543B.29(1)(d), 543B.34(1) and 272C.3(2)(a) (2018) and shall be grounds for further disciplinary action. However, no action may be taken against the Respondent for violations of this Order without a hearing, or waiver of hearing.

16. This Order is not binding on the Iowa Real Estate Commission until it has been formally approved by a majority of the Commission members.

(a) In the event that this Order is rejected by the Commission it shall be of no force or effect to either party, and it shall not be admissible for any purpose in further proceedings in this matter.

(b) If the Commission approves this Order, it shall fully dispose of all issues in this case.

17. Upon acceptance by both the Commission and Respondent, this Combined Statement of Charges, Informal Settlement and Consent Order shall be a public record available for inspection and copying in its entirety in accordance with the requirements of Iowa Code chapter 22 (2019).

CONSENT ORDER

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

18. **REPRIMAND.** Pursuant to 193E Iowa Administrative Code section 18.14(1)(j), the Respondent is reprimanded.

19. CIVIL PENALTY. The Respondent shall pay a civil penalty to the Commission in the amount of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) (for Count I) no later than six (6) months after acceptance of this Order by the Commission. The civil penalty must come under a cover letter addressed to the Commission's Executive Officer, referencing Case Number 18-177.

20. EDUCATION. The Respondent shall attend the Commission approved eight (8) hour course "Real Estate Law & Agency Law" (for Count II). These hours shall be in addition to any real estate continuing education required by law for license renewal. The original certificate of attendance must be submitted to the Iowa Real Estate Commission no later than twelve (12) months after acceptance of this Order by the Commission. The certificate of attendance must come under a cover letter addressed to the Commission's Executive Officer, referencing Case Number 18-177.

21. FUTURE COMPLIANCE. The Respondent also shall at all future times fully and promptly comply with all pertinent Orders of the Commission and the statutes and Commission rules regulating the practice of real estate.

WHEREFORE, the terms of this Combined Statement of Charges, Informal Settlement Agreement and Consent Order are agreed to and accepted by the Iowa Real Estate Commission and the Respondent.

FOR THE RESPONDENT:

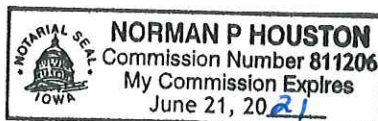
Voluntarily agreed to and accepted by **Timothy H. Ellefson** on this 27th day of August, 2019.

Timothy H. Ellefson
By: **TIMOTHY H. ELLEFSON**, Respondent

State of Iowa)

County of Hardin)

Signed and sworn to before me on this 27th day of August, 2019, by:



Norman P. Houston
Notary Public, State of Iowa
Printed Name: Norman P. Houston
My Commission Expires: 6-21-21

FOR THE COMMISSION:

Voluntarily agreed to and accepted by the **IOWA REAL ESTATE COMMISSION** on this
5th day of SEPTEMBER, 2019.



TERRANCE M. DUGGAN, Chair
Iowa Real Estate Commission