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| | Attorneys for Official Committee | |
| 6 | IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT | |
| 7 | | |
| 8 | IN AND FOR TH | IE DISTRICT OF ARIZONA |
| 0 | In re: | Case No.: 2:15-bk-09178-PS |
| 9 | Z'Tejas Scottsdale, LLC, et al., | |
| 10 | Z Tejas Scousdale, LLC, et al., | Chapter 11 |
| 11 | Debtors. | Joint Administration With Case Nos.: |
| 11 | Joint Administration With: | Joint Administration with Case 105 |
| 12 | joint / Kummstration with. | 2:15-bk-09180-PS |
| 13 | Z'Tejas 6th Street, LLC | 2:15-bk-09184-PS |
| 15 | Z'Tejas Avery Ranch, LLC | 2:15-bk-09188-PS |
| 14 | Z'Tejas Bellevue, LLC | 2:15-bk-09193-PS |
| 15 | Z'Tejas Bethany Home LLC | 2:15-bk-09194-PS |
| 15 | Z'Tejas Chandler, LLC | 2:15-bk-09195-PS |
| 16 | Z'Tejas Costa Mesa, LLC | 2:15-bk-09198-PS |
| 17 | Z'Tejas GP, LLC | 2:15-bk-09200-PS |
| 17 | Z'Tejas Grill Gateway, L.L.C. | 2:15-bk-09201-PS |
| 18 | Z'Tejas Holdings, Inc. | 2:15-bk-09203-PS |
| 10 | Z'Tejas, Inc. Z'Tejas La Contora LLC | 2:15-bk-09205-PS 2:15-bk-09207-PS |
| 19 | Z'Tejas La Cantera, LLC Z'Tejas LP, LLC | 2:15-bk-09207-FS |
| 20 | Z'Tejas of Arboretum, LLC | 2:15-bk-09210-PS |
| | Z'Tejas Restaurant Holdings, LP | 2:15-bk-09212-PS |
| 21 | Z'Tejas Salt Lake City, LLC | 2:15-bk-09213-PS |
| 22 | Z'Tejas Summerlin, LLC | 2:15-bk-09214-PS |
| | Z'Tejas Tempe, LLC | 2:15-bk-09215-PS |
| 23 | Taco Guild Osborn LLC | |
| 24 | This pleading applies to: | COMMITTEE'S OMNIBUS REPLY IN |
| - • | ☑ All Debtors | SUPPORT OF MOTION TO CONVERT CASES TO CHAPTER 7 |
| 25 | □ Specified Debtors | AND FOR OTHER RELATED RELIEF |
| 26 | | |

Case 2:15-bk-09178-PS Doc 274 Filed 01/08/16 Entered 01/08/16 09:55:52 Desc Main Document Page 1 of 15 The Official Committee of Unsecured Creditors (the "Committee") hereby submits this Reply to the pleadings filed by various parties in response to its motion (the "Motion") for entry of an order converting these cases to cases under Chapter 7 of the Bankruptcy Code and granting other related relief.¹

Preliminary Statement

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None of the objections to the Motion go to the ultimate conversion of the cases, only to the timing of the conversion. The Committee filed the Motion when it did because it sought to conserve the estate's remaining resources, and it was unable, through negotiation, to reach a mutually-acceptable agreement with the Debtors to limit certain post-sale expenditures.

Since filing the Motion, the Committee has engaged in communications with the 13 Debtors to discuss their competing views about the timing of conversion and associated 14 issues. Those discussions have been fruitful, and common ground has been reached 15 regarding various items. For example, the Committee and Debtors agree that there are 16 good reasons for certain things to occur prior to the conversion date, including the 17 processing of a motion for payment of Code §503(b)(9) claims; the processing of final 18 professional fee applications; the completion of the liquor license transfers and assignment 19 of the leases; and the payment of any remaining cure amounts in connection with those 20 leases. Completing these tasks pre-conversion will save a considerable amount of money, 21 considering the commission that a Chapter 7 trustee would charge if it made those 22 distributions post-conversion. In that context, the Committee and the Debtors have reached 23 agreement on procedures calling for the completion of these tasks in time for a February 24

¹ Unless otherwise stated, capitalized terms used herein shall have the same meaning as those used in the Motion.

15, 2016 conversion of the cases; and the two parties have worked cooperatively on a proposed order to effectuate that.

The Committee has negotiated a resolution with the Debtors embodied in the proposed form of order attached hereto as Exhibit A. As reflected therein, the Debtors agree to use their best efforts to complete the above open matters on or before February 15, 2016. If they are not completed by that time, the Debtors may request an extension from the Committee. If the Committee does not agree, then the Debtors may request an extension from the Court by filing a separate motion on or before February 15, 2016. *Objection Filed by Cornbread Ventures, LP ("Cornbread") and Joinder therein filed by Macerich Company.*²

Cornbread does not take issue with the conversion of these cases, only the timing of the conversion. Specifically, it asserts that conversion should not occur "until all liquor licenses have been transferred and all Restaurant Leases have been assumed and assigned." Conrbread Objection at 2, lines 6-8.) It expects all liquor licenses to be transferred "by the first or second week of February 2016." (Id. at 3, lines 13-14.)

Cornbread states that it does not know why conversion cannot be postponed until these steps have occurred. (Cornbread Obj. at 4, lines 8-10). As previously noted, the Committee is agreeable to extending the conversion of the cases to February 15, 2016 in order to allow these and the other items to occur. That is expected to provide sufficient time to allow Cornbread time to complete the transfer of the liquor licenses and send its Designation Notices pursuant to Sale Order ¶14(c). If the assignments are not completed by February 15, the proposed order contains a procedure for the Debtors to request an extension. (See Exhibit A.)

² Cornbread was given an extension to file its objection. Macerich was not given an extension; but its Joinder, which was filed late – on January 5, 2016 – does not add anything to Cornbread's Objection.

While this presumably resolve's Cornbread's objection, the Committee will respond, out of an abundance of caution, to certain to certain other points raised by Cornbread.

Cornbread asserts that the Debtors would be in breach of the APA if the cases are converted before the liquor licenses are transferred. (Id. at 3, line 19.) The Committee disagrees. It is Cornbread's responsibility to take the necessary steps to obtain government authorization of the liquor license transfers; and all that is still needed from the Debtors, at most, is a written authorization. The Committee sees no reason why a Chapter 7 trustee is not an appropriate bankruptcy estate representative to provide that. Nothing in the APA or Sale Order prevents that. Nor do they prohibit conversion of the cases prior to the completion of that process. On the contrary, the Sale Order expressly contemplates the possibility of a conversion of the cases to Chapter 7 and states that the APA and Sale Order "shall be binding" notwithstanding conversion and, further, that it "shall be binding upon ... any chapter 7 ... trustee...." [Doc 177 at p. 18, lines 19-28.]³ In sum, nothing in the APA or Sale Order prevent a chapter 7 trustee from completing any of the Debtors' remaining obligations under the APA or Sale Order.

Combread also asserts that having approved the form of the Sale Order, the Committee should not now be heard to complain about "what is currently happening." (Id. at 4, lines 23-27). The Sale Order, however, does not prohibit the conversion of the cases or proscribe or regulate, in any fashion, the timing of conversion. Nor did the Sale Order disclose, or the Committee know, the full nature and extent of the post-Sale expenditures which the Debtors wished to make.⁴

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³ Additionally, the APA provides that it "shall bind and inure to the benefit of the respective ... successors and assigns of the Parties hereto. [APA Section 16.11, Doc. 175 at 28].

⁴ The Committee sought disclosure of the Debtors' estimated winddown costs on September 24, 2015 – before the Sale Order was entered – but the Committee did not receive that information until October 22, 2015 – after the Sale Order was entered.

Limited Objection filed by Pavilion Holdings, LLC ("PH")

PH also does not object to the relief requested in the Motion. Instead, it requests that the Cure Amount [for the PH Lease] be determined and paid, and the Notice [of assumption and assignment of the PH Lease] be filed by ZTC,⁵ before these cases are converted." (PH Objection at 3, lines 8-9.) Alternatively, PH requests that if conversion occurs before the Cure Amount has been paid, that "such conversion should be conditioned upon the setting aside of the full Cure Amount in a separate account, with the only condition to payment to PH being the determination of the Cure Amount by the Court." (Id. at lines 13-15.)

The hearing regarding the PH Cure Amount was held on December 10, 2015 and
taken under advisement; and the Committee fully expects a ruling prior to conversion. The
Committee further expects the Chandler location liquor license to be transferred, the Notice
filed, and the Cure Amount paid prior to conversion.

In sum, these things are all expected to occur prior to conversion. Even if they do
not, however, and for the reasons discussed at page 4 *supra*, the Committee does not see
why conversion should prevent their occurrence, including PH's right to receive any courtdetermined Cure Amount.

18 *Response filed by the United States Trustee ("UST")*

In its Response, the UST also does not object to the conversion of these cases.
Rather, she objects to that portion of the related relief requesting that (i) the Committee be
allowed to "continue in effect" post-conversion (UST Response at 2) and (ii) "the court ...
appoint a second (additional) hybrid trustee." (UST Response at 3, lines 14-15).

As to (i), the Committee hereby withdraws its request to continue post-conversion.
As the UST points out, Code §705 authorizes the formation of a Chapter 7 Creditors'

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⁵ ZTC is the entity formed by Cornbread Ventures to own and operate the Z'Tejas Chandler location.

Committee; and the Committee deems that (and other creditor rights upon conversion) to be sufficient.

As to (ii), the Committee has not asked *the court* to appoint a second trustee. The Committee has (or, prior to conversion, will have) appointed the GUC Trustee to see to the distribution of the GUC Trust Account funds for the benefit of non-insider general unsecured creditors and thereby implement the court-approved Settlement.⁶

Nor has the Committee requested that the GUC Trustee "be granted duties which 7 8 would either be taken away from or shared with the Chapter 7 trustee." (UST Response at 3, lines 18-19.) The Committee has neither requested that any duties be "taken away from" the Chapter 7 trustee or "shared" with the GUC Trustee.⁷ There will be no effect on the Chapter 7 trustee's ability to object to claims or independently exercise any other rights or responsibilities. The Committee merely has requested that the Court confirm that the GUC Trustee has the right to object to claims against the Debtors' estates – the same right that any creditor or other party in interest otherwise would have.

The Committee believes that the GUC Trustee would have such standing as a "party" in interest," in any event, to bring such claim objections pursuant to Bankruptcy Code § 502(a). The term "party in interest," is not limited by the small list of examples, or otherwise defined, in Code §502(a) or elsewhere in the Bankruptcy Code. Courts have defined "party in interest" as one who "has a sufficient stake in the proceeding as to require representation." See, e.g., In re Amatex Corp., 755 F.2d 1034 (3d Cir.1985)(holding that "future claimants" were parties in interest). A party with a contractual duty to determine

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²³ ⁶ The Settlement provided that from the proceeds of the Sale in which KRI held a first priority security interest, \$250,000 would be paid and go into a trust account for the benefit of non-insider general unsecured 24 creditors (the "GUC Trust Account"). The Settlement was approved by the court's order dated November 16, 2015 [Doc. 234], and the payment was made. Without limitation, the court's order authorizes the 25 parties "to take such steps as may be necessary or appropriate to implement" it. Nowhere in its Response

does the UST argue that the Committee may not do so. 26

⁷ The GUC Trustee will not receive any fees from, or owe any duties to, the bankruptcy estate.

the validity of claims and distribute funds in accordance therewith has a sufficient interest in the litigation and thereby qualifies as a party in interest. *See, e.g., In re Black, Davis, and Shue Agency, Inc.* 460 B.R. 407 (Bankr. M. D. Pa. 2011)(holding that insurance company with contractual duty to contest claim was a party in interest with standing to object); *see also, In re Highway Technologies, Inc.,* Case No. 13-11326 (KJC)(Bankr. D. Del. Dec. 20, 2013)(ordering that a liquidating trustee selected by the creditors' committee had standing to object to claims upon conversion of the debtors' chapter 11 cases to chapter 7)[Docket No. 812].

The GUC Trustee appointed by the Committee will ensure that unsecured claims that have been satisfied (through, for example, first-day orders and other orders) will be expunged and other invalid, duplicative, or overstated claims will be objected to. As a result, the GUC Trustee will ensure that the GUC Trust Account funds will be maximized for the benefit of general unsecured creditors. It is important to ensure that the GUC Trustee has standing because he is agreeing to accept responsibility for making a *pro rata* distribution to the holders of valid claims and objecting to any claims which appear invalid. That is a "sufficient stake" to make it a party in interest. *See Id*.

Notably, the Debtors (through counsel) have represented to the Committee that they
support the request to ensure that the GUC Trustee has standing to object to claims. They
(like the Committee) believe that by allowing the GUC Trustee to review and object to
claims at no cost to the estates, it will help administer them in a more expeditious and
efficient manner.

In sum, the Committee believes that the GUC Trustee should be considered a party in interest who can object to claims under Bankruptcy Code § 502(a); and it merely seeks the court's confirmation that the GUC Trustee will be entitled to do so, out of an abundance of caution, so that this process can proceed smoothly and promptly. Doing so will help implement the Settlement and the court's November 16, 2015 order approving it

^{- 7 -}

and authorizing the parties "to take such steps as may be necessary or appropriate to implement" the provisions of the Settlement [Doc. 234, p. 2, lines 22-23]; and it therefore would be an appropriate exercise of the court's equitable power under Bankruptcy Code §105.

5 **Concluding Comments**

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The Committee seeks to maximize the funds remaining in the estate for distribution to creditors, conserve the estates' remaining resources, and effectuate the court-approved Settlement as it relates to the GUC Trust Account funds. Accordingly, the Committee respectfully requests that the court overrule any and all objections to the Motion.

Dated January 8, 2016.

SCHNEIDER & ONOFRY, P.C.

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|----|---|
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| | Case 2:15-bk-09178-PS Doc 274 Filed 01/08/16 Entered 01/08/16 09:55:52 Desc Main Document Page 8 of 15 |

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Exhibit A

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| | IN THE UNITED STATE | ES BANKRUPTCY COURT | |
| 7 | IN AND FOR THE D | IN AND FOR THE DISTRICT OF ARIZONA | |
| 8 | | | |
| 9 | In re: | Case No.: 2:15-bk-09178-PS | |
| 10 | Z'Tejas Scottsdale, LLC, et al., | Chapter 11 | |
| 11 | Debtors. | Laint Administration With Case Nes. | |
| 11 | Joint Administration With: | Joint Administration With Case Nos.: | |
| 12 | | | |
| 13 | Z'Tejas 6th Street, LLC | 2:15-bk-09180-PS | |
| | Z'Tejas Avery Ranch, LLC | 2:15-bk-09184-PS 2:15-bk-09188-PS | |
| 14 | Z'Tejas Bellevue, LLC Z'Tejas Bethany Home LLC | 2:15-bk-09193-PS | |
| 15 | Z'Tejas Chandler, LLC | 2:15-bk-09194-PS | |
| | Z'Tejas Costa Mesa, LLC | 2:15-bk-09195-PS | |
| 16 | Z'Tejas GP, LLC | 2:15-bk-09198-PS | |
| 17 | Z'Tejas Grill Gateway, L.L.C. | 2:15-bk-09200-PS | |
| | Z'Tejas Holdings, Inc. | 2:15-bk-09201-PS | |
| 18 | Z'Tejas, Inc. | 2:15-bk-09203-PS | |
| 19 | Z'Tejas La Cantera, LLC | 2:15-bk-09205-PS | |
| | Z'Tejas LP, LLC | 2:15-bk-09207-PS | |
| 20 | Z'Tejas of Arboretum, LLC | 2:15-bk-09208-PS | |
| 21 | Z'Tejas Restaurant Holdings, LP | 2:15-bk-09210-PS | |
| 21 | Z'Tejas Salt Lake City, LLC | 2:15-bk-09212-PS | |
| 22 | Z'Tejas Summerlin, LLC | 2:15-bk-09213-PS | |
| 23 | Z'Tejas Tempe, LLC | 2:15-bk-09214-PS | |
| 23 | Taco Guild Ösborn LLC | 2:15-bk-09215-PS | |
| 24 | This pleading applies to: | ORDER GRANTING MOTION TO | |
| 25 | All Debtors | CONVERT CASES FROM CHAPTER | |
| 26 | □ Specified Debtors | 11 TO CHAPTER 7 | |
| - | | | |
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| 1 | Upon consideration of the motion of the Official Committee of Unsecured | |
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| 2 | Creditors (the "Committee") to convert the above-captioned cases from chapter 11 to | |
| 3 | chapter 7 of the Bankruptcy Code (the " <i>Motion</i> "); ¹ upon the record in these cases; notice | |
| 4 | of the Motion and the hearing thereon having been provided; following a hearing on the | |
| 5 | Motion, and good and sufficient cause appearing therefor; | |
| 6 | THE COURT HEREBY FINDS AS FOLLOWS: | |
| 7 | | |
| 8 | A. Notice of the Motion and the hearing thereon was sufficient and proper under the circumstances. | |
| 9 | B. The Court has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§157 and | |
| 10 | 1334. | |
| 11 | C. This is a core proceeding under 11 U.S.C. §157(b). | |
| 12 | D. The Debtors, prior to the granting of relief pursuant to this Order, were debtors | |
| 13 14 | and debtors in possession in these cases pending under chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code. | |
| 15 | E. The Debtors' chapter 11 cases were not originally commenced as involuntary cases. | |
| 16 | | |
| 17 | F. The above-captioned cases were not previously converted to cases under chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code. | |
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| 19 | THE COURT HEREBY ORDERS AS FOLLOWS: | |
| 20 | 1. The Motion is GRANTED as set forth herein. | |
| 21 | | |
| 22 | 2. The chapter 11 cases of the Debtors shall be converted, pursuant to Bankruptcy Code §1112, to cases under chapter 7 of the Bankruptcy Code upon satisfaction | |
| 23 | of the following conditions (collectively, the " <i>Conditions</i> "): | |
| 24 | | |
| 25 | | |
| 26 | ¹ Unless otherwise defined herein, capitalized terms used herein shall have the same meaning as set forth in the Motion. - 2 - | |

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| 1 | a. The Debtors shall file a motion (the "503(b)(9) Motion") for payment of |
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| 2 | Bankruptcy Code $(503(b)(9)$ claims (the "503(b)(9) Claims") on or before largery 12, 2016. A basis on the $(502(b)(0))$ Matien shall be held |
| 3 | before January 13, 2016. A hearing on the 503(b)(9) Motion shall be held on February, 2016, atm. If approved, the Debtors shall |
| 4 | promptly pay the 503(b)(9) Claims in accordance with the Court's disposition of such motion |
| 5 | disposition of such motion. |
| 6 | b. The deadline for Debtors' counsel and Committee's counsel to file final fee applications is January 13, 2016. A hearing on such final fee |
| 7 | applications shall be held on February, 2016, atm. The Debtors |
| 8 | shall promptly pay the professional fees in accordance with the Court's disposition of such final fee applications. |
| 9 | c. After obtaining the necessary regulatory approvals relating to the |
| 10 | Debtors' transfer of their liquor licenses, the Debtors shall promptly |
| 11 | effectuate the assignment of their real property leases pursuant to the "Sale Order" [Decket No. 177] and pay any outstanding surge arising |
| 12 13 | "Sale Order" [Docket No. 177] and pay any outstanding cures arising under such leases. |
| 13 | d. The Debtors shall promptly complete the filing of their federal and state |
| 15 | tax returns for the tax year ending June 30, 2015. |
| 16 | e. The Debtors shall promptly complete the audit for 2014 relating to their terminated 401(k) plan. |
| 17 18 | 3. The Debtors shall exercise their best efforts to complete the Conditions on or before February 15, 2016. |
| 19 | 4. If the Conditions are satisfied by February 15, 2016, counsel to the Debtors shall |
| 20 | promptly upon satisfaction of the Conditions file a declaration with the Court |
| 21 | that indicates the Conditions have been satisfied. In connection with the filing of such declaration, the Debtors and the Committee shall upload a proposed order |
| 22 | that formally converts the Debtors' chapter 11 cases to cases under chapter 7. |
| 23 | 5. If, and at such time as it becomes apparent that, the Conditions are not going to |
| 24 | be satisfied by February 15, 2016, counsel to the Debtors shall promptly notify counsel to the Committee. If the Debtors believe it will be in the estates' best |
| 25 | interest to extend the conversion of these cases beyond February 15, 2016, the |
| 26 | Committee and Debtors may agree on an extension of the conversion date and |
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file a stipulation that sets forth the terms. Promptly upon satisfaction of the Conditions, counsel to the Debtors shall file a declaration with the Court that indicates the Conditions have been satisfied. In connection with the filing of such declaration, the Debtors and the Committee promptly shall upload a proposed order that formally converts the Debtors' chapter 11 cases to cases under chapter 7.

- 6. If, for any reason, the Committee and Debtors do not agree to an extension and the Debtors nevertheless believe that it will be in the estates' best interest to extend the conversion of the cases beyond February 15, 2016, the Debtors (on or prior to February 15, 2016) shall file a motion seeking an extension of the conversion of these cases and, subject to the Court's availability, seek to have it heard by the court on or before February 18, 2016; and the Court will decide on whether or not to grant the Debtors' motion to extend the conversion of the cases and the date of such conversion. In connection with such motion, the Debtors shall submit a Declaration in support of the motion.
- 7. After entry of an order converting the Debtors' chapter 11 cases to cases under chapter 7, the Debtors shall:
 - a. Promptly turn over to the chapter 7 trustee all records and property of the estate under its custody and control as required by Bank. Rule 1019(4).
 - b. Within 14 days after entry of an order converting the cases, file a schedule of unpaid debts incurred after the Petition Date of the cases including the name and address of each creditor, as required by Bank. Rule 1019(5).
 - c. Within 30 days after entry of an order converting the cases, file and transmit to the U.S. Trustee a final report and account as required by Bank. Rule 1019(5)(A).
- 8. To the extent the Debtors has any employees, a representative of the Debtors, shall appear at the first meeting of creditors after conversion of the Debtors' cases to chapter 7 pursuant to sections 341(a) and 343 of the Bankruptcy Code.
- 9. After conversion of these cases to chapter 7, GUC Trustee, the liquidating trustee selected by the Committee to administer the funds paid to the Committee in connection with the Settlement [Docket Nos. 190 and 234], shall have

| 1 | standing to prosecute claim objections with respect to the claims filed against the |
|----------|---|
| 2 | Debtors' estates. |
| 3 | 10. The Court retains jurisdiction to interpret and enforce the terms of this Order. |
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| 5 | *DATED AND SIGNED AS INDICATED ABOVE* |
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