# UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO EASTERN DIVISION

In re:	)	Chapter 11
Wall St. Recycling L.L.C.,	)	Case No. 17-51701
Debtor.	)	
An Ohio Limited Liability Company	)	Judge Alan Koschik
(Employer Tax I.D. No. 34-1924090)	) )	

DEBTOR'S SECOND MOTION FOR AN ORDER PURSUANT TO 11 U.S.C. § 1121(d) EXTENDING THE EXCLUSIVITY PERIODS DURING WHICH ONLY THE DEBTOR MAY PROPOSE A CHAPTER 11 PLAN AND SOLICIT ACCEPTANCES THEREOF

Wall St. Recycling L.L.C. (the "<u>Debtor</u>"), the Debtor and Debtor-in-possession in the above-captioned Chapter 11 case (the "<u>Case</u>"), hereby moves this Court for the entry of an order, pursuant to section 1121(d) of Title 11 of the United States Code (the "<u>Bankruptcy Code</u>"), extending the exclusive periods within which the Debtor may propose a Chapter 11 plan (the "<u>Plan</u>") and solicit acceptances thereon.

In support of the Motion, the Debtor respectfully represents as follows:

### **Background**

- 1. On July 19, 2017 (the "<u>Petition Date</u>"), the Debtor filed a voluntary petition for relief under chapter 11 of title 11 of the Bankruptcy Code. The Debtor is continuing in position of its property and is operating its business as a debtor-in-possession, pursuant to sections 1107 and 1108 of the Bankruptcy Code. No trustee, examiner, or official committee of unsecured creditors has been appointed
- 2. The Court has jurisdiction over this Motion pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 157 and 1334. Consideration of the Motion is a core proceeding pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 157(b)(2). The

venue of the Debtor's chapter 11 case is proper in this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1408 and 1409.

- 3. The statutory predicates for the relief requested herein are Bankruptcy Code sections 105(a) and 1121(d).
- 4. Pursuant to section 1121(b) of the Bankruptcy Code, the Debtor's exclusive period for filing a Plan would have expired on November 16, 2017 (the "Plan Proposal Period"), and the Debtor's exclusive period for soliciting acceptances of the Plan would have expired on January 15, 2018 (the "Solicitation Period," and, together with the Plan Proposal Period, the "Exclusive Periods"). However, on December 6, 2017, this Court ordered the extension of the Plan Proposal Period to February 14, 2018, as well as the extension of the Solicitation Period to April 15, 2018 (the "Exclusivity Order"). Notwithstanding making strident progress towards the ability to propose a plan of reorganization, the Debtor requires additional time to formulate the terms and parameters of a feasible plan.
- 5. As this Court is aware, the Debtor is engaged in two significant pieces of litigation. The first case relates to the Debtor's interest in a joint venture called JV Iron and Metal, LLC (the "JV Litigation") and involves a myriad of claims that the joint venture members assert against one another, including claims for breach of contract and breach of fiduciary duty. The second case involves a dispute among the Debtor and its equity holders (the "Member Litigation").
- 6. The Debtor is actively engaged in negotiations that, it hopes, will generate a consensual resolution to both cases. Rather than submit a plan that contains multiple contingencies pending these discussions, the Debtor instead seeks a further extension of the periods during which it has the exclusive right to file and seek acceptance of a plan.

#### **Relief Requested**

#### A. Status of the Debtor's Chapter 11 Case

- 7. By this Motion, the Debtor seeks an order further extending the Plan Proposal Period to the earlier of: (i) forty-five (45) days after the settlement or other resolution on the merits of the JV Litigation or (ii) August 15, 2018. Debtor seeks to extend the Solicitation Period to sixty (60) days following the Plan Proposal Period. The extensions requested herein are without prejudice for any party to seek termination of the Exclusive Periods for cause under the applicable rules. The Debtor submits that the requested extensions are appropriate given the posture of the cases and the ongoing settlement discussions. Further, the Cawley Parties (the counter parties in the JV Litigation) consent to the requested extension and counsel for Michael Ambrose (the counter party in the Member Litigation) has indicated that Mr. Ambrose will not oppose the requested extension.
- 8. Since the initial extension of the Exclusive Periods, the Debtor has made significant progress in its reorganization efforts and its ability to confirm a plan. Specifically, the Debtor has retained professionals to perform appraisals of its machinery, equipment, real estate and the business enterprise as a whole.
- 9. The Debtor also is working to resolve one of the biggest impediments to plan confirmation resolution of the JV Litigation. Although the Debtor continues to dispute the merits of the Cawley Parties' claims, it recognizes that a reasonable settlement of the litigation would be in the best interests of the estate. To that end, the Debtor and the Cawley Parties have agreed to mediation before Judge Harris, with an eye towards a global resolution of the parties' claims against one another. Resolution of the JV Litigation (and any other claims of the Cawley Parties) will significantly streamline the plan process and promote a more likely opportunity to resolve the Member Litigation.

10. Finally and equally important, the filed monthly operating reports demonstrate that the Debtor continues to run a thriving and profitable business post-petition.

## B. Basis for the Relief Requested

- 11. Exclusivity was incorporated into the Bankruptcy Code to provide a debtor with a full and fair opportunity to prepare a Chapter 11 plan and to solicit acceptances to such plan without the dislocation and disruption of the debtor's business that would be caused by the filing of competing proposed plans by other parties in interest.
- 12. The objective of a chapter 11 case is the negotiation, formulation, development, confirmation, and consummation of a plan, and it is the intention of the Debtor to achieve that objective. In circumstances where, as here, the initial 120 and 180-day exclusive periods provided for in the Bankruptcy Code prove to be an unrealistic time frame for a debtor to achieve confirmation of a plan, section 1121(d) of the Bankruptcy Code allows the Court to extend a debtor's exclusive periods for "cause".
- discretion of the Court and should be based upon the facts and circumstances of a particular case. Official Comm. of *Unsecured Creditors v. Elder Beerman Stores Corp. (In re Elder-Beerman Stores Corp.)*, 1997 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 23785 (S.D. Ohio 1997). Although the Bankruptcy Code does not define "cause" for an extension, courts have looked to the legislative history of section 1121(d) for guidance. *In re Lake in the Woods*, 10 B.R. 338 (E.D. Mich. 1981). Congress did not intend that the 120-and 180-day periods be absolute. Instead, Congress intended that the exclusive periods be of an adequate length, given the circumstances, for a debtor to formulate, negotiate and draft a viable plan without the disruption to the business that would occur with the filing of competing plans. *See In re Amko Plastics*, 197 B.R. 74, 77 (Bankr. S.D. Ohio 1996) (noting that Congress intended courts to have flexibility in dealing with extensions of

exclusivity); Gaines v. Perkins (In re Perkins), 71 B.R. 294, 297 (W.D. Tenn. 1987) ("The hallmark of [section 1121(d)] is flexibility.").

- 14. In determining whether cause exists, courts generally look to the totality of circumstances in each case. In re Express One Int'l Inc., 194 B.R. 98,100 (Bankr. E.D. Tex. 1996); In re McLean Indus., Inc., 87 B.R. 830, 834 (Bankr. S.D.N.Y. 1987); In re Nicolet, Inc., 80 B.R. 733 (Bankr. E.D. Pa. 1987). Specifically, the factors that courts look to in determining whether or not cause exists to extend the exclusive periods prescribed in Bankruptcy Code section 1121 include: (i) the size and complexity of the case; (ii) the necessity of sufficient time to negotiate and prepare adequate information; (iii) the existence of good faith progress; (iv) whether the debtor is paying its debts as it becomes due; (v) whether the debtor has demonstrated reasonable prospects for filing a viable plan; (vi) whether the debtor has made progress negotiating with creditors; (vii) the length of time a case has been pending; (viii) whether the debtor is seeking an extension of exclusivity to pressure creditors to submit to the debtor's reorganization demands; and (ix) whether or not unresolved contingencies exist. See, e.g., In re Crescent Mfg. Co., 122 B.R. 979, 982-83 (Bankr. N.D. Ohio 1990); In re Service Merchandise Co., Inc., 256 B.R. 744, 751-54 (M.D. Tenn. 2000). No single factor is dispositive with respect to whether exclusivity should be extended. *In re Dow Corning Corp.*, 208 B.R. 661, 664 (Bankr. E.D. Mich 1997). The Debtor respectfully submits that under these factors, particularly in light of the additional burdens imposed on the Debtor due to the pending pieces of litigation, the Exclusive Periods should be extended.
- 15. The following factors all weigh in favor of granting an extension at this time: (i) the Debtor has made only one prior request for an extension of the Exclusive Periods; (ii) the Debtor has managed its bankruptcy case in good faith and is pursuing plan negotiations in good faith; (iii) the Debtor is paying its debts as they become due post-petition and continues to be

profitable; (iv) the Debtor is at a critical point in its restructuring process – namely working towards resolution of the JV Litigation; and (v) the extension is not being sought in order to pressure creditors.

- 16. The requested extension of the Exclusive Periods is essential to allow the Debtor to proceed with the plan process as contemplated by the Bankruptcy Code. Since virtually day one of this case, the Debtor has been balancing the time-consuming litigation with managing its Chapter 11 case. This process has moved along as quickly as reasonably possible; however, the Debtor requires additional time to propose a plan of reorganization and expects to be in an optimal position to propose a plan in the near future.
- 17. In light of the foregoing factors, the Debtor's request is reasonable. This Court, as well as others, routinely grants lengthy extensions of exclusivity in reorganization cases facing complex issues. *See*, *e.g.*, *In re Phar-Mor*, *Inc.*, No. 92-41599 (Bankr. N.D. Ohio) (exclusivity ultimately extended for approximately three years); *In re Revco D.S.*, *Inc.*, Case Nos. 588-1308-1321, 1305, 1761-1812 & 1820 (Bankr. N.D. Ohio) (exclusivity ultimately extended for over two years); *In re The Elder-Beerman Stores Corp.*, No. 95-33643 (S.D. Ohio) (exclusivity ultimately extended for approximately 22 months); *In re Loewen Group Int'l, Inc.*, No. 99-1244 (PJW) (Bankr. D. Del.) (exclusivity ultimately extended for approximately 18 months).
- 18. Accordingly, the Exclusive Periods should be extended to provide the Debtor with a full and meaningful opportunity to negotiate, propose and seek to confirm a plan of reorganization.

#### Notice

19. Notice of the Motion has been given to (i) the Office of the United States Trustee for the Northern District of Ohio, (ii) the Debtor's secured lender, (iii) the Debtor's twenty largest creditors, and (iv) all other parties that have appeared and requested notice pursuant to

Rule 2002 of the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure. The Debtor submits that, under the circumstances, no other or further notice need be given.

## **Conclusion**

WHEREFORE, the Debtor respectfully requests the entry of an order granting the relief requested herein, that the Plan Proposal Period be extended for the earlier of (i) forty-five (45) days after the settlement or other resolution on the merits of the JV Litigation or (ii) August 15, 2018; that the Solicitation Period be extended for sixty (60) days following the Plan Proposal Period; and such other and further relief as the Court deems just and proper.

Dated: February 13, 2018 Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Kate M. Bradley

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## **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I, Kate M. Bradley, hereby certify that on February 13, 2018, a true and correct copy of Debtor's Second Motion for an Order Pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 1121(d) Extending the Exclusivity Periods During Which Only the Debtor May Propose a Chapter 11 Plan and Solicit Acceptances Thereof was served via the Court's CM/ECF system to the following who are listed on the Court's Electronic Mail Notice List:

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And by regular U.S. Mail, postage prepaid on February 13, 2018, on the parties identified below.

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