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6	Stevenson, Donald Williams and Veronica Timberlake		
7	Timbertake		
8	IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT		
9	FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA		
10			
11		No. 3:18cv-02669-WHO	
		DEFENDANTS ANDREW	
12		STEVENSON, DONALD WILLIAMS	
13		AND VERONICA TIMBERLAKE'S	
14	JW GAMING DEVELOPMENT, LLC,	NOTICE OF MOTION AND MOTION FOR JUDGMENT ON THE	
15	Plaintiff,	PLEADINGS; AND SUPPORTING	
16	V.	MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND	
10	Angela James et. al.,	AUTHORITIES  Date 17, 2020	
17	Defendants.	Date: June 17, 2020	
18		Time: 2:00 Department: Courtroom 2, 17th floor	
19		Judge: William Orrick	
		Reservation No*:	
20		Date Action Filed: March 12, 2018	
21		Trial Date: Not Set	
22			
23			

MOTION FOR JUDGMENT ON THE PLEADINGS; SUPPORTING MEMORANDUM

No. 3:18cv-02669-WHO

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- iii -

1	Notice of Motion and Motion
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3	TO PLAINTIFF JW GAMING DEVELOPMENT, LLC, AND THEIR
4	COUNSEL OF RECORD, AND TO ALL OTHER PARTIES AND THEIR COUNSEL
5	OF RECORD:
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1	PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that, on June, 2020, at a.m., in Courtroom		
2	of the above-entitled court, located at 450 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco,		
3	defendants Andrew Stevenson, Donald Williams, and Veronica Timberlake will ask the		
4	Court for an order granting them judgment on the pleadings, on the ground that the		
5	complaint fails to state a cause of action upon which relief can be granted against them.		
6	These individual defendants' motion is made under Federal Rules of Civil Procedure		
7	12(c) and 12(h)(2)(B) and it seeks entry of judgment in their favor and against plaintiff		
8	on the second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth causes of action in the complaint. Their		
9	motion is based on the ground that the complaint lacks sufficient factual allegations		
10	linking these three defendants to any cause of action asserted against them in their		
11	individual capacity. These defendants' motion is based on this notice of motion and		
12	motion, the supporting memorandum of points and authorities, the pleadings and		
13	papers on file in this case, and any other matter that may be presented at the hearing on		
14	the motion.		
15			
16	Prometheus Partners		
17	Respectfully submitted,		
18	Dated: May 11, 2020 By: /s/ Eduardo Roy		
19	EDUARDO G. ROY		
20	Attorney for Defendants Andrew Stevenson, Donald Williams and		
21	Veronica Timberlake		
22			
23			

#### **Memorandum of Points and Authorities**

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INTRODUCTION

Plaintiff JW Gaming's lengthy 76-page, 563-paragraph complaint seeks to hold defendants Andrew Stevenson, Donald Williams, and Veronica Timberlake personally liable for millions of dollars in damages based almost exclusively on a few allegations that each of these individuals is a member-at-large of the Tribal Council of the Pinoleville Pomo Nation, a federally-recognized Indian tribe that is one of the complaint's principal targets. (Complaint, p. 7, ¶¶ 65–66, 67–68, 69–70.) The complaint does not allege that defendants Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake are members of any of the tribal groups identified with inflammatory labels, such as the "Principal Fraudsters" (Complaint, p. 38, ¶ 305) or the "Financial Fixers" (Complaint, p. 41, ¶330). The complaint does not allege that any of these three defendants holds a tribal governance position.

Instead, and tellingly, plaintiff alleges only that defendants Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake are currently members of the Tribal Council, which has seven members. (Complaint, p. 3, ¶ 9; p. 49, ¶ 393.) The complaint merely alleges that each of these defendants "is" a member of the tribal council. (Complaint, p. 7, ¶¶ 66, 68, 70.)¹ There are no allegations that any of these defendants was a Tribal Council

Compare plaintiff's allegations that other tribal defendants held positions or a status during relevant time periods, allegations that show plaintiff's attempts to connect certain defendants to actions taken nearly a decade ago. For example, plaintiff alleges that defendant Kathy Stallworth "is and was at all relevant times the secretary of the Business Board" (Complaint, p. 6,  $\P$  52) and repeatedly uses the identical phrase "is and was at all relevant times" to describe other individual defendants (e.g., Complaint, pp. 6-7,  $\P\P$  54, 57, 60, and 63).

member during the years 2008 through 2012, the time period covered by most of plaintiff's claims, or that they participated in any predicate act critical to plaintiff's civil RICO causes of action. And any conclusory claims that the Tribal Council "approved" other group or individual defendants' actions cannot be sufficient to state a claim against these three persons in the absence of allegations that they were members of the Tribal Council at relevant times and voted affirmatively. Simply put, the complaint lacks sufficient factual allegations to state cognizable fraud or federal civil RICO causes of action against them based merely on their current Tribal Council membership.

Defendants Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake are perforce aware that all tribal entity and individual defendants made an earlier motion to dismiss under Rule 12(b)(1) and 12(b)(6). They submit that those defendants' joint Rule 12(b)(6) dismissal motion collectively sought more expansive relief – dismissal of the complaint in its entirety – based on broader attacks on the complaint's factual support for its civil RICO claims against all defendants. Defendants Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake do not now quarrel with the Court's ruling that the complaint adequately alleged fraud and civil RICO claims generally. Instead, these three defendants contend that the complaint does not sufficiently allege facts to make them individually liable for the alleged fraud or civil RICO violations. Because the earlier Rule 12(b)(6) motion did not specifically challenge the complaint's ability to state cognizable claims against defendants

Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake individually, they now seek judgment on the pleadings in their favor and against plaintiff JW Gaming.

as delay. Rather, defendants seek to promote judicial economy and to simplify any potential trial, by eliminating from the extensive list of defendants those persons not sufficiently linked to the acts that allegedly form the bases of plaintiff's multiple claims.<sup>2</sup>

These three defendants do not make this motion for any improper purpose, such

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#### **ARGUMENT**

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I. PLAINTIFF'S SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION FOR FRAUD AND DECEIT DOES NOT ALLEGE FACTS SUFFICIENT TO STATE A COGNIZABLE CLAIM AGAINST DEFENDANTS STEVENSON, WILLIAMS, AND TIMBERLAKE.

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This Rule 12(c) motion for judgment on the pleadings is "fundamentally identical" to a Rule 12(b)(6) motion to dismiss for failure to state a claim upon which relief can be granted and, thus, the same legal standards apply. *Cafasso v. Gen, Dynamics C4 Sys., Inc.*, 637 F.3d 1047, 1055 n. 4 (9th Cir. 2011). To test the factual sufficiency of plaintiff's complaint against these three defendants, this Court may identify the complaint's statements that are legal conclusions, even if purportedly presented as factual allegations. *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 679 (2009). Those statements are not entitled to any presumption of truth. *Id.* The Court may then presume the truth of the remaining "well-pleaded factual allegations" and decide whether those allegations and reasonable inferences support a claim for relief. *Id.* at 679–680. Plaintiff must allege "enough facts to state a claim to relief that is plausible

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Three other individual defendants, Jason Steele, Cassandra Steele, and Julian Maldonado, also seek judgment on the pleadings. Success on this and the other defendants' motions would pare the list of tribal defendants, making trial and the consideration of the defendants' liability, if any, more manageable.

1	on its face." Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 556 (2007). A facially plausible
2	claim pleads facts that "allow the court to draw the reasonable inference that the
3	defendant is liable for the misconduct alleged." Ashcroft v. Iqbal, at 678 (citation
4	omitted). Plaintiff's second cause of action simply does not admit of any inference that
5	defendants Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake should be liable for the alleged fraud.
6	Additionally, plaintiff's second cause of action does not satisfy the requirement
7	to plead fraud with particularity against defendants Stevenson, Williams, and
8	Timberlake. Fed. R. Civ. Proc. 9(b). The allegations do not include the required "time,
9	place, and specific content of' these defendants' allegedly false representations.
10	Schreiber Distrib. v. Serv-Well Furniture, 806 F.2d 1393, 1401 (9th Cir. 1986). Instead,
11	the complaint merely lumps multiple defendants together, failing to inform defendants
12	Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake "separately of the allegations surrounding [their]
13	alleged participation in the fraud." Swartz v. KPMG LLP, 476 F.3d 756, 764–765 (9th
14	Cir. 2007) [citation omitted]). The complaint fails to identify each of these defendants'
15	roles in the fraud scheme. <i>Id.</i> Accordingly, the complaint fails to state a cognizable
16	fraud claim against defendants Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake. <i>Id.</i> at 765.
17	Curiously, the second cause of action heading identifies defendants Stevenson,
18	Williams, and Timberlake as defendants. (Complaint, p. 38.) But not one of the 79
19	paragraphs in that section of the complaint (pp. 38–47) mentions or even alludes to
20	defendants Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake. Nor does the second cause of action
21	specify any Tribal Council action purportedly relevant to plaintiff's fraud and deceit
22	claim, which is largely based on three allegedly fraudulent acts – the so-called Sham
23	2009 Canales Note that occurred in 2008 and 2009 (Complaint, pp. 38-41,

¶¶ 305–327), the "Falsified 2011 Accounting" (Complaint, pp. 41–46, ¶¶ 328–367), and the "Sham 2012 Canales Note" (Complaint, pp. 46–47, ¶¶ 368–382.) Yet, plaintiff seeks to hold these individual defendants liable for fraud allegedly committed by other parties, without any allegation that they were members of the Tribal Council at relevant times or that they affirmatively approved the alleged misconduct as a Tribal Council member.

Plaintiff may counter that its complaint more generally alleges these defendants' liability by asserting the need for Tribal Council approval of relevant tribal business transactions. For example, plaintiff alleges that the Tribe is "governed by its sevenmember board." (Complaint, p. 3, ¶ 9.) Plaintiff also alleges that the Tribal Council created the Business Board, which is a named defendant while the Tribal Council is not. (Complaint, pp. 4–5, ¶¶ 24–33.) As in Swartz v. KPMG LLP, plaintiff's complaint "is shot through with general allegations that the 'defendants' engaged in fraudulent conduct, but attributes specific misconduct only to" other named defendants. Swartz v. KPMG LLP, 476 F.3d at 765. The complaint's conclusory allegations about purported Tribal Council approval of other defendants' actions, without any specific factual bases, are not sufficient to make these three Tribal Council members liable on the second cause of action for fraud. *Id.* Plaintiff cannot rest on boilerplate allegations about Tribal Council approvals, even if cast as factual allegations. *In re Toyota Motor* Corp.. Unintended Acceleration Mktg., 785 F.Supp.2d 883, 911 (C.D. Cal. 2011). Accordingly, the Court should grant these defendants' motion for judgment on the pleadings on plaintiff's second cause of action.

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# II. PLAINTIFF'S CIVIL RICO CAUSES OF ACTION DO NOT ALLEGE FACTS SUFFICIENT TO STATE COGNIZABLE CLAIMS AGAINST DEFENDANTS STEVENSON, WILLIAMS, AND TIMBERLAKE

Defendants Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake contend that plaintiff's civil RICO claims, the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth causes of action, contain the same defect as the second cause of action – the failure to allege facts sufficient to state claims against these individual defendants. Noticeably lacking in the complaint's 563 paragraphs are specific factual allegations connecting these defendants individually to the multiple RICO claims. Instead, as plaintiff's recent motion for summary judgment tacitly admits, these three defendants' RICO liability is purportedly predicated on their status as members-at-large on the Tribal Council. (Plaintiff's Motion for Summary Judgment filed March 23, 2020, p. 18:2–8.) But that status, alone, is not a sufficient factual basis for making these defendants liable to plaintiff on its civil RICO claims.

Before turning to the specific factual deficiencies in plaintiff's complaint against defendants Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake, they submit that certain controlling principles should guide the Court's assessment of the adequacy of plaintiff's allegations. The RICO statutes are criminal laws. Those statutes are contained in Title 18 of the United States Code, entitled "Crimes and Criminal Procedure." More specifically, the RICO statutes are in Part I of Title 18, the part that defines federal crimes. The asserted basis for plaintiff's civil RICO claims, section 1962, is a criminal statute, as made plain by the applicable definition of "racketeering activity" in section

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1961(1)(B). That statutory definition says that "'racketeering activity' means . . . (B) any act which is *indictable* under any of the following provisions of title 18, United States Code:" 18 U.S.C. § 1961(1)(B)(emphasis added).

Because RICO is a criminal law, civil RICO liability requires wrongful acts and criminal intent. *Morrisette v. United States*, 342 U.S. 246, 274 (1952). So, a cognizable civil RICO claim must contain allegations of both a defendant's allegadly unlawful conduct and the required state of mind. Plaintiff's complaint lacks factual allegations sufficient to satisfy either requirement for a valid civil RICO cause of action.

The elements of a civil RICO claim are: "(1) conduct (2) of an enterprise (3) through a pattern (4) of racketeering activity (known as 'predicate acts') (5) causing injury to the plaintiff's 'business or property." *Grimmett v. Brown*, 75 F.3d 506, 510 (9th Cir. 1996).) This Court has already determined that the complaint pleads wire fraud and money laundering as predicate acts for plaintiff's RICO claims. (Order Denying Defendants' Motion to Dismiss, Etc. filed October 5, 2018, p. 10.) That determination allowed plaintiff's complaint to survive a global challenge by all tribal defendants, but it should not permit plaintiff's RICO claims to continue against defendants Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake in the absence of specific factual allegations connecting them to those acts.

The wire fraud claim requires three elements: (1) the formation of a scheme to defraud; (2) the use of the mails or wires in furtherance of that scheme; (3) the specific intent to defraud. *Eclectic Props. E., LLC v. Marcus & Millchap Co.*, 751 F.3d 990, 997 (9th Cir. 2014). Although this Court earlier found "[t]he complaint provides dates, excerpts from email correspondence, and amounts of transactions" to support the claim

1	that "defendants" were part of a scheme to defraud, plaintiff (Order filed October 5,
2	2018, p. 10: 11–16), the complaint does not connect these defendants to any of the wire
3	fraud elements. There are no allegations about these defendants' participation in a
4	scheme to defraud, especially in the absence of specific allegations about their times as
5	members of the Tribal Council. There are no allegations linking any of these
6	defendants to the relevant email correspondence. In short, the complaint does not meet
7	plaintiff's burden of alleging the role of these defendants in the alleged fraud.
8	Lancaster Cmty. Hosp. v. Antelope Valley Hosp. Dist., 940 F.2d 397, 405 (9th Cir.
9	1991), cert. denied 502 U.S. 1094 (1992). And even detailed allegations about other
10	defendants' roles in the fraud scheme do not fix the failure to specify these defendants'
11	involvement in that scheme. See Moore v. Kayport Package Exp., Inc., 885 F.2d 531,
12	541 (9th Cir. 1989).
13	Plaintiff's money laundering claim against defendants Stevenson, Williams, and
14	Timberlake is even more factually deficient. The four elements of that claim include:
15	(1) defendant's knowing engagement in a monetary transaction; (2) knowledge that the
16	transaction involved criminal property; (3) property valued at more than \$10,000; (4)
17	the property's derivation from a specified criminal activity. <i>United States v. Rogers</i> ,
18	321 F.3d 1226, 1229 (9th Cir. 2003). Although this Court earlier ruled that the
19	complaint states a claim for money laundering, the Tribal defendants' original joint
20	motion challenged that claim on the sole ground that plaintiff had not pleaded a specific
21	unlawful activity. The Court found that plaintiff had adequately alleged defendants'

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misappropriation of funds for individual purposes. (Order Denying Defendants' Motion

to Dismiss, Etc., filed October 5, 2018, p. 10: 22-27.) Though the complaint may

generally allege a money laundering claim against some defendants, it lacks specific factual allegations to establish the four elements of that claim against defendants Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake.

The complaint does not allege these defendants' participation in a monetary transaction. They are not parties to any disputed contract. They did not sign any contracts. There are no factual allegations establishing their knowledge that any tribal transaction involved criminal property. Instead, the complaint, without any factual basis, asserts the conclusion that the Tribal Council members "vote on and approve resolutions they know, or reasonably should know, will be used . . . to perpetrate frauds against third parties . . . ." (Complaint, p. 60, ¶481.) Tellingly, the complaint does not specify the Tribal Council's composition at the times it allegedly acted improperly, and it does not identify the periods of time that these three defendants have been Tribal Council members. It utterly fails to identify each of these defendant's role in the alleged scheme. *Swartz v. KPMG LLP*, 476 F.3d at 765.

And allegations about the Tribal Council's votes creating the Business Board and empowering it to open bank accounts do not cure the complaint's defects against defendants Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake. (Complaint, p. 60, ¶ 482.) These defendants are not members of the Business Board. (Complaint, p. 6, ¶¶ 26–31.) They were not authorized signers on the Business Board's short-lived checking account, which was only open for four months. (Complaint, p. 36, ¶¶ 274–276.) Although plaintiff asserts that the Tribal Council Defendants delegated certain authority to the Business Board (Complaint, p. 60, ¶ 483), the complaint does not allege the composition of the Tribal Council at the relevant time. Because the complaint only

alleges that these three defendants are currently Tribal Council members, not that they
were members "at all relevant times" (Complaint, p. 49, ¶ 393), it does not adequately
allege facts sufficient to state civil RICO claims against defendants Stevenson,
Williams, and Timberlake, despite the complaint's conclusory assertion that Tribal
Council members "actively participated in the management and direction of the
association-in-fact enterprise." (Complaint, p. 52, ¶ 414,). That conclusory statement
even though offered as a factual allegation, is not sufficient to satisfy plaintiff's
obligation to allege the factual bases for its civil RICO claims. <i>In re Toyota Motor</i>
Corp Unintended Acceleration Mktg., 785 F.Supp.2d at 911.

To state cognizable civil RICO claims against defendants Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake, plaintiff must specifically allege that they conducted or participated, directly or indirectly, in the conduct of the unlawful enterprise's offenses. 18 U.S.C. § 1962(c). Although these defendants do not challenge plaintiff's allegation of an association-in-fact enterprise generally, they contend that the complaint lacks plausible factual allegations showing their conduct or participation in the conduct of the enterprise. Their motion raises the question whether the particular allegations about them are sufficient to subject them to liability for conducting the affairs of the enterprise. *Walter v. Drayson*, 538 F.3d 1244, 1247 (9th Cir. 2008). That question must be answered in the negative.

For these three defendants to be properly subject to civil RICO liability, they must have had some part of directing its affairs. *Walter v. Drayson*, 538 F.3d at 1249. Their mere involvement in the enterprise is not enough. *Id.* Even if defendants

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> This conclusory statement should be disregarded, as it is not entitled to any presumption of truth. *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. at 679.

Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake are alleged to be part of an association-in-fact enterprise, their alleged performance of services for the enterprise would not be enough to make them liable. They can be part of an enterprise without having any role in its management or operation. *Id.* And some element of direction is necessary to subject them to liability. *Id.* 

The complaint does not allege facts about these three defendants' purported conduct or participation in the conduct of any association-in-fact enterprise. The few factual allegations about them do not even raise any inference that they tried to conduct the enterprise's affairs. The complaint does not allege that they directed any of the enterprise's activities. At best, the complaint alleges their mere service on the Tribal Council. Thus, the complaint fails the test for plausible allegations that defendants Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake conducted or participated in the conduct of an enterprise, and, for that reason, it necessarily fails to state cognizable civil RICO claims against them.

Shorn of its conclusory statements about the Tribal Council and the numerous so-called Non-Governmental Defendants, and examined only for its specific factual allegations against defendants Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake, plaintiff's complaint appears as a factual desert in its attempt to state cognizable claims against defendants Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake. Any appearance of a claim against them is mere mirage, created by superficial suppositions about the Tribal Council, unsupported conclusions that stand in stark contrast to plaintiff's factual allegations detailing at exhaustive length the alleged misdeeds of other defendants. For this reason, the Court's earlier ruling that the complaint may sufficiently state civil RICO claims

1	against some of those defendants should not be any bar to entry of judgment on the		
2	pleadings for defendants Stevenson, Williams, and Timberlake. These defendants are		
3	entitled to dismissal based on the absence of sufficient facts alleged against them, even		
4	though the complaint may state cognizable legal theories. Balisteri v. Pacifica Police		
5	Dept., 901 F.2d 696, 699 (9th Cir. 1990).		
6			
7	CONCLUSION		
8	For the stated reasons, defendants Andrew Stevenson, Donald Williams, and		
9	Veronica Timberlake respectfully submit that the Court should grant their motion for		
10	judgment on the pleadings and enter judgment in their favor and against plaintiff JW		
11	Gaming.		
12			
13	Prometheus Partners		
14	Respectfully submitted,		
15	Dated: May 11, 2020 By: /s/ Eduardo Roy		
16	EDUARDO G. ROY		
17	Attorney for Defendants Andrew Stevenson, Donald Williams and		
18	Veronica Timberlake		
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