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DEC 01 2008

BRICKLIN NEWMAN DOLD. LLP

BEFORE THE SHORELINES HEARINGS BOARD OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

TAYLOR RESOURCES, INC., a Washington corporation, also known as TAYLOR SHELLFISH FARMS.

NO. 08-010; 08-017

Petitioners.

INTERVENOR NORTH BAY PARTNERS' MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT

v.

PIERCE COUNTY,

Respondent.

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RELIEF REQUESTED

North Bay Partners requests the Board to grant Summary Judgment pursuant to WAC 461-08-300(2) and CR 56 that based upon uncontested and established material facts:

The Pierce County Planning and Land Use Services is estopped from terminating or rescinding SD 22-00 as a result solely of the passage of time.

UNCONTESTED AND ESTABLISHED FACTS

The following facts are established and cannot be contested:

1. Taylor Resources Inc. applied for a shoreline substantial development permit in 2000 to conduct commercial geoduck cultivation on private tidelands in Pierce County known as the "Foss Farm." The application indicated the proposed starting date for the project would be summer 2000 and the estimated duration of the activity would

INTERVENOR NORTH BAY PARTNERS MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT

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be "on-going." (Order Denying Motion to Dismiss dated November 7, 2008, page 2, lines 16-20).

- 2. A public hearing on the proposal was conducted by the Pierce County Hearing Examiner in December 2000. (Order Denying Motion to Dismiss dated November 7, 2008, page 2, lines 20-21.) The Staff Report and testimony from staff indicated the project would involve planting baby geoducks in PVC pipes for cultivation and subsequent harvest after approximately five years. The company would then "repeat the process." The testimony at hearing acknowledged that Taylor's request was for on-going activity. The staff recommended approval of the application. (Order Denying Motion to Dismiss dated November 7, 2008, page 2, lines 2, page 3, line 4).
- 3. In 2000, the Pierce County Hearing Examiner found the geoduck project consistent with governing regulations and granted the permit subject to several conditions including the following language regarding timing:

Construction or substantial progress toward construction of a project for which a permit has been granted pursuant to the Act must be undertaken within two (2) years after the approval of the permit. Substantial progress toward construction shall include, but not be limited to the letting of bids, making of contracts, purchase of materials involved in development, but shall not include development or uses which are inconsistent with the criteria set forth in WAC 173-14-100. Provided, that is determining the running of the two (2) year period hereof, there shall not be included the time during which a development was not actually pursued by construction and the tendency of litigation reasonably related thereto made it reasonable not to so pursue; provided further, that local government may, at its discretion extend the two (2) year time period for a reasonable time based on factors, including the inability to expeditiously obtain other governmental permits which are required prior to the commencement of construction.

If a project for which a permit has been granted pursuant to the Act has not been completed within five (5) years after the approval of the permit by local government, the local government that granted the permit shall, at the expiration of the five (5) year period; review the permit, and upon a showing of good cause, do either of the following:

Extend the permit for one (1) year; or

Terminate the permit; provided that nothing herein shall preclude local government from issuing Substantial Development Permits with a fixed termination date of less than five (5) years. (Greene Declaration, Attachment 2).

The County included this language as a standard permit condition. The Pierce County planner assigned to the project indicated this language was "boilerplate." (Order Denying Motion to Dismiss dated November 7, 2008, page 3, line 5 through page 4, line 3; Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 1, page 15).

- 4. After the permit was granted, Taylor Resources began activities necessary to establish the geoduck farm. They surveyed the area, notified necessary Tribes, and registered with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Washington Department of Health. They then began planting young geoduck in PVC pipes and maintaining the farm with protective netting. They planted portions of the property with young geoduck each year and by the end of five years they had completed an initial planting of geoduck over the entire farm area. (Order Denying Motion to Dismiss dated November 7, 2008, page 3, line 5 through page 4, line 3; Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 1, page 136, 139).
- 5. While they were developing the farm, Taylor Resources had conversations with Ty Booth, the assigned planner for Pierce County, in which he indicated that once the farm was established within a five-year period, the farming could continue on an ongoing basis. (Order Denying Motion to Dismiss dated November 7, 2008, page 4, line 5 through page 4, lines 11-14; Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 1, page 17).
- 6. Pierce County also made representations adopting this view which were conveyed in writing to Laura Hendricks of Coalition to Protect Puget Sound, one of the project opponents, by Vicki Diamond, Supervisor of Current Planning for Pierce County.
 Ms. Diamond indicated that there was no expiration of a shoreline permit for

geoduck cultivation once the use was initiated and established. (Order Denying Motion to Dismiss dated November 7, 2008, page 4, lines 14-17 through page 4, line 3; Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 1, page 84).

7. Ms. Diamond also responded to written questions from Coalition to Protect Puget Sound. In answer to the question, "Once these geoduck permits are issued, how long do they run?" she responded:

"We have not placed any expirations of this particular activity for several reasons. The aquaculture is to be an ongoing activity and once the seeds are planted, it would take up to approximately 7 years for the geoduck to reach a size to harvest for market. In a Conditional Use Permit, there are time limits for expiration of the approval, which is usually directed at development to be substantially completed within a two year time period and finish within a 5 year window. If the activity is aquaculture, then the activity would not be allowed to start if applicant did not proceed with the harvest or planting with the time periods listed above. This had not been the case of the geoduck applications. (Order Denying Motion to Dismiss dated November 7, 2008, page 4, line 18 through page 5, line 5).

- 8. Until Pierce County notified Taylor Resources that SD 22-00 had expired, Pierce County had never published or otherwise promulgated a formal administrative position regarding the need to obtain successive permit approvals to conduct ongoing geoduck farming operations. (Order Denying Motion to Dismiss dated November 7, 2008, page 5, lines 5-7).
- 9. After the geoduck farm had been in full operation for a number of years, neighbors and others began to express growing dissatisfaction with geoduck farming as a use on the shoreline. Many opponents contacted the County and ultimately filed a petition in June 2007, requesting that the County revoke Taylor Resources' shoreline permit for the Foss Farm. (Order Denying Motion to Dismiss dated November 7, 2008, page 5, lines 8-12).

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- 10. Pierce County held a number of internal meetings in the process of developing an administrative policy on permit coverage for geoduck farming. The majority of staff believed the five-year timeframe for "establishing" the farm should also limit the length of time it could operate. (Order Denying Motion to Dismiss dated November 7, 2008, page 5, lines 5-7; Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 1, pages 17-19, 84).
- 11. In August 2007, Pierce County for the first time finalized a formal position on the length of time a shoreline substantial development permit authorized geoduck cultivation and issued an Administrative Determination on August 8, 2007, informing Taylor Resources that its shoreline permit had expired at the end of six years. (Order Denying Motion to Dismiss dated November 7, 2008, page 5, lines 515-19).
- 12. The Determination indicated that further work at the site would have to be authorized by a new permit. Taylor Resources appealed the County's Determination to the Pierce County Hearing Examiner, who upheld the County's decision. (Order Denying Motion to Dismiss dated November 7, 2008, page 5, line 19 through page 6, line 2). The Hearing Examiner refused to consider Taylor Resources' claim that Pierce County was estopped from terminating the permit.
- 13. Taylor Resources leases the property on which the Foss Farm is operated from North Bay Partners, LLC, a Washington Limited Liability Company whose members are descendants of Henry Foss. The family has owned the tidelands leased to Taylor Resources and all of the 123 acres of adjoining uplands for over 70 years. The family has preserved the property in a largely undeveloped condition permitting only one, one-room cabin without electricity or running water. (Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 4, pages 61-67).

FAX: (206) 624-1361

- 14. North Bay Partners has an economic interest in the success of the aquaculture activities on its property as North Bay receives a percentage of the gross value of the geoduck crop harvested as a well a minimum lease payment. (Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 4, pages 61-67).
- 15. Taylor Resources has invested over tens of thousands of dollars in the development of the Foss Farm, the planting and nurturing of the geoduck crop, the harvest of geoduck as they mature, and the maintenance and monitoring of the farm on an ongoing basis. (Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 5).
- 16. Taylor Resources would not have invested the very substantial sums of money necessary to the development and planting of the Foss Farm but for Pierce County's representations that SD 22-00 allowed farming of geoduck on the site on an ongoing basis. (Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 5).
- 17. Taylor Resources applied for a permit to develop an ongoing farm operation. Taylor Resources' reliance on the staff report of the Pierce County Planning and Land Use Services and the later representations both to them and to the public that SD 22-00 allowed ongoing farming activity not subject to the five-year construction time limit was reasonable. But for the County's affirmative representations that the permit authorized ongoing activities, Taylor would have timely appealed the Hearing Examiner's decision approving the permit. (Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 5).
- 18. Taylor Resources planted a portion of the available tidelands in successive years to create an ongoing supply of harvestable geoduck from the Foss Farm at maturation of each crop which takes five or more years. Taylor Resources would not have planted the farm in this manner but for the representations of Pierce County that

INTERVENOR NORTH BAY PARTNERS' MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT - 7

SD 22-00 allowed farming on an ongoing basis. (Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 5).

19. At the time that Pierce County finalized a formal position on the length of time a shoreline substantial development permit authorized geoduck cultivation and issued an Administrative Determination on August 8, 2007, Taylor Resources had planted goeduck valued at approximately \$20,000,000 (at maturation) in the tidelands at the Foss Farm. (Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 5).

LEGAL ARGUMENT

Summary Judgment Generally. The purpose of the Summary Judgment Rule is to avoid a needless hearing on the merits or, if that is not possible, to narrow the issues to be heard. Summary Judgment is appropriate where no material question of facts exists. Fahan v. Cowlitz County, 93 Wn.2d 328, 610 P.2d 857 (1980). When no material issue of fact exists, the court must render summary judgment as a matter of law. Only where a genuine issue of fact remains may the court deny summary judgment. Peterson v. Pacific First Federal Savings and Loan Association, 23 Wn. App. 688, 598 P.2d 407 (1979).

The summary judgment procedure is equally applicable to all civil actions. *Hoagland v. Mount Vernon School District No. 320*, 23 Wn. App. 650, 597 P.2d 1376 (1979); *Hoffman v. Hoffman*, 57 Wn.2d 684, 359 P.2d 153 (1961). Board practice is governed by WAC 461-08-300(2)-which incorporate by reference the Civil-Rules for Superior Courts-where those rules are not inconsistent with WAC 461-08. WAC 461-08 makes no separate provision for Motions for Summary Judgment.

The following rules apply to summary judgment motions:

1. Only a material question of fact, one upon which the outcome of the case depends, may defeat a motion for summary judgment. *Capital Hill Methodist Church v. Seattle*, 52 Wn.2d 359, 324 P.2d 1113 (1958).

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- 2. If there is a question of the credibility of the witnesses or the weight to be accorded to the evidence, summary judgment should ordinarily be denied. *Colby v. Klune*, 178 F.2d 872 (2nd Cir. 1949). However where the factual opposition is too incredible to be accepted, the motion should be granted. *Whitaker v. Coleman*, 115 F.2d 305 (5th Cir. 1940).
- 3. The moving party has the burden of demonstrating the absence of a genuine issue of fact. F.A.R. Liquidated Corp. v. Brownell, 209 F.2d 375 (1995). Once the moving party does so, the burden shifts to the nonmoving party to establish the existence of a material fact regarding an element essential to that burdened party's case. In so doing, the nonmoving party must set forth specific facts which otherwise comply with the requirements of Civil Rule 56. Young v. Key Pharmeceuticals, 112 Wash. 2d 216, 225, 770 P.2d 182 (1989).
- 4. The nonmoving party must support all elements of his claim with testimonial facts, not merely conclusive statements, statements of belief or information or lay opinion. *Kirk* v. *Moe*, 114 Wn.2d 550, 789 P.2d 84 (1990).
- 5. In ruling on a motion for summary judgment the court does not make Findings of Fact, but instead finds that no genuine issue of fact exists and the judgment should be rendered as a matter of law. *Duckworth v. City of Bonney Lake*, 91 Wn.2d 19, 586 P.2d 860 91978).

Based upon the applicable legal considerations, this case is ripe for summary judgment to be granted on the basis of estoppel. The facts set forth are not or cannot be seriously challenged. The truth of many of those facts previously has been determined by the Board. Based upon the uncontested or previously ruled upon facts, Pierce County is estopped from rescinding SD 22-00.

Doctrine of Estoppel. Under the doctrine of equitable estoppel, Pierce County is barred from revoking Taylor Resources' permit based on its interpretation that the permit expired. The elements of equitable estoppel are: (1) a party's admission, statement or act that is inconsistent with its later claim; (2) action by another party in reliance on the first party's act, statement or

	admission; and (3) injury that would result to the relying party from allowing the other party to
	contradict or repudiate prior act, statement or admission. See Kramarevcky v. Dept. of Social
_	and Health Services, 122 Wn.2d 738, 743, 863 P.2d 535 (1993) (citing Robinson v. Seattle, 119
	Wn.2d 34, 82, 830 P.2d 318, cert. denied, 506 U.S.1028, 113 S. Ct. 676, 121 L. Ed. 2d 598
-	(1992). See, also Board of Regents of the Univ. of Washington v. Seattle, 108 Wn.2d 545, 551
	741 P.2d 11 (1987).

Because a claim of equitable estoppel against the government is not favored, a party asserting the claim against a governmental entity must meet two additional standards. See *Kramarevcky*, 122 Wn.2d at 743. First, equitable estoppel "must be necessary to prevent a manifest injustice." *Id.* Second, "the exercise of governmental functions must not be impaired as a result of the estoppel." *Id.* The record demonstrates that all elements for estoppel have been met and these two additional standards are satisfied.

"(1) A party's admission, statement or act that is inconsistent with its later claim." Both Ms. Diamond and Mr. Booth acknowledged that their earlier statements were inconsistent with the County's administrative determination. (Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 1, page 17). Specifically, both Ms. Diamond and Mr. Booth indicated that the permit did not expire. *Id.* and (Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 1, page 84). The statements are inconsistent with Pierce County's later claim that the permit has expired.

Certainly—Mr.—Booth—and Ms.—Diamond—had—apparent—authority to make these representations on behalf of the county. The Board has already found that Mr. Booth and Ms. Diamond were "in positions with authority over the particular project." (Order Denying Motion to Dismiss dated November 7, 2008 at page 11). Mr. Booth was the planner in charge of the permit SD 22-00 ("once you touch it you're stuck with it for life"). (Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 2, Deposition of Ty Booth, page 7, line 8). Ms. Diamond was his supervisor. (Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 3, Deposition of Vicki Diamond, page

4, line 25). The apparent authority of both Mr. Booth and Ms. Diamond to bind the County was objectively manifested to Taylor Resources and Pierce County is bound by the statements of Mr. Booth and Ms. Diamond. *State v. French*, 88 Wash.App. 586, 595, 945 P.2d 752 (1997) (citing *King v. Riveland*, 125 Wash.2d 500, 507, 886 P.2d 160 (1994)). That a public entity can only speak through its agents buttresses this conclusion. Pierce County through Mr. Booth and Ms. Diamond made representations which are directly inconsistent with the later action of the County in rescinding the SD 22-00.

(2) Action by another party in reliance on the first party's act, statement or admission. The evidence that Taylor Resources made the decision to establish the Foss Farm and to plant and cultivate geoduck and continue to plant and cultivate geoduck at the Foss Farm in reliance on those prior County interpretations and representations cannot be contested. (Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 1, page 105, line 11 through page 106, line 3). Taylor Resources maintained ongoing contact with the county over the years and was repeatedly reassured. (Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 1, pages 15-17). Taylor Resources continued to rely on those representations by actively investing time, money and continuing to plant and cultivate geoduck at the Foss Farm. (Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 5). But for those representations Taylor Resources would have appealed the Hearing Examiner's issuance of a permit that did not authorize ongoing activities and would not have incurred the considerable expense of establishing the Foss farm and then continuing to plant geoduck each year. Each geoduck crop requires five to seven years to mature and without the ability to pursue the Foss Farm on an ongoing basis, it would have made no sense for the Foss Farm to be established and cultivated. Id. Because the interpretation came from both the staff person in charge of administering Taylor Resources' permit and the Supervisor of the County's Current Planning Department, Taylor Resources' reliance on those statements is justifiable.

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(3) Injury that would result to the relying party from allowing first party to contradict or repudiate prior act, statement or admission. The evidence at hearing also demonstrated that Taylor Resources was injured by its reliance on County interpretation. Mr. Phipps testified that if Taylor Resources is unable to continue its operations at the Foss Farm, it will leave over \$20 million in unharvested geoduck in the ground. (Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 1, pages 171, line 17 through 172, line 6). Even though Pierce County later determined harvest could occur under the rescinded permit for geoducks planted prior to it being rescinded, Taylor Resources' farming operation was suspended for over a year. (Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 5). Taylor Resources was not able to plant the rotational crop of geoduck in 2007 or 2008 as a result of the county's action. (Declaration of Jerry R. Kimball, Attachment 5). All of the elements of estoppel are clearly present in this case.

Public Entity Standards. As noted above, because Pierce County is a public entity, two additional standards must be satisfied before it will be applied in this situation. First, estoppel "must be necessary to prevent a manifest injustice." Second, "[t]he exercise of governmental functions must not be impaired as a result of the estoppel." Kramarevcky v. Dept. of Social and Health Services, supra. Both of these standards support estoppel being applied in this case.

Allowing Pierce County to rescind SD 22-00 will result in "manifest injustice" to Taylor Resources and to North Bay Partners, as Taylor Resources has invested tens of thousands of dollars and seven years of effort into developing the Foss Farm. See Silverstreak, Inc. v. Washington State Dept. of Labor and Industries, 159 Wn.2d 868, 891, 154 P.3d 891 (2007) ("This court will not sanction a government agency's arbitrary decision to change its interpretation of rules and enforce such change against small businesses that have performed

1	three then contract. The right to plant future crops will be lost in addition to the two years of
2	planting that can now never be recovered. The ability to harvest the \$20,000,000 of geoduck
3	now planted at the Foss Farm will remain in jeopardy. The deprivation of an owner of a
4	multimillion dollar investment made in reliance on the county's representations is a manifest
5	injustice that cannot be left uncorrected. Ruland v. State, Dept. of Social and Health Services,
6	144 Wash.App. 263, 182 P.3d 470 (2008).
.7	Pierce County's exercise of governmental functions is not in any way impaired by application of
8	the estoppel doctrine in these circumstances. What Pierce County did in the instant case is
9	fundamentally wrong. The county made representations that it knew would result in private
10	citizens investing substantial sums. The county then, because of a change in the political winds,
11	decided that it was expedient to change course, regardless of whether it resulted in the citizens
12	losing the money invested in reliance on its representations. That is not a legitimate government
13	function, but it is the only function that would be impaired by applying estoppel here. In
14	contrast, proper government functions would remain unimpaired. Even if the County's
15	Administrative Determination was substantively correct, a reversal of the County's
16	Administrative Determination with respect to the Foss Farm does not impair or prohibit the
17	County from enforcing its interpretation against other parties and new farms where it has not
18	made contrary representations.

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¹ In Silverstreak, the court held that an attempt by the Department of Labor and Industries to retroactively apply a new interpretation of regulations defining the applicability of the prevailing wage act was "manifestly unjust" in part because "[i]f the Department were allowed to change its interpretation of a regulation after contractors had performed, it would have the effect of impairing the obligations of those contracts—an effect forbidden by article I, section 23 of our state constitution." Silverstreak, 159 Wn.2d at 890. Similarly, allowing the County to retroactively apply its new interpretation of the duration of geoduck permits would have the effect of impairing the obligations of North Bay Partners' lease to Taylor Resources.

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SUMMARY

Taylor Resources is the lessee of North Bay Partners' property and pays a fee to North Bay Partners based in part on the market value of geoduck grown on North Bay Partners' tidelands. On behalf of North Bay Partners and others, Taylor Resources applied for and obtained SD 22-00 from Pierce County. Pierce County represented through the responsible officials that the permit as issued would allow farming of the beach on an ongoing basis. Taylor Resources did not appeal the permit based upon this representation.

What Taylor Resources did do was invest thousands of dollars developing, planting, cultivating, harvesting and replanting the harvested portions of the leased North Bay Partners tidelands. Taylor Resources did this in reliance on the representations of the responsible Pierce County officials that the farming would be allowed on an ongoing basis.

In August 2007, Pierce County formulated a formal policy on geoduck aquaculture and as part of that policy determined that geoduck aquaculture permits should be limited to a five or six-year duration. Pierce County then applied that new policy retroactively to SD 22-00 despite its prior representations and Taylor Resources' reliance on those representations. Then, Pierce County rescinded and terminated SD 22-00.

No important government function would be impaired by requiring Pierce County to apply its newly formed policy prospectively only and, to the contrary, manifest injustice would result if Taylor and North Bay were deprived of the millions of dollars of geoducks and the right to conduct an ongoing farm. The doctrine of estoppel bars Pierce County from rescinding SD 22-00.

Dated this 28th day of November, 2008.

KIMBALL, WSBA #8641 Attorney for North Bay Partners

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DEC 01 2008

BRICKLIN NEWMAN DOLD. LLP

BEFORE THE SHORELINES HEARINGS BOARD OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

TAYLOR RESOURCES, INC., a Washington corporation, also known as TAYLOR SHELLFISH FARMS,

NO. 08-010; 08-017

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Petitioners,

DECLARATION OF JERRY R.
KIMBALL IN SUPPORT OF NORTH
BAY'S MOTION FOR SUMMARY
JUDGMENT

PIERCE COUNTY.

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I, JERRY KIMBALL, declare as follows:

- 1. That I am over the age of 18 years and make this declaration based upon my personal knowledge of facts I am competent to testify to. I am the attorney for North Bay Partners, LLC and make this declaration in support of North Bay's Motion for Summary Judgment.
 - 2. Attached hereto are true and correct copies of the following documents:

 <u>Attachment 1:</u> Transcript of Proceeding before Terrence F. McCarthy,

 Thursday, November 2, 2007;

Attachment 2: Deposition of Ty Booth, October 28, 2008;

Attachment 3: Deposition of Vicki Diamond, October 28, 2008;

Attachment 4: Partial Transcript of Proceeding before Terrence F. McCarthy,

Thursday, November 1, 2007, Testimony of Leslie Foss;

Attachment 5: Declaration of Diane Cooper;

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DECLARATION OF JERRY R. KIMBALL IN SUPPORT OF NORTH BAY'S MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT - 1



I certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that the foregoing is true and correct. EXECUTED at Seattle, Washington on November 28, 2008. erry Kimball, Declarant

DECLARATION OF JERRY R. KIMBALL IN SUPPORT OF NORTH BAY'S MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT - 2