

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
Trademark Trial and Appeal Board
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Alexandria, VA 22313-1451
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October 16, 2020

Opposition No. 91250941

Sharp Kabushiki Kaisha TA Sharp Corporation

v.

Michael E. Nipke LLC

Rochelle Adams, Paralegal Specialist:

Applicant's consented motion (filed October 13, 2020) to suspend proceedings for 60 days is granted.

Because the parties are negotiating for possible settlement of this case, proceedings are suspended, subject to the right of either party to request resumption at any time. *See* Trademark Rules 2.117(c), and 2.127(a); TBMP § 605.02.

If, during the suspension period, either of the parties or their attorneys have a change of address or email address, the Board should be so informed. *See* Trademark Rule 2.18(b)(1).

Status Report Required for Future Motions to Suspend or Extend for Settlement

The Board retains discretion to condition the approval of a consented or stipulated motion to suspend on the party or parties providing necessary information about the

status of settlement talks, discovery activities, or trial activities, as may be appropriate. *See* Trademark Rule 2.117(c); TBMP §§ 510 and 605.02.

Due to the number of extensions approved thus far in this proceeding, the Board imposes a condition on the approval of all future motions to suspend or extend for settlement. Specifically, to establish good cause for all future motions to suspend or extend, the parties must include in the motion a status report setting forth what specific efforts the parties have made towards settlement during the previous period of suspension. The report must set forth, at a minimum, 1) all dates on which the parties communicated, and the method of each communication (*e.g.* telephone conferences, emails, in-person meetings), 2) the general nature of each communication, 3) the issues that have been resolved, 4) the issues that remain to be resolved or that remain for trial, and 5) a proposed timetable for resolution of the remaining issues. Appropriately designated confidential information or materials may be filed under seal pursuant to Trademark Rule 2.126(c). *See* TBMP § 605.02.

Due to this requirement, the parties may no longer use the ESTTA "Consent Motions" forms to submit motions to extend or suspend dates for settlement. Rather, the parties must select the "Opposition, Cancellation or Concurrent Use (general filings)" option, the "Scheduling Motions" option, then the "Motion to Suspend for Settlement Discussions" form to which the parties may attach the motion they prepared. The motion must set forth both the required status report and a proposed trial schedule.¹ The requirement to use the general filings ESTTA form is limited to

¹ When parties stipulate to the rescheduling of a deadline for pretrial disclosures and subsequent testimony periods or to the rescheduling of the closing date for discovery and the

consent motions based on settlement discussions, and does not prohibit the use of ESTTA consent forms for other filings.

Absent the required status report, a motion to suspend or extend may be denied, even if consented to by the parties. If the Board denies such a motion, dates may remain as previously set. *See* TBMP § 509.01(a).

If there is no word from either party concerning the status of settlement, upon conclusion of the suspension period, **proceedings shall resume without further notice or order from the Board**, upon the schedule set forth below.

Time to Answer	12/19/2020
Deadline for Discovery Conference	1/18/2021
Discovery Opens	1/18/2021
Initial Disclosures Due	2/17/2021
Expert Disclosures Due	6/17/2021
Discovery Closes	7/17/2021
Plaintiff's Pretrial Disclosures Due	8/31/2021
Plaintiff's 30-day Trial Period Ends	10/15/2021
Defendant's Pretrial Disclosures Due	10/30/2021
Defendant's 30-day Trial Period Ends	12/14/2021
Plaintiff's Rebuttal Disclosures Due	12/29/2021
Plaintiff's 15-day Rebuttal Period Ends	1/28/2022
Plaintiff's Opening Brief Due	3/29/2022
Defendant's Brief Due	4/28/2022
Plaintiff's Reply Brief Due	5/13/2022
Request for Oral Hearing (optional) Due	5/23/2022

Generally, the Federal Rules of Evidence apply to Board trials. Trial testimony is taken and introduced out of the presence of the Board during the assigned testimony periods. The parties may stipulate to a wide variety of matters, and many

rescheduling of subsequent deadlines for pretrial disclosures and testimony periods, a stipulation presented in the form used in a trial order, signed by the parties, or a motion in said form signed by one party and including a statement that every other party has agreed thereto, shall be submitted to the Board through ESTTA, with the relevant dates set forth and an express statement that all parties agree to the new dates. Trademark Rule 2.121(d).

requirements relevant to the trial phase of Board proceedings are set forth in Trademark Rules 2.121 through 2.125. These include pretrial disclosures, matters in evidence, the manner and timing of taking testimony, and the procedures for submitting and serving testimony and other evidence, including affidavits, declarations, deposition transcripts and stipulated evidence. Trial briefs shall be submitted in accordance with Trademark Rules 2.128(a) and (b). Oral argument at final hearing will be scheduled only upon the timely submission of a separate notice as allowed by Trademark Rule 2.129(a).