

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF JASPER COUNTY, MISSOURI

GARY COLSON, JOHN OCHOA, and)	
JANET OCHOA on behalf of themselves,)	
and all others similarly situated)	Case No. 19AO-CC00071
)	
Plaintiffs,)	Hon. Dean G. Dankelson
)	
v.)	
)	FILED
PROTEIN SOLUTIONS, LLC,)	Melissa Holcomb - Clerk
)	8/13/2020
)	JASPER COUNTY CIRCUIT CLERK
Defendant.)	JOPLIN, MISSOURI

ORDER GRANTING PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF SETTLEMENT

Named Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and the proposed Settlement Class, seek preliminary approval of the Settlement Agreement in its entirety and approval of the notice procedure, including without limitation conditional certification of the proposed Settlement Class and final approval of the proposed Class Notice (Ex. 1, Settlement Agreement), the proposed Claim Form (Ex. B to the Settlement Agreement, Claim Form), and all of the requirements for potential Class Members to either opt-out from or object to the settlement.

This Court, having reviewed the pleadings in the case and the submissions of the parties with respect to preliminary approval of the proposed Settlement Agreement, and for good cause shown;

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, this day of 13th day of August 2020, that pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 52.08:

- This Order incorporates by reference the definitions in the Settlement Agreement (a copy of which is attached as Ex. 1), and all capitalized terms used in this Order will have the same meanings as set forth in the Settlement Agreement, unless otherwise defined in this Order.

- Settlement Agreement, together with its attached exhibits, sets forth the terms and conditions for the proposed settlement and dismissal with prejudice of the class action Litigation against Defendant. The Settlement Agreement was the result of extended good faith, arm's-length negotiations by the parties.

- Pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 52.08, the Settlement Agreement and the proposed settlement provided for therein are preliminarily approved as (a) fair, reasonable, and adequate in light of the relevant factual, legal, practical, and procedural considerations of the Litigation, (b) free of collusion to the detriment of putative Settlement Class Members, and (c) within the range of possible final judicial approval, subject to further consideration thereof at the Settlement Fairness Hearing as described below. Accordingly, the Settlement Agreement and the settlement are sufficient to warrant notice thereof, as set forth below, and a full hearing on the settlement.

- If, for any reason, the Settlement Agreement is not finally approved or does not become effective, this provisional approval Order, including but not limited to the conditional Settlement Class certification, shall be null and void and automatically deemed vacated. Neither the Settlement Agreement nor anything related to the negotiation, consideration, or approval of it shall be used, referred to, proffered, or admissible for any purpose in this Litigation or any other action or proceeding. In such event, the parties and the putative Class Members shall be returned to the same litigation position that they were in prior to seeking preliminary approval

of the Settlement Agreement, and they shall be free to raise all claims, defenses, and arguments as they would have been able to had they never negotiated or sought approval of the Settlement Agreement. In the case that the Settlement Agreement is not finally approved or does not become effective, the parties must also promptly schedule a status conference to establish a new scheduling order for the continuation of the Litigation.

- Plaintiffs Gary Colson, John Ochoa and Janet Ochoa are appointed as Class Representatives.

- The Firm of Liddle & Dubin, P.C. is appointed as Class Counsel.

- Solely for the purpose of settlement in accordance with the Settlement Agreement, this Court hereby conditionally certifies the following class (the "Settlement Class"):

- all persons who do not affirmatively and timely opt out of this Settlement and who submitted a *data sheet* to Class Counsel prior to April 15, 2020; and
- all owner/occupants and renters of residential property residing within two (2) miles of the Facility's property boundary at any point in time on or after March 15, 2014 to the present and who do not affirmatively and timely opt-out of this Settlement.

- The form, content, and procedures of notice to the putative Settlement Class Members as set forth in the Settlement Agreement, including but not limited to the direct mailings and internet postings, are approved. The notices to be provided to the putative Settlement Class Members clearly, concisely, and in plain language advise them of, among other things, the nature of the Litigation, the proposed Settlement Agreement, the definition of the Settlement Class, the claims the Settlement Class would release, the consideration the Settlement Class would receive, Class Counsel's intended application for attorneys' fees and expenses and monetary awards for the Named Plaintiff, putative Settlement Class Members' right to participate individually or through an attorney and object to the Settlement Agreement or any

portion of it, putative Settlement Class Members' right to opt out and exclude themselves from the Settlement Agreement, and the binding nature of the Settlement Agreement if it is ultimately approved. The notices to be provided to the putative Settlement Class Members are the best notice practicable under the circumstances, and constitute due and sufficient notice of the proposed Settlement Agreement and this Order to all persons affected by and/or entitled to participate in the settlement, in full compliance with the notice requirements of Supreme Court Rule 52.08 and due process.

- Within fourteen (14) days of entry of this Order, (a) Class Counsel shall provide notice of the proposed Settlement Agreement and information regarding the Settlement Fairness Hearing to all Class Members by mailing to each identified putative Settlement Class Member via first class mail a copy of the Notice of Pendency of Class Action Settlement ("Class Notice"), substantially in the form as that document attached as Exhibit 3 to the Settlement Agreement, and (b) Class Counsel shall establish a page on its website where interested parties can access information about this Litigation and the proposed Settlement Agreement, including but not limited to copies of the Settlement Agreement and its exhibits, and a copy of this Preliminary Approval Order. That webpage shall remain accessible until the Effective Date, at which time Class Counsel shall cease hosting the webpage. Class Counsel shall also publish a copy of the Notice in the Joplin Globe (a newspaper of general circulation in the Joplin area), once within 21 days following the Court's issuance of an Order Granting Preliminary Approval.

- As set forth in the Settlement Agreement, costs and expenses for Administration of Settlement shall be paid by Class Counsel, to be reimbursed from the Settlement Fund subject to the Court's approval.

- Any putative Settlement Class Member wishing to be excluded from the Settlement Class shall mail an opt-out request to Class Counsel conforming in all respects to the terms and provisions of the Class Notice. Those who timely and properly do so shall neither participate in the settlement nor release his or her claims, and they forego (a) all of the benefits he or she might otherwise receive as a result of the settlement and (b) his or her standing to participate in the Settlement Fairness Hearing or object to the proposed Settlement Agreement or any portion of it. Failure to opt out in strict compliance with the time and manner requirements set forth in the Class Notice shall result in waiver of the right to opt out. All potential Settlement Class Members who either do not attempt to or fail to properly and timely opt out shall remain part of the Settlement Class and, to the extent the Settlement Agreement is ultimately approved, be bound by the settlement.

- The Class Notice shall designate Class Counsel as the entity to whom opt-out requests shall be sent. Class Counsel shall be responsible for the receipt of all responses from putative Settlement Class Members and shall preserve all opt-out requests and any and all other written communications from putative Settlement Class Members or any other person in response to the Class Notice until Administration of the Settlement is complete or pursuant to further Order of this Court. All written communications received from putative Settlement Class Members and all written responses to inquiries by them relating to the Settlement Agreement and settlement shall be available at all reasonable times for inspection and copying by counsel for Defendant, subject to further Order of the Court if issues of privilege or confidentiality arise.

- At least seven (7) days prior to the Settlement Fairness Hearing, Class Counsel shall file with the Court a sworn statement listing all persons who properly have submitted

timely requests for exclusion. The originals of all opt-out notices shall be retained by Class Counsel.

- Any potential Settlement Class Member who does not attempt to or fails to properly and timely opt out of the Settlement Class may, but is not required to, enter an appearance either *pro se* or through counsel of said Settlement Class Member's own choosing and expense. Any Settlement Class Member who does not enter a separate appearance shall be represented by Class Counsel. Settlement Class Members who are in favor of the proposed Settlement need not appear at the Settlement Fairness Hearing or take any other action to indicate their approval.

- Absent further order from the Court, any Settlement Class Member who will challenge or object to the fairness, reasonableness, or adequacy of the Settlement Agreement or any portion of the settlement, including without limitation the amount of Class Counsel's requested fees and expenses or the amount of Named Plaintiffs incentive awards must remain part of the Settlement Class and must mail such Settlement Class Member's written objection to Class Counsel conforming in all respects to the terms and provisions of the Class Notice. Within seven (7) days of the Settlement Fairness Hearing, Class Counsel shall file all objections received with the Court. Any objecting Settlement Class Member may appear at the Settlement Fairness Hearing in person, with or without such Class Member's separate counsel. The scope of any objector's presentation of evidence or argument at the Settlement Fairness Hearing shall be limited to such objector's written objection. Any Settlement Class Member who fails to file and serve an objection in strict compliance with the deadlines and procedures, and containing the information required by the Class Notice shall be deemed to have forever waived and forfeited

the right to object to the proposed Settlement Agreement or any part of the settlement or to raise or pursue an objection at the Settlement Fairness Hearing or at any point thereafter, including in appeal or as part of a separate proceeding.

- All other events contemplated under the Settlement Agreement to occur after this Order and before the Settlement Fairness Hearing described in this Order shall be governed by the Settlement Agreement, to the extent not inconsistent herewith.

- All memoranda, affidavits, declarations, and other evidence in support of the request for approval of the Settlement Agreement and Class Counsel's request for approval of attorneys' fees and costs and the Named Plaintiffs' awards shall be filed on or before September 28, 2020.

- A Settlement Fairness Hearing shall be held before the undersigned at 1:30 /pm on October 6, 2020 at the Jasper County Circuit Court Building, 601 South Pearl, Division II courtroom, 3rd floor, Joplin, MO 64801 to consider the fairness, reasonableness, and adequacy of the proposed Settlement Agreement, the entry of any final order or judgment in the action, any application for attorneys' fees and costs, payments to the Named Plaintiffs, and other related matters. The Settlement Fairness Hearing may be postponed, adjourned, or continued by further Order of this Court without further notice to the putative Settlement Class.

- All proceedings in the action other than such as may be necessary to carry out the terms and conditions of the Settlement Agreement or the responsibilities related or incidental thereto are stayed and suspended until further notice of this Court. Pending final determination of the fairness, reasonableness, and adequacy of the proposed Settlement Agreement, no putative Settlement Class Member, other than those who timely and properly have opted out of

the Class, may either directly or indirectly prosecute, institute, or commence any individual or class action with respect to the subject matter of this Litigation.

- Class Counsel is hereby appointed to coordinate and effectuate the Administration of Settlement.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



Dean G. Dankelson, Circuit Judge
August 13, 2020