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August 2, 2011

Okaloosa Circuit Court Enters Judgment In Favor of Local Land Owner

A real estate contract dispute stretching back to 2005 was recently won by local land owners Alan Laird and MSB of Destin, Inc. After a two day trial before Judge William F. Stone, the Circuit Court entered judgment in favor of Laird and MSB, and against Bluegreen Vacations Unlimited, Inc., in the amount of \$1,563,087.

In 2005, Bluegreen, which is headquartered in Boca Raton, agreed to purchase land from Laird and MSB in Destin's harbor area to build a proposed timeshare resort. In 2006, Bluegreen terminated the contract alleging it did not receive the necessary governmental approvals from the City of Destin to build the project.

However, Bluegreen terminated the contract before allowing Destin's City Council to vote on the proposed Tier III project. Judge Stone found that Bluegreen failed to fulfill

the contractual obligations to pursue the development order and therefore breached the contract. As a result, Laird and MSB were awarded the contract's escrow deposit as liquidated damages.

Laird and MSB were represented at trial by lead attorney Patrick McCarthy and assisted by Dana Matthews, both of Matthews Jones & Hawkins, LLP.

According to Mr. McCarthy, "This judgment was a long time coming. Mr. Laird and MSB had faith in the system, and that after the facts were fully presented the court would reach the right result."

The Matthews Jones & Hawkins Transaction and Litigation Teams encompass a full spectrum of real estate representation, estate planning, probate, asset protection, corporate reorganization and complex work-out transactions, civil, criminal, family law and personal injury litigation. The firm has attorneys licensed in federal and state courts in Florida, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Texas, with offices in Destin Niceville and DeFuniak Springs, Florida.