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Estates & Wills & Trusts

Business manager will control King estate





By Charles Ticker

I recently <u>wrote a comment</u> about the ongoing B.B. King estate battle which commenced shortly after the legendary Blues musician passed away. I was particularly interested in this story as I have always admired B.B. King and his music.

I am a Blues fan, and his passing was a truly sad day for myself and other fans. At the time of my initial comment several serious allegations were being made against B.B.

King's long time manager LaVerne Toney.

Some of B.B. King's daughters had filed suit in a Las Vegas court alleging that Ms. Toney looted B.B. King's bank accounts, misappropriated funds, and endangered B.B. King's health in the days leading up to his death.

There were also allegations that B.B. King may have had a second "missing" will. The court date in this matter was set for June 22, 2015. It appeared that the King estate was going to be involved in a highly contested battle to determine who is entitled to control and manage B.B. King's legacy.

On June 22, 2015 Clark County Judge Gloria Sturman did not allow the daughters to challenge the 2007 will appointing Ms. Toney as the executor of the King estate.

She found that B.B. King had a valid succession plan in place, and that there was insufficient evidence to allow the will to be challenged. She also found that the family members failed to provide any evidence that a second, competing will existed.

At the outset of the King estate dispute it looked like a messy battle would ensue between the parties involved. A will challenge where allegations of misconduct are made against an executor by family members can become very acrimonious. Family members are often unable to accept the decision making of an elderly relative who decided to leave control of his or her estate to an "outside" individual.

This is especially true if the family members involved believe that they have somehow been wronged by the decision making process of the relative. It is not uncommon for aggrieved beneficiaries to challenge the validity of succession plans or to allege that the elderly testator lacked capacity while making the will in question.

Another common tactic when <u>contesting a will</u> is to allege that the elderly testator was under undue influence by the executor or third parties who benefited from the changes to the succession plan.

Whatever the case may be, it is important to ensure that there is sufficient evidence to support the allegations being made. If not, significant <u>estate litigation</u> costs can be incurred by the parties involved in the process. Given the size of the King estate, it seems likely that the decision of Judge Sturman may be subsequently appealed.

For more updates on the B.B. King estate click here.

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