IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA (RICHMOND)

In Re:	Case No. 24-32428-KLP
	Richmond, Virginia
HOPEMAN BROTHERS INC.,	
Debtor.	May 20, 2026
	1:02 p.m.

TRANSCRIPT OF STATUS CONFERENCE ON
1. "[SEALED] OBJECTION TO LMIC CLAIM NO. 10" – OBJECTION OF HOPEMAN BROTHERS, INC. TO CLAIM NO. 10 OF LIBERTY MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY [DOCKET NO. 693].
BEFORE THE HONORABLE KEITH L. PHILLIPS
UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY JUDGE

APPEARANCES:

For the Debtor:	HENRY (TOBY) LONG, III, ESQ. HUNTON ANDREWS KURTH LLP Riverfront Plaza, East Tower 951 East Byrd Street Richmond, VA 23219
For Liberty Mutual Insurance Company:	DOUGLAS M. FOLEY, ESQ. KAUFMAN & CANOLES, P.C. Two James Center 1021 East Cary Street Suite 1400 Richmond, VA 23219
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THE CLERK: In the matter of Hopeman Brothers, item number 46 on the docket, status conference.

MR. LONG: Good afternoon, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Good afternoon.

MR. LONG: Toby Long on behalf of the debtors. We are here for our omnibus hearing, and thanks to Your Honor entering the orders approving our fee applications, there's just one item on, as Your Honor knows. You asked us to schedule the Liberty claim objection for a status conference here today. And Mr. Foley and I had a chance to speak a little bit in the hallway, and I think we disagree about what should happen next, and I'll let him speak for himself. But from the debtor's perspective, and obviously subject to the Court's view, we think we should, consistent with the case management procedures, just adjourn this, and adjourn it until we know what's happening upstairs with our confirmation hearing. We do not need this to be resolved for our plan to be confirmed.

Yes, we objected to Liberty's standing, but we took on all of Liberty's objections to the plan, and Your Honor addressed those in your findings of fact. We don't need this to be resolved for -- if the district court agrees to confirm our plan, we don't need this to be resolved for our plan to become effective. If we ultimately take this up, it's an objection to Liberty's general unsecured claim. Liberty would just have a general unsecured claim under the plan. The plan

has 200,000 dollars to share pro rata.

What we, as the debtors, are trying our best to do is keep our pencils down. We are trying to keep our pencils down. We are trying to get this plan confirmed. And we're trying to hand it over to a trust. And our suggestion is that it would not be a good use of estate resources to take this up now, before we see what happens with confirmation, and that once the plan is hopefully confirmed, the trustee and Liberty should be able to probably sit down and figure out. I don't think it's that complicated. Can probably figure out how this resolves. And if not, the Trustee can decide how to use the estate resources to fight this. But we, at this point, should preserve those estate resources and try to get this plan confirmed.

THE COURT: Well, at some point it's got to be resolved, right? Whether, I mean, if the plan is not confirmed, I assume, I mean, you're going to walk away, you're going to either file a modified plan, you're going to continue to push for some type of resolution. So why delay?

MR. LONG: I'm sorry. No, it'll need to be resolved, but like claims objections in other cases, right? It doesn't need to be resolved before confirmation. We don't need it to be resolved today.

Liberty may look at the writing on the wall and say, hey, this is a general unsecured claim just for cost monitoring

the bankruptcy case. Do I really want to pursue it? Mr. Foley probably will say I disagree.

THE COURT: In other words, you think the dynamics may change --

MR. LONG: Yes, sir.

THE COURT: -- depending on whether --

MR. LONG: I think we -- yes, sir. I think it makes sense, until we see what happens with confirmation, to adjourn it. And under our case management procedures, we, the debtor, it's our objection. And we have discretion to adjourn to the next omnibus hearing, obviously, unless anybody objects. But we would exercise that discretion that we want to save our resources, our estate resources, to take on the other fights to get us to confirmation.

THE COURT: When's the next adjournment or the next omnibus date?

MR. LONG: The next omnibus hearing, dare I say, is third week of June, but I don't know the specific day. We tried to space them out evenly.

THE COURT: Like to.

MR. LONG: Yes.

THE COURT: So you're looking for about a month.

MR. LONG: We have an omnibus hearing in June. Yes, sir.

THE COURT: A month. All right. Okay. Mr. Foley.

MR. LONG: Thank you, Your Honor.

MR. FOLEY: Good afternoon, Your Honor. Doug Foley with Kaufman & Canoles on behalf of Liberty Mutual Insurance Company. I believe Doug Gooding might be on the Zoom from the Choate firm, but I don't know if he's logged in yet or not.

But in any event, just to address the concerns that I spoke with Toby about before court is we want to obviously honor the directive of the district court, which is --

THE COURT: As do I.

MR. FOLEY: I understand. Since the bankruptcy court did not adduce any evidence concerning Hopeman's potential breach, the court lacked sufficient record to assess Hopeman's factual arguments and remands the matter to the bankruptcy court for further findings on the issue. We think, even though it's a thirty-eight page opinion, very extensive. Certainly wasn't expecting that. But to honor that directive, we think there should be some very limited, tailored, targeted discovery as to what was done or what was not done over the last year to honor this affirmative obligation to minimize claims against Liberty Mutual Insurance Company.

And we're happy to propound those, you know, propound that discovery again, limited, some request for admissions, some interrogatories, and if there's emails that need to be produced. But this is very, very narrowly tailored. This would not be an undue burden for the debtor to answer some

discovery about this minimization obligation so that we can come here at some point, whether it's three months from now, six months from now, two years from now, and we'll have a factual record to be able to present to the Court so you can honor the directive of the district court on this matter.

I don't think it's related to confirmation at all, as was said by counsel. So I don't see any reason to wait. I think we're just going to waste time if we wait.

My suggestion would be to carry this status conference out three months, allow some limited discovery. If they think it's overburdensome, they can object to it. If we want to stipulate to certain facts, we can certainly do that. Our view is there was little or nothing done to honor this affirmative obligation over the last year. In fact, we have cited some things that we think go the other direction as was the basis for our claim about the breach of this obligation.

So I don't think it would be very expensive to engage in very limited discovery. We'll have it. We have no idea what the timing is going to be with Judge Novak on analyzing your proposed findings and conclusions. As Your Honor is probably aware, I hate to call it a record, because it's not an appeal, but the documents from the bankruptcy court that you considered was supplemented recently, and it's pretty voluminous, so -- and that was only done recently.

So Judge Novak has had this, your proposed findings

and conclusions, for months, and we just supplemented the documents for his consideration, which he ordered to happen. It could be six months before we hear from Judge Novak on confirmation. And just given the nature of things, somebody's not going to be happy with the result, so somebody might appeal. I'm not saying my client's going to appeal. Debtors might appeal. Some of the other insurers might appeal. We might be here for two years waiting for confirmation.

THE COURT: You mean your claim might not be addressed for two years.

MR. FOLEY: Right.

THE COURT: Which is, I guess, Mr. Long's argument why deal with it now.

MR. FOLEY: Well, we just want to get the factual record. If we have to -- I just don't want to lose time. As Your Honor knows, this case is, I mean, the company has been gone a long time after it expired, and the case has been going on a long time. So we think if we just did three months, kick this out for three months for a status conference.

THE COURT: Well, I suppose everybody's all right with that.

MR. FOLEY: Yeah. But allow some discovery between now and then.

THE COURT: Well the question, then, is what's limited? What does that mean?

MR. FOLEY: We'll live with whatever limitation the Court wants to put on us, on number of interrogatories, on request for admissions. Whatever it is, we'll -- this is a very discrete, narrow issue factually. What did or didn't happen over the last year regarding the minimization obligation? What did they do? What did they not do? It could be as easy as we did nothing. Or it could be easy as we did one, two, and three. And we could say, well, this, this, and this goes against that obligation. Then we can at least have a factual record. Who talked to who about what over the last year. The committee was involved in plan negotiations. They wanted certain things that we think affected Liberty Mutual adversely. So again, this is not an extensive discovery process, but I just hate to waste another three, six months because --

THE COURT: Well, I'm inclined to allow some amount of discovery in light of putting this off for three months. And you never know what Judge Novak may do. But again, the question is, how do we limit it? Because normally, I wouldn't impose limitations at this stage, unless it was so expansive that it didn't make sense. But can the two of you agree, or did you discuss potential --

MR. FOLEY: I'll tell you what. We're happy to draft discovery within the next week, give it to them, and if they say, oh my God, this is horrible, you know, whatever, then

that's fine. We're willing to negotiate with them over the scope. Our intent is to be very narrow as to getting the facts surrounding this one discrete issue. Whether we have to have a trial on that before or after confirmation is decided, that's a different issue. I agree. We may not have to have that. But let's get the facts. Let's do what the judge said and adduce facts and present a record for Your Honor to consider.

THE COURT: All right. Well, Mr. Long, do you think you can work within these limitations?

MR. LONG: I'd like a brief opportunity to address that, Your Honor. My concern is I hear discovery, and I see our very limited cash being burned away addressing that, and why I say that is I would argue that many of the issues we've dealt with in this case since day one have been very discrete. And I recall Mr. Foley standing up at Your Honor with an Excel spreadsheet of all the documents that were served on us with what started as limited discovery.

So I step back a little hesitant, one, because I don't want to spend our estate resources dealing with that discovery now when we don't need to resolve it. Two, I also, when I look at Judge Novak's opinion for what he remanded it to this court, it was how much discovery do we really need? Did the debtor breach its minimization obligations developing a reorganization plan and in entering these orders that partially lifted the automatic stay? So in theory, it should be discrete. I don't

know how much discovery is really necessary, but I'd still say let's hit pause and not spend that money.

I do not want Mr. Foley to serve discovery, me to say it's too broad, and us fighting with you, and then responding to discovery when we need to it. God willing, Judge Novak's not going to take that long, but we need to have that money to get our plan confirmed. And if our plan isn't confirmed, we're going to be having a very different discussion that Mr. Liberty Mutual's unsecured claim is not going to be a top priority item, and we need to save our money to deal with those top priority items.

THE COURT: Well, my inclination was to allow some limited discovery to be initiated. And so I think maybe, rather than putting it off for three months, maybe what we need to do is give Mr. Foley an opportunity to present you with something. And if you can live with it, then great. If you can't, then maybe I'll allow some of what he's asking for. And it would seem like maybe, rather than waiting three months, let's come back in here in a month and see if you've been able to come to terms. And if not, and he says, here are my interrogatories or requests, and I look at it, and it looks to me like it's fairly minimal, I'll probably let them start. And if not, then I'll probably put it off.

MR. LONG: May I propose just a compromise? That we reschedule the status conference for the June omnibus. And in

that time, Mr. Foley provide me with discovery, and we come back and tell Your Honor whether we've agreed.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. LONG: And we can decide at that point what to do next. And with any luck, we'll have an opinion, because I'm more optimistic than Mr. Foley that we'll have an opinion from Judge Novak on our rocket docket before then.

THE COURT: And I wasn't aware he requested additional documents. Is that what I was told? Another filing?

MR. LONG: The insurers asked him to supplement the record --

THE COURT: Oh.

MR. LONG: -- with additional items that they'd identified in the --

THE COURT: Oh, yeah, yeah.

MR. LONG: -- evidentiary record at confirmation.

THE COURT: Okay. Was that part of the clerk's --

MR. LONG: Yes, Your Honor.

THE COURT: -- transmission? Okay.

MR. LONG: Yes, Your Honor.

THE COURT: That I knew about. All right. All right. Well, hopefully I'm with you. I'm hoping Judge Novak will get to it sooner than later, and maybe by the next omnibus date.

MR. LONG: Yes, sir.

THE COURT: So why don't we carry it over to the next

omnibus date? And if the two of you are still, at least I'll have something in front of me to look at.

MR. LONG: Yes, sir.

THE COURT: And then, if you can agree, then great.

MR. LONG: We can start the clock.

THE COURT: Yeah. And hopefully the debtor won't be required to spend much money between now and then, or even prior to the confirmation decision.

MR. LONG: Yes, Your Honor.

THE COURT: All right.

MR. LONG: Thank you very much.

THE COURT: Very good. Thank you.

Mr. Foley, was there something else?

MR. FOLEY: Just when is the June omnibus?

THE CLERK: June 17th at 11 o'clock.

MR. FOLEY: 17th?

THE CLERK: Yes.

THE COURT: June 17th at 11.

MR. FOLEY: Thank you.

THE COURT: All right. Anything else?

MR. LONG: No, Your Honor. That's it, unless Your Honor has any questions.

THE COURT: No, I'm good.

MR. LONG: Thank you.

THE COURT: All right. Thank you.

MR. FOLEY: Thank you, Your Honor.

THE COURT: We'll hope for the best with Judge Novak.

MR. LONG: Thank you.

(Whereupon these proceedings were concluded at 1:15 PM)

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, Hana Copperman, the court-approved transcriber, do hereby certify the foregoing is a true and correct transcript from the official electronic sound recording of the proceedings in the above-entitled matter.

Hana Copperman May 21, 2026

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United States Bankruptcy Court

Eastern District of Virginia
Richmond Division
701 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Case Number 24−32428−KLP
Chapter 11
Judge Keith L Phillips

In re: Debtor(s) (name(s) used by the debtor(s) in the last 8 years, including married, maiden, trade, and address):
Hopeman Brothers, Inc.
6 Auburn Court, Unit 3
Brookline, MA 02446

Last four digits of Social−Security or Individual Taxpayer−Identification (ITIN) No(s).,(if any):
Debtor: NA

Employer Tax−Identification (EIN) No(s).(if any):
Debtor: 13−0852520

NOTICE OF FILING OF TRANSCRIPT AND OF DEADLINES RELATED TO RESTRICTION AND REDACTION

A transcript was filed on May 21, 2026 in the above−referenced case, event text as shown below:

Transcript filed Re: Hearing Held 5/20/2026, Remote electronic access to the transcript is restricted until 08/19/2026. The transcript may be viewed at the Bankruptcy Court Clerk's Office. [For information about how to contact the transcriber, call the Clerk's Office] or [Contact the Court Reporter/Transcriber eScribers, LLC, Telephone number 800−257−0885.] [Transcript Purchased by Douglas M. Foley.] (RE: related document(s) [1490] Status Conference held and continued; (related document(s): 1437 Order of Appellate Court) Hearing scheduled for 06/17/2026 at 11:00 AM at Judge Phillips' Courtroom, 701 E. Broad St., Rm. 5100, Richmond, Virginia. Appearnaces: Toby Long, Doug Foley (DebraWeekley)). Notice of Intent to Request Redaction Deadline Due By 05/28/2026. Redaction Request Due By 06/11/2026. Redacted Transcript Submission Due By 06/22/2026. Transcript access will be restricted through 08/19/2026. (Gottlieb, Jason)

The parties have [until May 28, 2026] [seven (7) calendar days from the date of filing of the transcript] to file with the court a *Notice of Intent to Request Redaction* of this transcript. The deadline for filing a *request for redaction* is [June 11, 2026] [21 days from the date of filing of the transcript].

If a request for redaction is filed, the redacted transcript is due [June 22, 2026] [31 days from the date of filing of the transcript].

If no such notice is filed, the transcript may be made available for remote electronic access upon expiration of the restriction period, which is [August 19, 2026] [90 calendar days from the date of filing of the transcript] unless extended by court order.

To review the transcript for redaction purposes, you may purchase a copy from the transcriber or you may view the document at the clerk's office public terminal.

Charri S Stewart
Clerk, United States Bankruptcy Court

Date: May 21, 2026

[ntctranredact.jsp 3/2009]

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