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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT TACOMA

MAVERICK GAMING LLC,

 Plaintiff,

 v.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA et al.,

 Defendants.

CASE NO. 3:22-cv-05325-DGE

ORDER GRANTING MOTION
FOR RELIEF FROM SUMMARY
JUDGMENT DEADLINES

I INTRODUCTION

This matter comes before the Court on Intervenor Shoalwater Bay Tribe’s Motion for Relief from Summary Judgment Deadlines. (Dkt. No. 69.) Shoalwater Bay Tribe (“the Tribe”) simultaneously filed a Motion for Limited Intervention (Dkt. No. 68) and proposed Motion to Dismiss. (Dkt. No. 68-1.) In its Motion for Relief from Summary Judgment Deadlines, the Tribe asks the Court to suspend the current briefing schedule (Dkt. No. 63) until the Court has ruled on the Tribe’s Motion for Limited Intervention, and if granted, the Tribe’s Motion to

1 Dismiss. (Dkt. No. 69 at 12.) The Washington State Defendants (“State Defendants”)¹ join the
2 Tribe’s motion to temporarily suspend the summary judgment deadlines. (Dkt. No. 72.)
3 However, Plaintiff Maverick Gaming LLC (“Maverick”) opposes the Tribe’s motion. (Dkt. No.
4 71.) Having reviewed the motion, the responses, and the relevant portions of the record, the
5 Court GRANTS the Tribe and State Defendants’ motion.²

6 II BACKGROUND

7 This litigation concerns compacts between twenty-nine federally recognized tribes
8 (“Washington Tribes”) and the state of Washington entered under the Indian Gaming Regulatory
9 Act (“IGRA”), 25 U.S.C. §§ 2701-2721, and the Revised Code of Washington § 9.46.360 (“the
10 Compacts”). (Dkt. No. 66 at 3.) The Compacts permit Washington Tribes to offer most forms
11 of “casino-style gaming (known as ‘class III’ gaming under the IGRA),” most of which are
12 legally prohibited for other non-tribal entities. (*Id.*) Recent amendments to several of these
13 Compacts (“the Compact Amendments”) also allow multiple Washington Tribes to offer sports
14 betting at their casinos, although it remains illegal for other casinos throughout the state. (*Id.*)

15 On January 11, 2022, Maverick filed a Complaint against the United States as well as
16 associated federal and Washington state officials, alleging the Compacts and Compact
17 Amendments create a “gaming monopoly,” in violation of the IGRA, the Constitution’s
18 guarantee of equal protection, and the Constitution’s anti-commandeering doctrine. (*See* Dkt.
19 Nos. 1 at 22–28; 71 at 7.) Maverick initiated the lawsuit in the United States District Court for

20
21 ¹ On August 10, 2022, Defendants Steve Conway, Robert Ferguson, Tina Griffin, Jeff Holy, Jay
22 Inslee, Shelley Kloba, Sarah Lawson, Alicia Levy, Julia Patterson, Kristine Reeves, Bud
23 Sizemore, and Brandon Vick (“State Defendants”) filed a Notice of Joinder in which they stated
24 their intention to join the Tribe’s Motion for Relief from Summary Judgment Deadlines. (Dkt.
No. 72.)

² The Tribe requests oral argument on this matter. (Dkt. No. 73 at 1.) The Court believes the
Tribe’s motion can be determined without oral argument. *See* LCR 7(b)(4).

1 the District of Columbia; however, on April 28, 2022, the court transferred the action to the
2 Western District of Washington. Once transferred, this Court issued an order about initial
3 scheduling dates. (Dkt. No. 57.)

4 On June 21, 2022, the parties submitted a stipulated motion, asking the Court to vacate its
5 initial order and instead impose a briefing schedule on dispositive cross-motions. (Dkt. No. 60 at
6 1.) The parties agreed factual discovery was unnecessary. (*Id.*) The Court granted the motion
7 and adopted the deadlines agreed to by the parties. (Dkt. No. 63.) In accordance with the new
8 briefing schedule, Maverick filed an unopposed First Amended Complaint on July 1, 2022. (*See*
9 Dkt. Nos. 64; 66.)

10 On July 29, 2022, the Tribe informed Maverick it would move to intervene and dismiss
11 the action based on the Tribe's sovereign immunity. The Tribe informed Maverick it would seek
12 relief from the briefing schedule deadlines and request a stay pending the Court's ruling on its
13 motions. (Dkt. Nos. 73 at 5–6; 74 at 2.) Maverick relayed its intent to oppose all three motions.
14 (Dkt. No. 74 at 2.) The Tribe again contacted Maverick on August 1, 2022, asking Maverick to
15 reconsider its opposition to the Tribe's motion for relief from deadlines given that its Motion for
16 Summary Judgment was due August 12, 2022, the same day the Tribe's motion was ripe for
17 consideration. (Dkt. Nos. 73 at 6; 74 at 2.) The Tribe proposed a telephonic conference with the
18 Court under Local Civil Rule 7(i), to stay the case before August 12, 2022. (Dkt. No. 74 at 2.)
19 Maverick rejected the Tribe's proposed telephonic conference and continued to oppose a stay.
20 (*Id.*)

III DISCUSSION

A. Legal Standards for Modifying Case Deadlines

The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure do not expressly provide for a stay of proceedings; however, “[a] district court has inherent power to control the disposition of the causes on its docket in a manner which will promote economy of time and effort for itself, for counsel, and for litigants.” *CMAX, Inc. v. Hall*, 300 F.2d 265, 268 (9th Cir. 1962). In exercising its discretion to stay a pending proceeding, the Court must consider the following competing interests: (1) “possible damage which may result from the granting of a stay,” (2) “hardship or inequity which a party may suffer in being required to go forward,” and (3) “orderly course of justice measured in terms of the simplifying or complicating of issues[.]” *Lockyer v. Mirant Corp.*, 398 F.3d 1098, 1109–10 (9th Cir. 2005) (internal citations omitted).

Moreover, a district court may modify the case schedule and enlarge deadlines for good cause. *See* Fed. R. Civ. P. 16(b)(4) (“A schedule may be modified only for good cause and with the judge's consent.”); Fed. R. Civ. P. 6(b) (“When an act may or must be done within a specified time, the court may, for good cause, extend the time . . . if a request is made, before the original time or its extension expire.”).

B. Motion for Relief from Summary Judgment Deadlines

The Tribe asks the Court to suspend the Summary Judgment Deadlines, set forth in the Court’s Order of June 28, 2022, until the Court has deliberated and ruled on the Tribe’s Motion for Limited Intervention (Dkt. No. 68), and if the Motion for Limited Intervention is granted, the Tribe’s Motion to Dismiss (Dkt. No. 68-1). (Dkt. No. 69 at 12.) In short, the Tribe argues it is an indispensable party that cannot be joined because of sovereign immunity, and therefore, the

1 case should be dismissed under Federal Rules of Civil Procedure 12(b)(7) and 19. (Dkt. No. 69
2 at 7.)

3 1. Maverick Fails to show Undue Prejudice

4 Maverick argues it will suffer prejudice if the Court disrupts the agreed-upon briefing
5 schedule and “Maverick’s settled expectations.”³ (Dkt. No. 71 at 9.) Specifically, Maverick
6 identifies two sources of prejudice: (1) Defendants will have longer to prepare their dispositive
7 motions given Maverick has already filed its Motion for Summary Judgment and (2) extending
8 the suit will prolong Maverick’s alleged competitive injury caused by the Compacts. (*Id.* at 9–
9 10.)

10 These arguments are unavailing. As the Tribe rightly points out, Maverick could have
11 avoided the prejudice of which it now complains by stipulating to the Tribe’s motion or
12 participating in a telephonic conference with the Court. (Dkt. No. 73 at 6.) Had Maverick done
13 so, it need not have filed its Motion for Summary Judgment on August 12, 2022. Maverick
14 cannot now claim a circumstance it permitted to occur has caused undue prejudice. Maverick’s
15 argument that delay will prolong its competitive injury assumes its allegations are meritorious,
16

17 ³ One of Maverick’s primary arguments is the Tribe’s Motion for Limited Intervention is
18 untimely. Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 24 requires an intervention motion to be timely. *See*
19 *Fed. R. Civ. P. 24(a), (b)*. Indeed, under permissive intervention, “the court must consider
20 whether the intervention will unduly delay . . . the adjudication of the original parties’ rights.”
21 *Fed. R. Civ. P. 24(b)(3)*. In this Order, the Court does not decide whether the Tribe’s Motion for
22 Limited Intervention fulfills the timeliness requirement. Yet Maverick fails to establish in its
23 opposition to the Tribe’s Motion for Relief from Summary Judgment Deadlines that the Tribe’s
24 intervention motion is so untimely to not warrant a stay of proceedings to give the matter full
consideration. As the Tribe asserts, its Motion for Limited Intervention was made around one
month after Maverick filed its First Amended Complaint. Further, the case cited by Maverick in
support of its timeliness argument presents a substantially greater delay. (*See* Dkt. No. 71 at 9–
10) (citing *Eastman Chem. Co. v. Nestle Waters Mgmt. & Tech.*, 2014 WL 1316772, at *7
(S.D.N.Y. Apr. 1, 2014)). In *Eastman*, the court denied the defendants request to amend its
answer to add a third counterclaim because it would require substantial new factual discovery.
The circumstances are not analogous to this case.

1 which is yet to be determined. Although the Court acknowledges the parties' interest in swiftly
2 resolving litigation (*see* Dkt. No. 71 at 10 (collecting cases)), the proposed stay will not
3 indefinitely postpone the proceedings. Since the parties agree this case does not require factual
4 discovery, the litigation is unlikely to stretch beyond comparable matters.

5 2. Hardship or Inequity Faced by the Tribe

6 Related to the second consideration—the hardship or inequity the Tribe would suffer if
7 compelled to move forward—Maverick argues the Tribe would face no adverse consequence
8 given that its suit does not seek relief from the Tribe. (*See* Dkt. No. 71 at 12.) But, even if the
9 Tribe is not currently a named defendant, it may be affected by the outcome given this suit could
10 nullify the Washington Tribe's Compacts. Maverick concedes this interest although it contests
11 the Tribe qualifies as an indispensable party. (*Id.* at 14.) Despite its status as a party, the Tribe
12 seeks the opportunity to decide whether to waive sovereign immunity and intervene should the
13 Court deny its motion to dismiss. (Dkt. No. 73 at 8.) This opportunity may be denied if forced
14 to proceed according to the briefing schedule. On balance, the hardship faced by the Tribe if
15 compelled to move forward outweighs the potential prejudice to Maverick if the deadlines are
16 stayed.

17 3. A Stay Permits Orderly Consideration of the Issues

18 As for the third factor, whether the Tribe is an indispensable party and entitled to
19 sovereign immunity is a threshold inquiry that should be addressed before the parties' summary
20 judgment motions to conserve judicial and litigant resources. *See, e.g., Dine Citizens Against*
21 *Ruining Our Env't et al. v. United States Bureau of Indian Affairs et al.*, 3:16-cv-08077-SPL (D.
22 Ariz. Oct. 28, 2019) (Dkt. No. 49 at 2) (staying case scheduling deadlines pending resolution of
23 the Navajo Transitional Energy Company LLC's motion to dismiss).

