

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

**CIVIL MINUTES – GENERAL**

Case No. CV 21-9402-MWF (PLAx) Date: January 10, 2022

Title Jessica Jessa Hinton, et al. v. Vivid Ent. Grp., et al.

Present: The Honorable: MICHAEL W. FITZGERALD, United States District Judge

Rita Sanchez  
Deputy Clerk

Not Reported  
Court Reporter / Recorder

Attorneys Present for Plaintiffs:  
Not Present

Attorneys Present for Defendants:  
Not Present

**Proceedings: (IN CHAMBERS) ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE**

On January 6, 2022, Defendant TMBJ Investments, Inc., d/b/a Vivid Gentlemen’s Club, d/b/a Vivid Live Houston (“TMBJ”), submitted its Answer through the Electronic Document Submission System (“EDSS”). (See Docket No. 12). EDSS is only for use by pro se litigants – however, TMBJ is a corporate entity.

Individual litigants may represent themselves pro se, but corporations and associations must be represented by counsel. See *Church of the New Testament v. United States*, 783 F.2d 771, 773 (9th Cir. 1986) (unincorporated association); *In re Highley*, 459 F.2d 554, 555 (9th Cir. 1972) (corporations). In addition, non-attorney litigants may not represent other individual litigants or trusts for which they serve as trustee. See *Johns v. County of San Diego*, 114 F.3d 874, 876 (9th Cir. 1997) (minor children); *C.E. Pope Equity Trust v. United States*, 818 F.2d 696, 697–98 (9th Cir. 1987) (trust); *McShane v. United States*, 366 F.2d 286, 288 (9th Cir. 1996) (other litigants). A partner may not represent his or her own interest in a partnership pro se, and a sole shareholder may not represent a corporation. See *In re Am. West Airlines*, 40 F.3d 1058, 1059 (9th Cir. 1994) (per curiam) (partner); *United States v. High Country Broad Co., Inc.*, 3 F.3d 1244, 1245 (9th Cir. 1993) (per curiam) (shareholder).

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In other words, TMBJ needs to be represented by a lawyer. For now, the Court will allow the Answer to stand to prevent an immediate default. However, if a lawyer does not enter the action for TMBJ or if some exception to the general rule isn't shown – which the Court doubts exists – then the Answer will be stricken and Plaintiff will be directed obtain entry of default by the Clerk and then entry of default judgment by this Court.

Accordingly, the Court **ORDERS** Defendant TMBJ to show cause, in writing, on or before **February 11, 2022**, why the Answer should not be stricken. The appearance of a lawyer for TMBJ will be a sufficient response to discharge the Order to Show Cause. In other words, the Court is giving TMBJ a month to find a lawyer.

IT IS SO ORDERED.