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28UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

NEXTDOOR.COM, INC.,

No. C-12-5667 EMC

Plaintiff,

v.

**ORDER RE MOTION TO WITHDRAW
AS COUNSEL**

RAJ ABHYANKER,

(Docket No. 217)

Defendant.

RAJ ABHYANKER,

Counterclaimant,

v.

NEXTDOOR.COM, INC., *et al.*,

Counterdefendants.

Defendant Abhyanker's counsel ("Counsel"), Bruno Tarabichi, Heather Norton, Scott Allen, Roy Montgomery, and Brian Orion, have filed a motion to withdraw as attorneys in this matter. Docket No. 217. Each of them has submitted a declaration, identical but for the name of the attorney, stating that he or she is "ethically required to seek to withdraw" pursuant to Rule 3-700 of the California Rules of Professional Conduct. Docket Nos. 217-1 to 217-5. Counsel, however, provide no further detail.


Hearing for the motion is scheduled for July 10, 2014. Counsel request the hearing be held *ex parte*, in camera, to avoid breaches of confidentiality with their client Abhyanker.

1 Abhyanker opposes the motion, stating that permitting Counsel to withdraw at this late stage
2 would cause him irreparable harm. Docket No. 230. The discovery deadline has passed and trial is
3 scheduled to begin on December 1, 2014. Abhyanker asserts that Counsel is well versed in the
4 detailed and complex facts of the case, and that it would be extremely difficult for him to find new
5 counsel. Docket No. 230. Abhyanker requests the Court to refuse Counsel permission to withdraw
6 until and unless he is able to find counsel to represent him in this matter. *Id.*

7 The Court **GRANTS** Counsel's request that the July 10 hearing be held *ex parte*, in camera.
8 Counsel are ordered to file under seal, by Friday June 27, 2014, the grounds they believe ethically
9 require them to withdraw. Counsel shall also provide any grounds they believe warrant another
10 judge to conduct review "to avoid prejudice or bias moving forward." Docket No. 217-1. The
11 papers shall be served on Mr. Abhyanker. Mr. Abhyanker may file a response by July 3, under seal
12 and *ex parte*.

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14 IT IS SO ORDERED.

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16 Dated: June 24, 2014

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18 EDWARD M. CHEN
19 United States District Judge
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