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Pet kennel founder alleges overcharging by contractor

Published June 24, 2004 by Elizabeth Ramsey

Nashville attorney Linda Burnsed is alleging that a local construction firm over-charged her in building a pet kennel.

In a lawsuit filed in Chancery Court against contractor Michael D. Baron, his former company Corporate Construction Managers (CCM) and its successor Baron & Dowdle Construction, Burnsed accuses Baron of purposefully misleading her and unlawfully breaching a contract formed in 2003. That agreement outlines the construction of the lawyer's side project: a \$1.8 million pet boarding, grooming, and daycare facility on the Old Farm off Natchez Trace.

The plaintiff further alleges the defendant improperly increased the original contracted cost of construction. She points to charges labeled "cost of work" from Mercedes-Benz, Cracker Barrel, Nashboro Village Golf, Z Bar and Grill, CVS Pharmacy, and numerous out-of-state gasoline pumps. Also in question is an \$80,000 increase when Baron himself took over as project manager, the original having been terminated.

Burnsed, a lawyer with Chernau, Chaffin & Burnsed, asked Baron to terminate work on the project in February 2004 after failing to meet two critical deadlines around the December holidays, peak pet care season.

CCM claims Burnsed still owes up to \$175,000 for the completed construction, according to the lawsuit. Efforts to reach the defendant this week were unsuccessful.

"You just can't do that to people," Stanley Chernau, Burnsed's law partner who will represent her in court, told *Nashvillepost.com*. "I'm gonna get him."

The suit calls for over \$150,000 in reimbursement of alleged overpayments, plus compensatory and punitive damages and court fees to be awarded to Burnsed.

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