

STATE OF MINNESOTA

DISTRICT COURT

COUNTY OF STEARNS

SEVENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Stearns County,

Court File No. 73-CV-26-451

Plaintiff,

ORDER

vs.

Aloysius William Studniski,
on behalf of Studniski Properties LLC,

Defendant.

The above-entitled matter came before the Honorable Laura A. Moehrle, Judge of the District Court, on September 11, 2026 for a Contempt Hearing.

Assistant Stearns County Attorney Chad May appeared for Plaintiff. Defendant Aloysius William Studniski appeared *pro se*.

NOW, having duly considered all files, records, and proceedings herein, together with the applicable law, the Court makes the following:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. A valid court order was filed on August 6, 2026. The August 6, 2026 order:
 - a. Enjoined Defendant Aloysius William Studniski (“Defendant”) from using the property located at 36271 County Road 2, St. Joseph, MN as an event venue unless and until Defendant complied with all applicable laws and ordinances.
 - b. Required Defendant to completely abate the violations as required by law by applying for a provisional or conditional use permit, and comply within State and County ordinances within 60 days of the Order.
 - c. Required Defendant to submit a driveway access permit from the Stearns County Highway Department.
 - d. Required Defendant to submit an engineered stormwater management plan in accordance with Section 7.26 of Ordinance No. 439.

- e. Required Defendant to submit a Jurisdictional Determination Letter from the Department of Labor and Industry.
 - f. Ordered that if Defendant did not apply for the required permits and failed to comply with items b, c, d, and e, Defendant was required to remove the driveway, culvert, and all related fill within the County Road 2 right of way, remove all impervious surface located east and north of the structure permitted in 2022, and to revegetate or turn the area back to farmland.
 - g. Ordered that if Defendant continued to use the property as an event venue without complying with the law, Plaintiff was entitled to enter the property and abate the violations and was entitled to recover the cost of such action in the manner of a mechanic's lien against the property, and in the manner of a special assessment against the real estate, and to have costs reduced to a civil judgment.
2. This Court has jurisdiction over the subject matter.
 3. The August 6, 2026 Order clearly defined the acts to be performed by a party to the proceedings.
 4. Defendant had notice of the August 6, 2026 Order and had a reasonable time within which to comply. Defendant has been present at all court hearings and was provided with a copy of the August 6, 2026 order. Defendant was personally served with the Order on August 12, 2026.
 5. Stearns County has applied to the court for aid in compelling performance, giving specific grounds for the complaint. Stearns County alleged that Defendant continued to hold events on his property in violation of the Court's August 6, 2026 Order.
 6. A duly noted contempt hearing took place on September 11, 2026, at which time Defendant was given an opportunity to show compliance or his reasons for failure. During the hearing, Defendant noted he had filed a motion to dismiss. The Court denied Defendant's motion to dismiss both as untimely and on the merits. The Court finds that Mr. Studniski did not raise any issues regarding ownership of the property in the proceedings giving rise to the August 6, 2026 Order and therefore waived any such arguments. The Court further found, and Mr. Studniski admitted that he is the owner the land that is the subject of the August 6, 2026 Order, and therefore his arguments seeking dismissal on the grounds that Studniski Properties LLC is no longer a going concern lacks merit. The Court notes that

while Mr. Studniski included references to the United States and Minnesota Constitutions in his motion, he did not offer any specific argument in support of a violation of any of those Constitutional rights.

7. Defendant and Sgt. Brian Bohlig testified at the September 11, 2026 hearing.

a. Defendant's Testimony

- i. Defendant acknowledged that gatherings have taken place at his property after August 6, 2026. Defendant characterized these gatherings as private, invitation-only events.¹ He testified that there are no trespassing signs on his property. He testified that the gatherings are religious in nature; they are gatherings for the purpose of holy matrimony.

b. Sgt. Brian Bohlig's Testimony

- i. Sgt. Bohlig testified that he is employed by the Stearns County Sheriff's Department. He is a sergeant in the Investigations Division.
- ii. Sgt. Bohlig testified that four events have taken place at the property since the order was issued on August 6, 2026. Three events have taken place since the order was served on August 12, 2026. The weekend after August 12, a deputy documented over 100-200 vehicles at the property. The following weekend, a deputy documented a gathering occurring with numerous people and vehicles at the property. On August 29, 2026, there was another event at the property. A deputy who was parked near the road was asked for directions to the wedding.
- iii. Sgt. Bohlig testified that he believes several events were scheduled to occur in September and October, but he doesn't know the current status of those events.
- iv. Sgt. Bohlig's testimony was credible.

8. The Court finds that Defendant failed to comply with the Court's August 6, 2026 order.

9. The Court finds that imposition of a fine is reasonably likely to produce compliance with the order.

¹ Defendant's testimony that the events occurring on his property are "private events" was not credible. The Court finds that these events are not events for Mr. Studniski's family members. Instead, members of the public book his property to host their own events. Sgt. Bohlig testified that there were more than 100-200 vehicles at one event. At another event, a wedding guest asked a deputy for directions to the wedding venue.

10. Defendant has not satisfied his burden in proving inability to comply with the August 6, 2026 order. He is not excused by inability despite a good-faith effort. Rather, the evidence shows that Defendant believes he has the right to host events—specifically weddings—on his property in violation of Stearns County ordinances. Defendant characterizes these weddings as private and does not believe he is violating the law, or alternately believes that the law does not apply to him.
11. Defendant has the ability to comply with the conditions set forth in the August 6, 2026 order. He can simply cease hosting the weddings, then remediate the property, or cease hosting the weddings until he has obtained the necessary permits as set forth in the order. The Court finds Defendant in civil constructive contempt of court for his willful failure to comply with the August 6, 2026 order.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. In exercising civil contempt powers, the only objective is to secure compliance with an order presumed to be reasonable. *Hopp v. Hopp*, 279 Minn. 170, 173, 156 N.W.2d 212, 216 (1968). “A civil contempt order is intended to be ‘remedial rather than punitive because its purpose is to coerce compliance with [a court] order, not to vindicate the authority of the court.’” *State by Cunningham v. Iron Waffle Coffee Co. LLC*, 990 N.W.2d 513, 519 (Minn. Ct. App. 2023) (citing *Mower Cnty. Hum. Servs. ex rel. Swancutt v. Swancutt*, 551 N.W.2d 219, 222 (Minn. 1996)). “A party may be held in civil contempt when the party ‘has acted contumaciously, in bad faith, and out of disrespect for the judicial process.’” *Id.* at 521 (citing *Newstrand v. Arend*, 869 N.W.2d 681, 692 (Minn. Ct. App. 2015)). In an initial contempt proceeding, the court may find the obligor in conditional contempt and set conditions to allow the obligor to purge himself of contempt. *Mahady v. Mahady*, 448 N.W.2d 888, 890 (Minn. Ct. App. 1989).
2. Because the Court has determined that Defendant failed to comply with the August 6, 2026 Court Order, that Defendant had the ability to comply with the Order, that imposition of a civil fine is reasonably likely to induce compliance, and that Defendant is not excused by inability to comply despite a good-faith effort, the Court finds that Defendant is in civil constructive contempt of court. *Hopp*, 156 N.W.2d at 214.

ORDER

1. Defendant Aloysius William Studniski is in civil constructive contempt of the Court's August 6, 2026 order. A civil contempt sanction of **\$5,000 per occurrence** is hereby **STAYED** upon compliance with the following conditions:
 - a. If Defendant wishes to continue operating the property as an event venue:
 - i. Cease using the property at issue as an event venue unless and until all applicable laws and ordinances have been adhered to, as follows:
 1. Apply for and receive a provisional or conditional use permit no later than October 6, 2026.
 2. Comply within State and County ordinances no later than October 6, 2026.
 3. Submit a driveway access permit from the Stearns County Highway Department.
 4. Submit an engineered stormwater management plan in accordance with Section 7.26 of Ordinance No. 439.
 5. Submit a Jurisdictional Determination Letter from the Department of Labor and Industry;
 6. Mr. Studniski must cease using the property as an event venue until he has received a conditional use permit, has fully complied with all State and County Ordinances, has received a driveway access permit, has submitted an engineered stormwater management plan, and has submitted a jurisdictional determination letter from the Department of Labor and Industry.
 - ii.
 - iii.
 - b. If Defendant wishes to cease operating the property as an event venue:
 - i. Remove the driveway, culvert, and all related fill within the County Road 2 right of way
 - ii. Remove all impervious surface located east and north of the structure permitted in 2022
 - iii. Revegetate or turn the area back to farmland.

2. If it is determined at a *Mahady* hearing that Mr. Studniski has hosted an event or events in violation of this Court's Order the stay on the order for contempt will be vacated and he will be fined \$5,000.00 per event.
3. If it is determined at a *Mahady* hearing that Mr. Studniski has failed to either (1) comply with all requirements in the Order required to either continue to operate his venue; or (2) to remediate his property by October 6, 2026, the stay on the order for contempt will be vacated and he may be subject to a \$5,000.00 fine, and a \$5,000 per week thereafter that he is not in compliance.
4. As stated in this Court's August 6, 2026 Order, if Defendant continues to use the property as an event venue without complying with the law and the terms of this order, Stearns County is entitled to enter the property and abate the violations.
 - a. The Stearns County Sheriff's Office may enter the property to prevent and disperse all event activity occurring at 36271 County Road 2, St. Joseph, Stearns County, MN 56374.
 - b. Plaintiff shall post necessary signage to inform individuals that the property is not to be used for any event activity.
 - c. Defendant shall notify all individuals with scheduled events of this order and shall not schedule any further events.
5. Defendant shall pay the costs of enforcing the Court's orders. Stearns County may recover the cost of such action in the manner of a mechanic's lien against the property, and in the manner of a special assessment against the real estate, and to have costs reduced to a civil judgment. The amount will be determined after submission of an affidavit by the Stearns County Sheriff's Office.

6. A **REVIEW HEARING** (*Mahady* Hearing) shall be scheduled for **October 16, 2026 at 1:30 p.m.** The hearing will take place in person at the Stearns County Courthouse. At the hearing, Defendant will have the opportunity to show compliance or a good faith effort to comply with the conditions. The Review Hearing/*Mahady* hearing may be accelerated if the Court is informed that Defendant is continuing to host events without obtaining the necessary permits as set forth in Order (1)(a)(i).

BY THE COURT:

Dated: 09-14-2026



Laura A. Moehrle
Judge of District Court