yahoo!entertainment

Britney Spears's latest conservatorship hearing reviews her finances now that Jamie Spears shares duties



Suzy Byrne • Editor, Yahoo Entertainment

Wed, March 17, 2021, 11:06 AM

As the #FreeBritney movement continues in support of Britney Spears, the latest hearing in her conservator case is set to take place today.

It is an accounting hearing, per the case calendar, and will see the co-conservators of her estate — that would be her dad, Jamie Spears, and new party Bessemer Trust — working together to report on the superstar's finances.

Case Calendar for

Case Number: BP108870

SPEARS, BRITNEY JEAN - CONSERVATORSHIP

Case filed on 2/1/2008

3/17/2021 at 1:30 PM in Probate Department 4 at 111 North Hill Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012 Accounting Hearing

(Screenshot: lacourt.org)

Bessemer Trust joined the circus, if you will, in November during a contentious hearing in which Britney's attorney tried to suspend Jamie as conservator, claiming that the singer was "afraid" of her father. Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Brenda Penny ruled against it, appointing Bessemer, a financial company, to share the role with Jamie. At last month's hearing, Jamie's attorneys argued he should have more power than Bessemer, as his daughter's conservator since 2008, but the judge ruled it will be equal.

The accounting <u>hearing</u> "is required by the conservator," California-based <u>top family law</u> <u>attorney</u> Christopher C. Melcher of <u>Walzer Melcher</u> explains to Yahoo Entertainment."

Jamie Spears and Bessemer Trust have to provide a report on the income that's come in for Britney, the expenses that have gone out and any other material financial information. That is a report that's given regularly to the court so the court can oversee the administration of her finances."



Britney Spears has been in a conservatorship since 2008. She has co-conservators of her estate, a role shared by Jamie Spears and financial company Bessemer Trust. She also has a conservator of her person, a role held by professional conservator Jodi Montgomery, who oversees the star's health and other personal decisions. Britney's lawyer has said she wants Jamie out, but has yet to happen. (Photo: REUTERS/Mario Anzuoni)

For Wednesday, Bessemer Trust will have reviewed Britney's finances and expenses for the first time, so if there is anything amiss while Jamie was overseeing it her money solo, it would be flagged today. There has been a lot of speculation, increased by the *Framing Britney Spears* doc, about Jamie's intentions in the role, due to his refusal to step down. However, he's maintained his only goal is to protect his daughter.

"Bessemer is newer to this and now in a co-conservator role with Jamie over money issues," <u>celebrity divorce lawyer</u> Christopher C. Melcher says. "It has an obligation to ensure that it

understands all of her finances — what money is going in, what money is going out —so if anything is being done incorrectly, Bessemer would have to report that."

It will be interesting to see how that working relationship plays out in light of Jamie's attorneys fighting in court to give him the power to delegate investment decision-making authority to Bessemer. (Through his attorney, Jamie's since said, he "looks forward to working with Bessemer ... in the best interests of his daughter.")

"There was some disagreement over how Bessemer and Jamie's roles related to each other," Melcher says. "It sounded like [Jamie wanted to] be the controlling conservator. But because there are two conservators over her estate or finances, those two conservators have to work together and in agreement and in unison. That's what is expected and that is what the law requires."

He continues, "It's not as if Jamie can just tell Bessemer to ignore something. They have to be involved. Bessemer is a big [finance] company. It's very protective of Britney to have Bessemer involved because of all these questions that have been raised [amid the #FreeBritney movement] about Jamie's fitness to continue serving."

Potentially an even more interesting case is what's on the calendar in Britney's case next month: a "petition hearing" on April 27.

Jamie's attorney Vivian Thoreen has given multiple interviews over the last month defending him from the villain label he's been given amid the #FreeBritney movement. She's said, "If [Britney] wants to end her <u>conservatorship</u>, she can file a petition to end it." So could this petition hearing be that?

Case Number: BP108870 SPEARS, BRITNEY JEAN - CONSERVATORSHIP Case filed on 2/1/2008

4/27/2021 at 1:30 PM in Probate Department 4 at 111 North Hill Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012 Petition Hearing

(Sceenshot: lacourt.org)

Melcher admits that it is unclear, but says it can be a number of things: It could relate to the underlying petition for conservatorship, which has been in place since 2008, and is why she's under this whole thing in the first place.

However, "It could be a petition to terminate the conservatorship," he says. If that is the case, "I would think that would show up in the court file and we would see evidence of that. Right now, we don't. So my assumption is that she hasn't petitioned to terminate the whole conservatorship at this point."

Additionally, "It could also be a petition to remove Jamie — or a further hearing on Britney's previous request to get him out. "The court denied that [previously], but that may have only been temporarily until there was more information or time has gone by," says Melcher. "So that could be a continuation of that hearing examining if Jamie should be removed."

Britney's conservatorship has monthly hearings on the calendar, but that isn't typical. Generally, there would be an annual hearing. "Here, the reason we are having all these hearings is because there's conflict over who the conservator is going to be," Melcher explains.

The hearing is scheduled for today at 1:30 p.m. PT — and Britney fans will likely turn up against outside the Stanley Mosk Courthouse, as they consistently have done at all recent hearings.

Meanwhile, the #FreeBritney movement will be getting more attention soon. A new documentary, by journalist Mobeen Azhar, exploring Britney's conservatorship is in the works for BBC.