

Couple renews lawsuit against LifeWay over Glorieta sale

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SANTA FE, N.M.—An Arkansas couple renewed their lawsuit that contests the sale of Glorieta Conference Center, asserting LifeWay Christian Resources misrepresented facts and withheld information to defraud property owners of fair value for homes built on leased land at the encampment.

Kirk and Susie Tompkins of Little Rock, Ark., filed an amended complaint May 16 in U.S. District Court of New Mexico.

The complaint—which corrects some procedural errors that caused dismissal of an earlier suit—accuses LifeWay Christian Resources and its officers of fraud, denial of constitutional due process, unconscionable contract, breach of fiduciary duty and extortion.

The Tompkinses seek \$800,000 in damages they claim as a result of losing the lease to property on which their four-bedroom home at Glorieta is located when LifeWay [sold the encampment](#) in 2013 to a new corporation called Glorieta 2.0.

Anthony Scott is executive director of Glorieta 2.0, and Houston homebuilder David Weekley is chair of its board. Both are named in the amended suit, along other Glorieta 2.0 officials, as well as LifeWay and its officers.

Representing themselves without assistance from legal counsel, the Tompkinses first [filed a lawsuit](#) in 2013 against LifeWay, Glorieta 2.0 and other parties, including officers and employees of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

A federal judge [dismissed](#) the case in 2015, but the couple filed an appeal. Last December, the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals [affirmed dismissal](#) of the case, citing procedural errors.

Environmental issues created alleged risks

In the amended complaint, the Tompkinses assert LifeWay was aware of environmental problems connected with the Glorieta property but withheld that information from individuals who owned homes on leased land there and from guests who used the conference center, potentially putting them at risk.

[Environmental issues and legal liability](#), along with the cost of deferred maintenance on buildings, led the Baptist Convention of New Mexico to reject an offer to buy Glorieta Conference Center for \$1 from LifeWay in 2012.

Earlier this year, Penny Ellis-Green, land use administrator for Santa Fe County's growth management department, sent a [cease-and-desist letter](#) to officers of Glorieta 2.0 citing multiple environmental, safety and zoning violations.

Raises questions about ownership

The amended complaint questions the ownership of the Glorieta property and alleges LifeWay misrepresented the details of the sale. It asserts LifeWay sold only about 400 acres to Glorieta 2.0 and retained 2,500 acres.

The claim is based on two government documents—online records from the Santa Fe County Assessor's Office that continued to name LifeWay Christian Resources as owner of the property as of Mar. 15 and a footnote in the Feb. 22 cease-and-desist order that references a property survey that names LifeWay.

The amended complaint also accuses Glorieta 2.0 of threatening and harassing Mike Adney, trustee for the Tompkinses, who maintains residence in their Glorieta home. Adney is a former cook at Glorieta and self-described “whistleblower” who has submitted affidavits citing multiple safety and environmental issues at the encampment.

LifeWay responds

“The courts have ruled twice against the plaintiff on his concerns. We have high levels of confidence they will continue to do so,” said Carol Pipes, director of corporate communications at LifeWay.

Regarding the question of surrounding ownership of the Glorieta property, Pipes said: “I’m not sure why the county assessor records still show LifeWay as the owner for Glorieta Conference Center. We no longer own any property at Glorieta. My guess is they haven’t updated their records.”

The Santa Fe County Assessor’s Office confirmed to the *Baptist Standard* deeds recorded in 2014 showed the property’s transfer from LifeWay to Glorieta 2.0, but the records had not been updated.

“LifeWay no longer owns property in Santa Fe County,” said Isaiah Romero, chief commercial appraiser for the county.