UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

Farm Credit Leasing Services Corporation v. Brice Jon Weber

Farm Credit Leasing · No. 1:24-cv-01381-SLD-RLH · Decided January 7, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois awards Farm Credit Leasing Services Corporation damages and attorneys’ fees after entering default judgment against Brice Jon Weber for breach of a lease agreement. The Court awards $50,053.78 in damages, prejudgment interest at 18% per annum from August 13, 2023, and $21,490.67 in attorneys’ fees and costs, while denying a requested $118,336 purchase-option amount as unsupported by the lease. The Court also directs the plaintiff to provide a status update regarding recovery of the leased tractor.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Sara Darrow
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois
DECIDED	January 7, 2026
DOCKET	1:24-cv-01381-SLD-RLH
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	After entering default judgment on liability for breach of contract, the court considered the plaintiff's supplemental submission seeking an award of damages, prejudgment interest, and attorneys' fees and costs.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	On a default-judgment damages application, the court required documentary evidence and affidavits supporting the amount and contractual authorization of each requested item. Contractual attorneys' fees were evaluated under a commercially reasonable aggregate-cost standard rather than a detailed, hour-by-hour statutory fee review.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Nonprecedential district court order

TOPICS

default judgment · attorney fees · prejudgment interest · breach of contract · commercial litigation

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure · contracts · remedies · commercial litigation

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the lease authorized recovery of the $118,336.00 Purchase Option amount as damages for Weber's default.
2. Whether the evidence and lease supported the requested past-due rent and over-term or hold-over rental amounts.
3. Whether the lease authorized prejudgment interest at eighteen percent per annum beginning August 13, 2023.
4. Whether the requested attorneys' fees and costs were reasonable and whether duplicative charges should be excluded.

HOLDINGS

1. The $118,336.00 Purchase Option amount was not recoverable because the lease made that amount an end-of-term purchase option available only to a lessee who had paid all amounts due, was not in default, and gave at least ninety days' prior written notice; Weber satisfied none of those conditions.
2. The evidence supported an award of $18,201.40 in past-due rent and $31,852.38 in over-term rental.
3. The plaintiff was entitled to prejudgment interest at eighteen percent per annum, prorated daily, beginning August 13, 2023, but calculated on the reduced damages subtotal excluding the denied Purchase Option.
4. The plaintiff was entitled to $21,490.67 in attorneys' fees and costs after a $4,245.35 reduction for duplicative charges.

KEY QUOTATIONS

> *"The standard in a contractual fee-shifting case is a commercially reasonable standard."* (Discussion § 5)

> *"The principal task when awarding contractual attorneys' fees is to consider the "aggregate costs in light of the stakes of the case.""* (Discussion § 5)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Weber entered into an equipment lease requiring six annual rental payments and providing for automatic renewal and hold-over rent if the equipment was not returned. Weber failed to make the final payment due August 13, 2023, remained in default, and did not return or purchase the equipment. Farm Credit Leasing sought past-due rent, over-term rental, a purported Purchase Option amount, prejudgment interest, and attorneys' fees and costs, but some requested fees and costs duplicated amounts billed through another law firm.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The court previously entered default judgment against Brice Jon Weber on the issue of breach of contract, denied a requested writ of replevin, granted an order of detinue, and directed Farm Credit Leasing Services Corporation to submit an updated accounting. After finding the accounting insufficiently supported, the court ordered a supplemental brief identifying the contractual basis for each damages category. The court awarded specified damages, prejudgment interest, and attorneys' fees and costs, while denying the requested Purchase Option damages.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- e360 Insight v. The Spamhaus Project, 500 F.3d 594, 602 (7th Cir. 2007)
- Langeland v. Farmers State Bank of Trimont, 319 N.W.2d 26, 33 (Minn. 1982)
- Cap. One Auto Fin., Inc. v. Orland Motors, Inc., No. 09-cv-4731, 2012 WL 3777025, at *4 (N.D. Ill. Aug. 27, 2012)
- Taco Bell Corp. v. Cont'l Cas. Co., 388 F.3d 1069, 1076 (7th Cir. 2004)
- Matthews v. Wis. Energy Corp., Inc., 642 F.3d 565, 572 (7th Cir. 2011)
- Medcom Holding Co. v. Baxter Travenol Lab'ys, Inc., 200 F.3d 518, 520–21 (7th Cir. 1999)
- 1st Source Bank v. Neto, Case No. 3:15-CV-261-JD, 2018 WL 8756568, at *3 (N.D. Ind. June 13, 2018)
- Jackson v. City of Peoria, Case No. 17-1129, 2019 WL 5103806, at *8 (C.D. Ill. Oct. 11, 2019)
- SPM Real Est. Bluffton, LLC v. Cinemas Inv. Props., Inc., No. 4:20-cv-04192-SLD-JEH, 2021 WL 3926242, at *5 (C.D. Ill. Sept. 1, 2021)
- Logan Knitting Mills, Inc. v. Matrix Grp. Ltd., Inc., No. 04 C 7596, 2007 WL 1594482, at *3 (N.D. Ill. June 1, 2007)