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Beveridge & Diamond's Leader On Enviro Work, Firm Strategy

By **Adrian Cruz**

Law360 (February 21, 2023, 4:45 PM EST) -- A longtime environmental litigation attorney has been named the new managing principal of Beveridge & Diamond PC. Boston-based Marc Goldstein spoke with Law360 Pulse about his new role, the firm's status as one of the largest firms in the country to focus on environmental matters and its strategic plan.

Goldstein succeeds Kathy Szmuszkovicz as managing principal of the 130-attorney Beveridge & Diamond, with the Washington, D.C.-based Szmuszkovicz becoming the firm's new chair, according to an announcement last week.

Goldstein, who first joined Beveridge & Diamond as a shareholder in 2003, has served in a variety of leadership roles at the firm, including managing principal of the Boston office and chair of the technology committee and litigation practice. He also had a key role in developing the new strategic plan.

"I'm just really excited to take over the firm," he said. "We're in this unique position in the market with respect to our practice and where the world is currently with environmental issues, so I'm excited about all the prospects we have to do work in this area and help our clients. We have this depth of experience to offer clients going forward as it's a unique time for law firms and for the world "

A graduate of Harvard Law School, Goldstein's practice focuses on working with clients both in Massachusetts and nationwide on problems and disputes arising from environmental contamination and residential, commercial, and industrial project development. He said that he plans to continue his active practice even while serving as managing principal.

Goldstein spoke with Law360 Pulse on Friday. This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

What does your legal practice entail and how will you manage to juggle the dual responsibilities of managing both your firm and a private practice?

I'm an environmental litigator and I do some permitting work, but a lot of my work is in the waste industry, both in Massachusetts and throughout the country. That involves the permitting of projects, the ensuing litigation and responding to enforcement actions.

The other big piece of my practice is Superfund work, figuring out how to divvy up the costs associated with contaminated sites and figuring out how to pursue potentially responsible parties.

It will be a challenge to continue practicing law while managing the firm, and although it's one that I've managed before with other responsibilities, the demands of running a firm of our size and sophistication will, frankly, take up most of my time. At the same time, I feel that it's really important that we continue to practice, so we remember what it's like to be a lawyer, practice day to day, and be responsive to clients even in a leadership role.

It's going to take some careful time management to accomplish what needs to be done. I consider the firm as my client now, and I also have traditional clients who need my attention and service, so it's a delicate balance.

What's the firm's strategic plan going forward?

We're in the midst of drafting our strategic plan, and we're getting one prepared to circulate to the firm's principals in the next couple of weeks. It's been a complicated process. We started strategic planning just before the pandemic hit and we were relatively deep in that process, hiring a consultant and doing all the traditional things associated with a strategic plan, only to find that the world was changing faster than we could update it.

We had to take a step back and think about that, but the plan, as far as I can talk about it right now, focuses on four things: Our people, clients, culture and our practice areas and how they intersect with each other. Also, it's about taking a step back and looking five, 10 years down the road at what kind of firm we want to be. It's a really interesting time to have that discussion as law firms are really dynamic places, the marketplace is really different, firms are under all sorts of different pressures, and we're looking at all those different pieces.

We're trying to figure out how we want to grow, where we want to grow, where our people work and how they will work together. We've knit all of that together to form our strategic plan.

How has the recent increase in demand for ESG services affected the firm?

Because we're an environmental law firm, the "E" has always been part of the core of what we've done, and we've been deep in that area with our clients from the onset. We've seen the increase in demand for our clients, and we're well positioned for it because they trust us with the work we've done on the environmental side. To the extent that the governance work is within our lane, we're well positioned to be working with our clients on those matters.

It's all a net positive for us because our clients already identify us with those issues, and they end up talking to us when new things come out in that space. It's a real boom for us and obviously, it's right in our lane.

As an environmental law firm, what are some of the things you do to operate as eco-friendly as possible?

It's been something we've focused on for some time since we felt that if we were going to do this kind of work, we needed to walk the walk. We've participated in the creation of the Law Firm Sustainability Network's American Legal Industry Sustainability Standard, a tool on the web that helps law offices assess and improve sustainability programs. We also participated in it and received a gold ranking.

We also participate in the leadership level for the EPA's Green Power Partnership by purchasing renewable energy certificates to offset 100% of the electricity our offices use.

Those are some of the basic building blocks of the things we do, but I think what's really important is how we're spending our time. We participate in the Lawyers for Sustainable Economy initiative, where we dedicate a certain amount of our pro bono dollars to issues in environmental sustainability. Since 2019, we've done about \$1.3 million in pro bono services for sustainability issues.

--Editing by Jill Coffey and Emily Kokoll.

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