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3 More Lawyers Move On From Dow Lohnes

Real estate law firm plucks trio in wake of shakeup prompted by Cox Enterprises

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A Dow Lohnes partner, David Lester, and two other lawyers, Jaimie Johnson and Kay Stanley, on Wednesday joined Sheley, Hall & Williams, a real estate law boutique.

Lester joined Sheley Hall as a partner after practicing real estate law at Dow Lohnes' Atlanta office for about 10 years. Johnson joined as senior counsel and Stanley joined as counsel.

They were the latest to leave the Washington-based firm after a major client, Cox Enterprises, decided to spread its legal work among more firms. In an unusual twist, Cox said it would continue using Dow Lohnes lawyers if they moved to other firms.

"We don't anticipate any disruption in service as a result of the transition and are pleased to further develop our relationship with the fine firms that former Dow Lohnes partners have joined over the past few weeks," said Bob Jimenez, a Cox spokesman.

In August, four labor and employment lawyers left Dow Lohnes' local office for Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton and another four corporate and litigation lawyers went to Sutherland, Asbill & Brennan. Another corporate and real estate partner, Larry Humphrey, moved to Wargo & French in July.

Jimenez told the *Daily Report* in a July 1 story that the company will continue to use Dow Lohnes for communications law, such as FCC-related regulatory matters but that it will shift other work to additional firms. Dow Lohnes' communications law practice is housed in the Washington office,

"David, Kay and Jaimie are a terrific team and terrific friends, and we wish them the best," said Peter Canfield, a senior partner at Dow Lohnes in Atlanta.

Lester said he chose Sheley Hall because of his relationship with the firm's principals, add-

ing that he'd been on the other side of deals from Raymond Sheley many times.

"Each of those times was a very positive experience. We had great rapport. He advocated strongly for his clients' interest, but he was able to do it with a level of decorum that was very unusual," Lester said. "They have a deep bench of real estate expertise and a rate structure that is very competitive."

Sheley Hall principals Sheley, Laura Hall and David Williams left King & Spalding to form the real estate boutique, which will mark its 10th anniversary in October. With the three additions from Dow Lohnes, the firm has eight lawyers.

Lester said he will continue doing real estate-related work for Cox Enterprises, adding that he represents the privately held company and its subsidiaries, Cox Communications, Cox Media Group Inc., Manheim and AutoTrader.com, in the "vast majority" of their real estate matters.

His other clients include Marriott Family Investment Cos. and Airwatch, a Dunwoody company that makes security and content management software for corporate mobile devices.

Lester said he represents "end-users" in real estate transactions, which are corporate clients with real estate interests, whether a revenue-generating facility or office space.



Jaimie Johnson, at left, David Lester and Kay Stanley have joined Sheley, Hall & Williams, a local real estate law boutique.

Sheley said a real estate boutique can charge rates 20 percent to 30 percent below that of large firms while providing the same expertise and quality of work. He said his firm represents institutional real estate investors, such as Hines and GE Asset Management, as well as Atlanta-based developers and equity funds.

The departure of the three real estate lawyers for Sheley Hall leaves Dow Lohnes with 15 lawyers in its Atlanta office, according to the firm's website. That's down from 29 lawyers on July 1.