

Risk Factors Comparison 2025-03-03 to 2024-02-29 Form: 10-K

Legend: **New Text** ~~Removed Text~~ Unchanged Text **Moved Text** Section

Risks Related to Our Business and Industry Generally Ineffective liquidity management could adversely affect our financial results and condition. Effective liquidity management is essential for the operation of our business. We require sufficient liquidity to meet customer loan requests, customer deposit maturities / withdrawals, payments on our debt obligations as they come due and other cash commitments under both normal operating conditions and other unpredictable circumstances causing industry or general financial market stress. Our access to funding sources in amounts adequate to finance our activities on terms that are acceptable to us could be impaired by factors that affect us specifically or the financial services industry or economy generally. Factors that could detrimentally impact our access to liquidity sources include a downturn in the geographic markets in which our loans and operations are concentrated or difficult credit markets. Our access to deposits may also be affected by the liquidity needs of our depositors. In particular, a majority of our liabilities are checking accounts and other liquid deposits, which are payable on demand or upon several days' notice, while by comparison, a substantial majority of our assets are loans, which cannot be called or sold in the same time frame. Although we have historically been able to replace maturing deposits and advances as necessary, we might not be able to replace such funds in the future, especially if a large number of our depositors seek to withdraw their accounts, regardless of the reason. A failure to maintain adequate liquidity could materially and adversely affect our business, results of operations or financial condition. Changes in interest rates or the shape of the yield curve may hurt our profits and asset values and our strategies for managing interest rate risk may not be effective. We are subject to significant interest rate risk as a financial institution with a high percentage of fixed rate loans and certificates of deposit on our balance sheet. Our interest-bearing liabilities reprice or mature more quickly than our interest-earning assets. Changes in the general level of interest rates can affect our net interest income by affecting the difference between the weighted-average yield earned on our interest-earning assets and the weighted-average rate paid on our interest-bearing liabilities, or interest rate spread, and the average life of our interest-earning assets and interest-bearing liabilities. Changes in interest rates also can affect: (1) our ability to originate loans; (2) the value of our interest-earning assets and our ability to realize gains from the sale of such assets; (3) our ability to obtain and retain deposits in competition with other available investment alternatives; and (4) the ability of our borrowers to repay their loans, particularly adjustable or variable rate loans. Interest rates are highly sensitive to many factors, including government monetary policies, domestic and international economic and political conditions and other factors beyond our control. Financial challenges at other banking institutions could lead to depositor concerns that spread within the banking industry causing disruptive and destabilizing deposit outflows. In March 2023, Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank experienced large deposit outflows coupled with insufficient liquidity to meet withdrawal demands, resulting in the institutions being placed into FDIC receivership. Additionally, in May 2023, First Republic Bank experienced similar circumstances which resulted in the institution being placed in FDIC receivership. In the aftermath of these events, there has been substantial market disruption and concerns that diminished depositor confidence could spread across the banking industry, leading to deposit outflows that could destabilize other institutions. To strengthen public confidence in the banking system, the FDIC took action to protect funds held in uninsured deposit accounts at Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank following the placement of those institutions into receivership. However, the FDIC has not committed to protecting uninsured deposits in other institutions that experience outsized withdrawal demands. ~~To further bolster the banking system, the Federal Reserve Board created a new Bank Term Funding Program to provide an additional source of liquidity.~~ At December 31, ~~2023~~ **2024**, we had approximately \$ ~~3.2~~ **4.7** billion in available liquidity, including \$ ~~423.289~~ **2** million in cash and cash equivalents, which was sufficient to cover our uninsured deposits. Notwithstanding our significant liquidity, large deposit outflows could adversely affect our financial condition and results of operations and could result in the closure of the Bank. Furthermore, the recent bank failures may result in strengthening of capital and liquidity rules which, if the revised rules apply to us, could adversely affect our financial condition and results of operations. Municipal deposits are an important source of funds for us and a reduced level of such deposits may hurt our profits. Municipal deposits are an important source of funds for our lending and investment activities. At December 31, ~~2023~~ **2024**, \$ ~~861.969~~ **8.4** million, or 11. ~~0.7~~ **7** % of our total deposits were comprised of municipal deposits, including public funds deposits from local government entities primarily domiciled in the State of New Jersey. Given our use of these high-average balance municipal deposits as a source of funds, our inability to retain such funds could have an adverse effect on our liquidity. In addition, our municipal deposits are primarily demand deposit accounts or short-term deposits and therefore are more sensitive to changes in interest rates. If we are forced to pay higher rates on our municipal deposits to retain those funds, or if we are unable to retain those funds and we are forced to turn to borrowing sources for our lending and investment activities, the interest expense associated with such borrowings may be higher than the rates we are paying on our municipal deposits, which could adversely affect our net income. We are dependent on our information technology and telecommunications systems and third-party service providers; systems failures, interruptions and cybersecurity breaches could have a material adverse effect on us. Our business is dependent on the successful and uninterrupted functioning of our information technology and telecommunications systems and third-party service providers. The failure of these systems, or the termination of a third-party software license or service agreement on which any of these systems is based, could interrupt our operations. Because our information technology and telecommunications systems interface with and depend on third-party systems, we could experience service denials if demand for such services exceeds capacity, or such third-party systems fail or experience interruptions. If significant, sustained or repeated, a system failure or service denial could compromise our ability to operate effectively, damage our reputation, result in a loss of customer business, and / or subject us to additional regulatory

scrutiny and possible financial liability, any of which could have a material adverse effect on us. Our third- party service providers may be vulnerable to unauthorized access, computer viruses, phishing schemes and other security breaches. We likely will expend additional resources to protect against the threat of such security breaches and computer viruses, or to alleviate problems caused by such security breaches or viruses. To the extent that the activities of our third- party service providers or the activities of our customers involve the storage and transmission of confidential information, security breaches and viruses could expose us to claims, regulatory scrutiny, litigation costs and other possible liabilities. Security breaches and cybersecurity threats could compromise our information and expose us to liability, which would cause our business and reputation to suffer. In the ordinary course of our business, we collect and store sensitive data, including our proprietary business information and that of our customers, suppliers and business partners, as well as personally identifiable information about our customers and employees. The secure processing, maintenance and transmission of this information is critical to our operations and business strategy. We, our customers, and other financial institutions with which we interact, are subject to ongoing, continuous attempts to penetrate key systems by individual hackers, organized criminals, and in some cases, state- sponsored organizations. While we have established policies and procedures to prevent or limit the impact of cyber attacks, there can be no assurance that such events will not occur or will be adequately addressed if they do. In addition, we also outsource certain cybersecurity functions, such as penetration testing to third party service providers, and the failure of these service providers to adequately perform such functions could increase our exposure to security breaches and cybersecurity threats. Despite our security measures, our information technology and infrastructure may be vulnerable to attacks by hackers or breached due to employee error, malfeasance or other malicious code and cyber attacks that could have an impact on information security. Any such breach or attacks could compromise our networks and the information stored could be accessed, publicly disclosed, lost or stolen. Any such unauthorized access, disclosure or other loss of information could result in legal claims or proceedings, liability under laws that protect the privacy of personal information, and regulatory penalties; disrupt our operations and the services we provide to customers; damage our reputation; and cause a loss of confidence in our products and services, all of which could adversely affect our financial condition and results of operations. We must keep pace with technological change to remain competitive. Financial products and services have become increasingly technology driven. Our ability to meet the needs of our customers competitively, and in a cost- efficient manner, is dependent on the ability to keep pace with technological advances and to invest in new technology as it becomes available, as well as related essential personnel. In addition, technology has lowered barriers to entry into the financial services market and made it possible for financial technology companies and other non- bank entities to offer financial products and services traditionally provided by banks. The ability to keep pace with technological change is important, and the failure to do so, due to cost, proficiency or otherwise, could have a material adverse impact on our business and therefore on our financial condition and results of operations. Because the nature of the financial services business involves a high volume of transactions, we face significant operational risks. We operate in diverse markets and rely on the ability of our employees and systems to process a high number of transactions. Operational risk is the risk of loss resulting from our operations, including but not limited to, the risk of fraud by employees or outside persons, the execution of unauthorized transactions by employees, errors relating to transaction processing and technology, breaches of our internal control system and compliance requirements, and business continuation and disaster recovery. Insurance coverage may not be available for such losses, or where available, such losses may exceed insurance limits. This risk of loss also includes the potential legal actions that could arise as a result of an operational deficiency or as a result of noncompliance with applicable regulations, adverse business decisions or their implementation, and customer attrition due to potential negative publicity. Although our control testing has not identified any significant deficiencies in our internal control system, a breakdown in our internal control system, improper operation of our systems or improper employee actions could result in material financial loss to us, the imposition of regulatory action, and damage to our reputation. The building of market share through our branch office strategy, and our ability to achieve profitability on new branch offices, may increase our expenses and negatively affect our earnings. We believe there are branch expansion opportunities within our market area and adjacent markets, including other states, and will seek to grow our deposit base by adding branches to our existing branch network. There are considerable costs involved in opening branch offices, especially in light of the capabilities needed to compete in today' s environment. Moreover, new branch offices generally require a period of time to generate sufficient revenues to offset their costs, especially in areas in which we do not have an established presence. Accordingly, new branch offices could negatively impact our earnings and may do so for some period of time. Our investments in products and services, and the related personnel required to implement new policies and procedures, take time to earn returns and can be expected to negatively impact our earnings for the foreseeable future. The profitability of our expansion strategy will depend on whether the income that we generate from the new branch offices will offset the increased expenses resulting from operating these branch offices. Strong competition within our market area could hurt our profits and slow growth. Our profitability depends upon our continued ability to compete successfully in our market area. We face intense competition both in making loans and attracting deposits. We continue to face stiff competition for one- to- four family residential loans from other financial service providers, including large national residential lenders and local community banks. Other competitors for one- to- four family residential loans include credit unions and mortgage brokers which keep overhead costs and mortgage rates down by selling loans and not holding or servicing them. Our competitors for commercial real estate and multifamily loans include other community banks, commercial lenders and insurance companies, some of which are larger than us and have greater resources and lending limits than we have and offer services that we do not provide, along with government agencies such as Freddie Mac, Fannie Mae and Ginnie Mae. Price competition for loans and deposits might result in us earning less on our loans and paying more on our deposits, which reduces net interest income. We expect competition to remain strong in the future. ~~Inflationary pressures and rising prices may impact our results of operations and financial condition. Inflation continued to rise in 2023 and may remain elevated in 2024. Smaller businesses may be impacted more during periods of high inflation, as they are not able to leverage economies of scale to mitigate cost pressures compared to larger businesses.~~

~~Consequently, the ability of some of our business customers to repay their loans may deteriorate, and a prolonged period of inflation could cause wages and other costs to the Company to increase, which could adversely impact our results of operations and financial condition.~~ Acts of terrorism and other external events could impact our ability to conduct business. Financial institutions have been and continue to be targets of terrorist threats aimed at compromising operating and communication systems. Additionally, the metropolitan New York area and northern New Jersey remain central targets for potential acts of terrorism. Such events could cause significant damage, impact the stability of our facilities and result in additional expenses, impair the ability of our borrowers to repay their loans, reduce the value of collateral securing repayment of our loans, and result in the loss of revenue. The occurrence of any such event could have a material adverse effect on our business, operations and financial condition. Climate change, severe weather, global pandemics, natural disasters, and other external events could significantly impact our business. Natural disasters, including severe weather events, global pandemics, and other adverse external events could have a significant impact on our ability to conduct business or upon third parties who perform operational services for us. Such events could affect the stability of our deposit base, impair the ability of borrowers to repay outstanding loans, impair the value of collateral securing loans, cause significant property damage, result in lost revenue, or cause us to incur additional expenses. Economic, social and political conditions or civil unrest in the United States, may affect the markets in which we operate, our customers, our ability to provide customer service, and could have a material adverse impact on our business, results of operations, or financial condition. Our business may be adversely affected by instability, disruption or destruction in the markets in which we operate, regardless of cause, including war, terrorism, riot, civil insurrection or social unrest, and natural or man-made disasters, including storm or other events beyond our control. Such events can increase levels of political and economic unpredictability, result in property damage and business closures within in our markets and increase the volatility of the financial markets. Any of these effects could have a material and adverse impact on our business and results of operations. These events also pose significant risks to the Company's personnel and to physical facilities, transportation and operations, which could materially adversely affect the Company's financial results. Regulation of the financial services industry is intense, and we may be adversely affected by changes in laws and regulations. We are subject to extensive government regulation, supervision and examination. Such regulation, supervision and examination govern the activities in which we may engage and are intended primarily for the protection of the federal deposit insurance fund and Columbia Bank's depositors. Any future legislative or regulatory changes could have a material impact on our profitability, the value of assets held for investment or the value of collateral for loans. Future legislative changes could also require changes to business practices and potentially expose us to additional costs, liabilities, enforcement action and reputational risk. Federal regulatory agencies also have the ability to take strong supervisory actions against financial institutions that have experienced increased loan production and losses and other underwriting weaknesses or have compliance weaknesses. These actions include entering into formal or informal written agreements and cease and desist orders that place certain limitations on their operations, and / or they can impose fines. If we were to become subject to a regulatory action, such action could negatively impact our ability to execute our business plan, and result in operational restrictions, as well as our ability to grow, pay dividends, repurchase stock or engage in mergers and acquisitions. See "Item 1: Business — Regulation and Supervision- Federal Banking Regulations- Capital Requirements" for a discussion of regulatory capital requirements. We face significant legal risks, both from regulatory investigations and proceedings, and from private actions brought against us. As a financial services company, many aspects of our business involve substantial risk of legal liability. From time to time, customers and others make claims and take legal action pertaining to the performance of our responsibilities. **In addition, at any given time, we are involved in a number of legal and regulatory examinations and investigations as a part of reviews conducted by regulators and other parties, which may involve banking, securities, consumer protection, employment, tort, and numerous other laws and regulations.** Whether customer claims ~~and or legal and / or regulatory~~ action related to the performance of our responsibilities are founded or unfounded, **they may result in significant expenses, attention from management and financial liability, even if they such claims and legal actions are not resolved in a manner favorable to us , they may result in significant expenses, attention from management and financial liability.** Any financial liability or reputational damage could have a material adverse effect on our business, which, in turn, could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations. There is no assurance that litigation with private parties will not increase in the future. In addition, regulatory actions or investigations may result in judgments, settlements, fines, penalties or other results adverse to us, which could materially adversely affect our business, financial condition or results of operations, or cause reputational harm to us. Increasing scrutiny and evolving expectations from customers, regulators, investors, and other stockholders with respect to our ESG practices may impose additional costs on us or expose us to new or additional risks. Companies are facing increasing scrutiny from customers, regulators, investors, and other stockholders related to their ESG practices and disclosure. Investor advocacy groups, investment funds and influential investors are also increasingly focused on these practices, especially as they relate to the environment, health and safety, diversity, labor conditions and human rights. Increased ESG related compliance costs could result in increases to our overall operational costs. Failure to adapt to or comply with regulatory requirements or investor or shareholder expectations and standards could negatively impact our reputation, ability to do business with certain partners, and our stock price. New government regulations could also result in new or more stringent forms of ESG oversight and expanding mandatory and voluntary reporting, diligence, and disclosure.