

Risk Factors Comparison 2025-03-07 to 2024-03-08 Form: 10-K

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

The risk factors described below discuss potential events, trends, or other circumstances that could adversely affect our business, financial condition, results of operations, cash flows, liquidity, access to capital resources, and, consequently, cause the market value of our common stock to decline. These risks could cause our future results to differ materially from historical results and expectations of future financial performance. If any of the risks occur and the market price of our common stock declines significantly, individuals may lose all, or part, of their investment in our Company. Individuals should carefully consider our risk factors and information included, or incorporated by reference, in this report before making an investment decision. There may be risks and uncertainties that we have not identified or that we have deemed immaterial that could adversely affect our business; therefore, the following risk factors are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all risks we face.

Economic Environment The current economic environment poses significant challenges. Our financial performance is generally highly dependent on the business environment in the markets in which we operate in and of the U. S. as a whole, which includes the ability of borrowers to pay interest, repay principal on outstanding loans, the value of collateral securing those loans, and demand for loans and other products and services we offer. A favorable business environment is generally characterized by, among other factors, economic growth, efficient capital markets, low inflation, low unemployment, high business and investor confidence, and strong business earnings. Unfavorable or uncertain economic and market conditions can be caused by declines in economic growth, business activity, and investor or business confidence; limitations on the availability, or increases, in the cost of credit and capital; increases in inflation, interest rates, or employee costs; high unemployment; natural disasters; or a combination of these or other factors. In recent years, economic growth and business activity across a wide range of industries has been slow and uneven. There are continuing concerns related to the level of U. S. government debt, fiscal actions that may be taken to address that debt, energy price volatility, global economic conditions, and significant uncertainty with respect to domestic and international fiscal and monetary policy. Economic and inflationary pressure on consumers and uncertainty about continuing economic improvement may result in changes in consumer and business spending, borrowing, and savings habits. There can be no assurance that these conditions will improve or that these conditions will not worsen. Such conditions could adversely affect the credit quality of the Bank's loans and the Company's business, financial condition, and results of operations.

Regulatory Risks We operate in a highly regulated industry subject to examination, supervision, enforcement, and other legal actions by various federal and state governmental authorities, laws, and judicial and administrative decisions. Congress and federal regulatory agencies continually review banking laws, regulations, and policies. Changes to these statutes, regulations, and regulatory policies, including changes in the interpretation or implementation, may cause substantial and unpredictable effects, require additional costs, limit the types of financial services and products offered **and fees charged for such services and products**, or allow non-banks to offer competing financial services and products. Failure to follow laws, regulations, and policies may result in sanctions by regulatory agencies and civil money penalties, which could have material adverse effects on our reputation, business, financial condition, and results of operations. We have policies and procedures designed to prevent violations; however, there is no assurance that violations will not occur. Existing and future laws, regulations, and policies yet to be adopted may make compliance more difficult or expensive; restrict our ability to originate, broker, or sell loans; further limit or restrict commissions, interest, and other charges earned on loans we originate or sell; and adversely affect our business, financial condition, and results of operations. The Bank's ability to pay dividends is subject to regulatory limitations that may affect the Company's ability to pay expenses and dividends to shareholders. The Company is a legal entity that is separate and distinct from its subsidiaries. The Company depends on the Bank and its other subsidiaries for cash, liquidity, and the payment of dividends to the Company to pay operating expenses and dividends to stockholders. There is no assurance that the Bank will have the capacity to pay dividends to the Company in the future or that the Company will not require dividends from the Bank to satisfy obligations. The Bank's dividend payment is governed by various statutes and regulations. For additional information, see "Payment of Dividends" in Item 1 of this report. The Company may not be able to service obligations as they become due if the Bank is unable to pay dividends sufficient to satisfy the Company's obligations, including our common stock. Consequently, the inability to receive dividends from the Bank could adversely affect the Company's financial condition, results of operations, cash flows, and prospects.

Market and Interest Rate Risk We are subject to interest rate risk. Interest rate risk results principally when interest-earning assets and interest-bearing liabilities reprice at differing times, when underlying rates change at different levels or in varying degrees, when there is an unequal change in the spread between two or more rates for different maturities, and when embedded options, if any, are exercised. Our earnings and cash flows are largely dependent upon net interest income. Interest rates are highly sensitive to many factors that are beyond our control, including general economic conditions and policies of various governmental and regulatory agencies, particularly, the Federal Reserve. Changes in monetary policy and interest rates could influence the interest we receive on loans and securities and the amount of interest we pay on deposits and borrowings. Further, such changes could also affect our ability to originate loans and obtain deposits and the fair value of our financial assets and liabilities. If the interest rates paid on deposits and other borrowings increase at a faster rate than the interest rates received on loans and other investments, our net interest income and earnings could be adversely affected. Conversely, if interest rates received on loans and other investments fall more quickly than interest rates paid on deposits and other borrowings, our net interest income and earnings could also be adversely affected. Changes in the fair value of our investment securities may reduce stockholders' equity and net income. A decline in the estimated fair value of the Company's investment portfolio may result in a decline in stockholders' equity, book value per

common share, and tangible book value per common share. Unrealized losses are recorded even though the securities are not sold or held for sale. If a debt security is never sold and no credit impairment exists, the decrease is recovered at the security's maturity. Equity securities have no stated maturity; therefore, declines in fair value may or may not be recovered over time. We conduct quarterly reviews of our securities portfolio to determine if unrealized losses are temporary or other than temporary. No assurance can be given that we will not need to recognize a credit loss for the decline in fair value in the future. Additional credit loss provision may materially affect our financial condition and earnings. For additional information, see Note 1, "Basis of Presentation and Significant Accounting Policies," and Note 3, "Debt Securities," to the Consolidated Financial Statements in Part II, Item 8 of this report. The repeal of the federal prohibitions on payment of interest on demand deposits could increase our interest expense. All federal prohibitions on the ability of financial institutions to pay interest on demand deposit accounts were repealed as part of the Dodd- Frank Act. We do not know what interest rates other institutions may offer as market interest rates begin to increase. Our interest expense will increase and net interest margin will decrease if we offer interest on demand deposits to attract additional customers or maintain current customers, which could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, and results of operations. Credit Risk Our accounting estimates and risk management processes rely on analytical and forecasting models. The processes we use to estimate probable loan losses and to measure the fair value of financial instruments, as well as the processes used to estimate the effects of changing interest rates and other market measures on our financial condition and results of operations, depend upon analytical and forecasting models. These models reflect assumptions that may not be accurate, particularly in times of market stress or other unforeseen circumstances. Even if these assumptions are adequate, the models may prove to be inadequate or inaccurate because of other flaws in their design or their implementation. If the models we use for interest rate risk and asset / liability management are inadequate, we may incur increased or unexpected losses upon changes in market interest rates or other market measures. If the models used for determining probable loan losses are inadequate, the allowance for credit losses may not be sufficient to cover actual loan losses and an increase in the loan loss provision could materially and adversely affect our operating results. Federal regulatory agencies regularly review our loans and allowance for credit losses as an integral part of the examination process. There is no assurance that we will not, or that regulators will not require us to, increase our allowance in future periods, which could materially and adversely affect our earnings and profitability. If the models we use to measure the fair value of financial instruments are inadequate, the fair value of such financial instruments may fluctuate unexpectedly or may not accurately reflect what we could realize upon the sale or settlement of such financial instruments. Any such failure in our analytical or forecasting models could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, and results of operations. For additional information, see "Fair Value Measurements" and "Allowance for Credit Losses" in the "Critical Accounting Policies" section in Part II, Item 7 and Note 1, "Basis of Presentation and Significant Accounting Policies," to the Consolidated Financial Statements in Part II, Item 8 of this report. 12We are subject to credit risk associated with the financial condition of other financial institutions. Credit risk is the risk of not collecting payments pursuant to the contractual terms of loans, leases and investment securities. Financial institutions are interrelated as a result of trading, clearing, counterparty, and other relationships. We have exposure to different industries and counterparties, and we routinely execute transactions with counterparties in the financial services industry, including brokers and dealers, commercial banks, investment banks, investment companies, and other institutional clients. Our ability to engage in routine funding transactions could be adversely affected by the failure, actions, and commercial soundness of other financial institutions. These transactions may expose us to credit risk if our counterparty or client defaults on their contractual obligation. Our credit risk may increase if the collateral we hold cannot be realized or liquidated at prices sufficient to recover the full amount of the loan or derivative exposure due to us. In the event of default, we may be required to provide collateral to secure the obligation to the counterparties. In the event of a bankruptcy or insolvency proceeding involving one of such counterparties, we may experience delays in recovering the assets posted as collateral or may incur a loss to the extent that the counterparty was holding collateral in excess of the obligation to such counterparty. Losses from routine funding transactions could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations. Our commercial loan portfolio may expose us to increased credit risk. Commercial business and real estate loans generally have a higher risk of loss because loan balances are typically larger than residential real estate and consumer loans and repayment is usually dependent on cash flows from the borrower's business or the property securing the loan. Our commercial business loans are primarily made to small business and middle market customers. As of December 31, 2023-2024, commercial business and real estate loans totaled \$ 1. 66-58 billion, or 64-65. 59-46 %, of our total loan portfolio. As of the same date, our largest outstanding commercial business loan was \$ 15. 74 million and largest outstanding commercial real estate loan was \$ 14-12. 71 million. Commercial construction loans generally have a higher risk of loss due to the assumptions used to estimate the value of property at completion and the cost of the project, including interest. If the assumptions and estimates are inaccurate, the value of completed property may fall below the related loan amount. As of December 31, 2023-2024, commercial construction loans totaled \$ 105-72. 95-32 million, or 4-2. 12-99 % our total loan portfolio. As of the same date, our largest outstanding commercial construction loan was \$ 20. 59-42 million. Losses from our commercial loan portfolio could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations. Operational Risks We face strong competition from other financial institutions, financial service companies, and organizations that offer services similar to our offerings. Our larger competitors may have substantially greater resources and lending limits, name recognition, and market presence that allow them to offer products and services that we do not offer and to price loans and deposits more aggressively than we do. The expansion of non-bank competitors, which may have fewer regulatory constraints and lower cost structures, has intensified competitive pressures on core deposit generation and retention. For additional information, see "Competition" in Item 1 of this report. Our success depends, in part, on our ability to attract and retain customers by adapting our products and services to evolving customer needs and industry and economic conditions. Failure to perform in any of these areas could weaken our competitive position, reduce deposits and loan originations, and adversely affect our financial condition, results of operations, cash flows, and prospects.

Liquidity risk could impair our ability to fund operations. Liquidity is essential to our business and the inability to raise funds through deposits, borrowings, equity and debt offerings, or other sources could have a materially adverse effect on our liquidity. Company specific factors such as a decline in our credit rating, an increase in the cost of capital from financial capital markets, a decrease in business activity due to adverse regulatory action or other company specific event, or a decrease in depositor or investor confidence may impair our access to funding with acceptable terms adequate to finance our activities. General factors related to the financial services industry such as a severe disruption in financial markets, a decrease in industry expectations, or a decrease in business activity due to political or environmental events may impair our access to liquidity. Additionally, negative news about us or the banking industry in general could negatively impact market and / or customer perceptions of our company, which could lead to a loss of depositor confidence and an increase in deposit withdrawals, particularly among those with uninsured deposits. Furthermore, as we and other regional banking organizations experienced in 2023, the failure of other financial institutions may cause deposit outflows as customers spread deposits among several different banks so as to maximize their amount of FDIC insurance, move deposits to banks deemed "too big to fail" or remove deposits from the banking system entirely. As of December 31, 2023-2024, approximately 18-19.37-52% of our deposits were uninsured and we rely on these deposits for liquidity. A failure to maintain adequate liquidity could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations. We may require additional capital in the future that may not be available when needed. We may need to raise additional capital to strengthen our capital position, increase our liquidity, satisfy obligations, or pursue growth objectives. Our ability to raise additional capital depends on current conditions in capital markets, which are outside our control, and our financial performance. Certain economic conditions and declining market confidence may increase our cost of funds and limit our access to customary sources of capital, such as borrowings with other financial institutions, repurchase agreements, and availability under the FRB's Discount Window. Events that limit access to capital markets and the inability to obtain capital may have a materially adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations, and market value of common stock. We cannot provide any assurance that additional capital will be available, on acceptable terms or at all, in the future. We may experience future goodwill impairment. We test goodwill for impairment annually, or more frequently if events or circumstances indicate there may be impairment, using either a quantitative or qualitative assessment. If we determine that the carrying amount of a reporting unit is greater than its fair value, a goodwill impairment charge is recognized for the difference, but limited to the amount of goodwill allocated to that reporting unit. Unfavorable or uncertain economic and market conditions may trigger additional impairment charges that may cause an adverse effect on our earnings and financial position. For additional information, see "Goodwill" in the "Critical Accounting Policies" section in Part II, Item 7 and Note 1, "Basis of Presentation and Significant Accounting Policies," and Note 8, "Goodwill and Other Intangible Assets," to the Consolidated Financial Statements in Part II, Item 8 of this report. 13We may be required to pay higher FDIC insurance premiums or special assessments. Our deposits are insured up to applicable limits by the DIF of the FDIC and we are subject to deposit insurance assessments to maintain the DIF. For additional information, see "Deposit Insurance and Assessments" in Item 1 of this report. We are unable to predict future insurance assessment rates; however, deterioration in our risk-based capital ratios or adjustments to base assessment rates may result in higher insurance premiums or special assessments. The deterioration of banking and economic conditions and financial institution failures deplete the FDIC's DIF and reduce the ratio of reserves to insured deposits. If the DIF is unable to meet funding requirements, increases in deposit insurance premium rates or special assessments may be required. Future assessments, increases, or required prepayments related to FDIC insurance premiums may negatively affect our financial condition and results of operations. Our operational capabilities depend on internal and third-party systems which could fail, be breached or otherwise be compromised. We rely on electronic communications and information systems, including those provided by third-party service providers, to conduct our business operations. Risks associated with our reliance on internal and third-party technology include cybersecurity incidents, operational failures and service interruptions, misconduct by our employees or those of third parties, and reputational damages. The First Community Bank cannot be certain that we will receive timely notification from our third parties of cyberattacks or other cybersecurity breaches affecting their systems. Like other financial institutions, the First Community Bank experiences malicious cyber activity directed at our vendors and other service providers. There is no guarantee that the measures the Company takes will provide absolute security or recoverability given that the techniques used in cyberattacks are complex and frequently change and are difficult to anticipate. Our employees and third parties may expose the Company and the Bank to risk as a result of human error, misconduct, malfeasance, or a failure or breach of systems and infrastructure. For example, the Company's ability to conduct business may be adversely affected by any significant disruptions, including to third parties service providers. Our third-party service providers include large entities with significant market presence in their respective fields; therefore, their services could be difficult to replace quickly if there are operational failures or service interruptions. We face cybersecurity risks which could result in the disclosure of confidential information, adversely affect the Company's operations, cause reputational damage, and create significant legal and financial exposure. First Community The Company, the Bank and its customers, regulators, and other third parties, including other financial services institutions and companies engaged in data processing, have been subject to and are likely to continue to be the target of cyberattacks, such as denial of service attacks, hacking, malware or ransomware intrusion, data corruption attempts, terrorist activities, or identity theft. Cyberattacks may expose security vulnerabilities in the Company's systems or the systems of third parties or other security measures that could result in the unauthorized gathering, monitoring, misuse, release, loss, or destruction of confidential, proprietary, or sensitive information. A cyberattack could also damage the Company's systems by introducing material disruptions to the Company's or the Company's customers' or other third parties' network access or business operations. As cyber threats continue to evolve, the Company may be required to expend significant additional resources to continue to modify or enhance the Company's protective measures or to investigate and remediate any information security vulnerabilities or incidents. Despite efforts to ensure the integrity of the Company's systems and implement controls, processes, policies and other protective measures, the Company may not be able

to anticipate all security breaches, nor may the Company be able to implement sufficient preventive measures against such security breaches, which may result in material losses or other adverse consequences. Even the most advanced internal control environment may be vulnerable to compromise. Persistent attackers may succeed in penetrating defenses given enough resources, time, and motive. The techniques used by cyber criminals change frequently and may not be recognized until launched or well after a breach has occurred. In addition, the existence of cyberattacks or security breaches at third-party vendors with access to the Company's data may not be disclosed to the Company in a timely manner. A successful penetration or circumvention of system security could cause serious negative consequences, including loss of customers and business opportunities; costs associated with maintaining business relationships after an attack or breach; significant disruption to the Company's operations and business; misappropriation, exposure or destruction of the Company's confidential information, intellectual property, funds and those of the Company's customers; damage to the Company's or the Company's customers' or third parties' computers or systems; or a violation of applicable privacy laws and other laws. This could result in litigation exposure, regulatory fines, penalties, loss of confidence in the Company's security measures, reputational damage, reimbursement or other compensatory costs, and additional compliance costs, which could adversely impact the Company's results of operations, liquidity, and financial condition. In addition, the Company may not have adequate insurance coverage to compensate for losses from a cybersecurity event. We continue to encounter technological change and must effectively anticipate and implement new technology. The financial services industry continues to experience rapid technological change with the introduction of new, and increasingly complex, technology-driven products and services. The effective use of technology increases operational efficiency that enables financial institutions to meet rapidly evolving customer demands. Our future success depends, in large part, on our ability to provide products and services that satisfactorily meet the financial needs of our customers, as well as to realize additional efficiencies in our operations. We may fail to use technology-driven products and services effectively to better serve our customers and increase operational efficiency or sufficiently invest in technology solutions and upgrades to ensure systems are operating properly. Further, many of our competitors have substantially greater resources to invest in technology, which may adversely affect our ability to compete. We may be subject to claims and litigation pertaining to intellectual property. Banking and other financial services companies, such as the Company, rely on technology companies to provide information technology products and services necessary to support the Company's day-to-day operations. Technology companies often enter into litigation based on allegations of patent infringement or other violations of intellectual property rights. In addition, patent holding companies seek to monetize patents they have purchased or otherwise obtained. Competitors of the Company's vendors, or other individuals or companies, have from time to time claimed to hold intellectual property sold to the Company by its vendors. Such claims may increase in the future as the financial services sector becomes more reliant on information technology vendors. The plaintiffs in these actions often seek injunctions and substantial damages. 14Regardless of the scope or validity of such patents or other intellectual property rights, or the merits of any claims by potential or actual litigants, the Company may have to engage in protracted litigation. Such litigation is often expensive, time consuming, disruptive to the Company's operations, and distracting to management. If the Company is found to have infringed on one or more patents or other intellectual property rights, it may be required to pay substantial damages or royalties to a third party. In certain cases, the Company may consider entering into licensing agreements for disputed intellectual property, although no assurance can be given that such licenses can be obtained on acceptable terms or that litigation will not occur. These licenses may also significantly increase the Company's operating expenses. If legal matters related to intellectual property claims were resolved against the Company or settled, the Company could be required to make payments in amounts that could have a material adverse effect on its business, financial condition, and results of operations.

Risks Related to Our Common Stock

The market price of our common stock may be volatile. Stock price volatility may make it more difficult for our stockholders to resell their common stock when desired. Our common stock price may fluctuate significantly due to a variety of factors that include the following:

- actual or expected variations in quarterly results of operations;
- recommendations by securities analysts;
- operating and stock price performance of comparable companies, as deemed by investors;
- news reports relating to trends, concerns, and other issues in the financial services industry;
- perceptions in the marketplace about our Company or competitors;
- new technology used, or services offered, by competitors;
- significant acquisitions or business combinations, strategic partnerships, joint ventures, or capital commitments by, or involving, our Company or competitors;
- failure to integrate acquisitions or realize expected benefits from acquisitions;
- changes in government regulations; and
- geopolitical conditions, such as acts or threats of terrorism or military action.

General market fluctuations; industry factors; political conditions; and general economic conditions and events, such as economic slowdowns, recessions, interest rate changes, or credit loss trends, could also cause our common stock price to decrease regardless of operating results. The trading volume in our common stock is less than that of other larger financial services companies. Although our common stock is listed for trading on the NASDAQ, the trading volume in our common stock is less than that of other, larger financial services companies. A public trading market having the desired characteristics of depth, liquidity, and orderliness depends on the presence in the marketplace of willing buyers and sellers of our common stock at any given time. This presence depends on the individual decisions of investors and general economic and market conditions over which we have no control. Given the lower trading volume of our common stock, significant sales of our common stock or the expectation of these sales could cause our stock price to fall. We may not continue to pay dividends on our common stock in the future. Our common stockholders are only entitled to receive dividends when declared by our Board of Directors from funds legally available for such payments. Although we have historically declared cash dividends on our common stock, we are not required to do so, and may reduce or eliminate our common stock dividend in the future. This could adversely affect the market price of our common stock. As a financial holding company, the Company's ability to declare and pay dividends is dependent on certain federal regulatory considerations, including the guidelines of the Federal Reserve about capital adequacy and dividends. For additional information, see "Payment of Dividends" in Item 1 of this report.

General Risks

We are subject to environmental liability risk associated with lending

activities. A significant portion of our loan portfolio is secured by real property. In the ordinary course of business, we foreclose on and take title to properties that secure certain loans. Hazardous or toxic substances could be found on properties we own. If substances are present, we may be liable for remediation costs, personal injury claims, and property damage and our ability to use or sell the property would be limited. We have policies and procedures in place that require environmental reviews before initiating foreclosure actions on real property; however, these reviews may not detect all potential environmental hazards. Environmental laws that require us to incur substantial remediation costs, which could materially reduce the affected property's value, and other liabilities associated with environmental hazards could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

Potential acquisitions may disrupt our business and dilute stockholder value. We may seek merger or acquisition partners that are culturally similar, have experienced management, and possess either significant market presence or the potential for improved profitability through financial management, economies of scale, or expanded services. Risks inherent in acquiring other banks, businesses, and banking branches may include the following:

- potential exposure to unknown or contingent liabilities of the target company;
- exposure to potential asset quality issues of the target company;
- difficulty, expense, and delays of integrating the operations and personnel of the target company;
- potential disruption to our business;
- potential diversion of management's time and attention;
- loss of key employees and customers of the target company;
- difficulty in estimating the value of the target company;
- potential changes in banking or tax laws or regulations that may affect the target company;
- unexpected costs and delays;
- the target company's performance does not meet our growth and profitability expectations;
- limited experience in new markets or product areas;
- increased time, expenses, and personnel as a result of strain on our infrastructure, staff, internal controls, and management; and
- potential short-term decreases in profitability.

We regularly evaluate merger and acquisition opportunities and conduct due diligence activities related to possible transactions with other financial institutions and financial services companies. As a result, merger or acquisition discussions and, in some cases, negotiations may take place and future mergers or acquisitions involving the payment of cash or the issuance of debt or equity securities may occur at any time. Acquisitions typically involve goodwill, a purchase premium over the acquired company's book and market values; therefore, dilution of our tangible book value and net income per common share may occur. If we are unable to realize revenue increases, cost savings, geographic or product presence growth, or other projected benefits from acquisitions, our financial condition and results of operations may be adversely affected. Attractive acquisition opportunities may not be available in the future. We expect banking and financial companies, which may have significantly greater resources, to compete for the acquisition of financial service businesses. This competition could increase the price of potential acquisitions that we believe are attractive. If we fail to receive proper regulatory approval, we will not be able to consummate an acquisition. Our regulators consider our capital, liquidity, profitability, regulatory compliance, level of goodwill and intangible assets, and other factors when considering acquisition and expansion proposals. Future acquisitions may be dilutive to our earnings and equity per share of our common stock. We may lose members of our management team and have difficulty attracting skilled personnel. Our success depends, in large part, on our ability to attract and retain key employees. Competition for the best people can be intense. The unexpected loss of key personnel could have a material adverse impact on our business due to the loss of certain skills, market knowledge, and industry experience and the difficulty of promptly finding qualified replacement personnel. Certain existing and proposed regulatory guidance on compensation may also negatively affect our ability to retain and attract skilled personnel. Our internal controls and procedures may fail or be circumvented. We review our internal controls over financial reporting quarterly and enhance controls in response to these assessments, internal and external audit, and regulatory recommendations. A control system, no matter how well conceived and operated, includes certain assumptions and can only provide reasonable assurance that the objectives of the control system are met. These controls may be circumvented by individual acts, collusion, or management override. Any failure or circumvention related to our controls and procedures or failure to follow regulations related to controls and procedures could have a material adverse effect on our business, reputation, results of operations, and financial condition. We are subject to environmental, social and governance ("ESG") risks that could adversely affect the Company's results of operations, reputation, and the market price of its securities. The Company is subject to a variety of risks arising from ESG matters. ESG matters include environmental and climate change activism, diversity activism, and racial and social justice issues. Such matters may involve our personnel, customers, or third parties with whom we do business. Risks arising from ESG matters may adversely affect, among other things, the Company's reputation and the market price of our securities. Further, the Company may be exposed to negative publicity based on the identity and activities of our shareholders, those to whom we lend and with which we otherwise do business, and the public's view of the approach and requirements of our state or federal regulators, customers, and business partners with respect to ESG matters. Any such negative publicity could arise through traditional media or electronic social media platforms. The Company's relationships and reputation with its existing and prospective customers and third parties with which we do business could be damaged if we were to become the subject of any such negative publicity. This, in turn, could have an adverse effect on the Company's ability to attract and retain customers and employees and could have a negative impact on the market price for our securities. Certain investors have begun to consider the steps taken and resources allocated by financial institutions and other commercial organizations with respect to ESG matters when making investment decisions. Certain investors are beginning to incorporate the business risks of ESG regulation and activism and the adequacy of companies' responses to these into their investment decisions. These shifts in investing priorities may result in adverse effects on the market price of the Company's securities.

~~The U. S. Congress, state legislatures and federal and state regulatory agencies, as well as certain stock exchanges, continue to propose numerous initiatives related to ESG matters. Similar and even more expansive initiatives are expected under the current administration, including potentially increasing supervisory expectations with respect to banks' risk management practices, accounting practices, and credit portfolio concentrations management practices. The lack of empirical data surrounding the credit and other financial risks posed by ESG regulation and activism render it impossible to predict how specifically ESG matters may impact the Company's financial condition and~~

~~results of operations.~~16 Specifically, environmental activism may adversely impact the economic viability of many of the Company's deposit and loan customers in our West Virginia and southwestern Virginia markets. We have customers who operate in carbon-intensive industries like coal, oil and gas that are exposed to climate activism risks and those risks created by a transition to a less carbon-dependent economy, as well as customers who operate in low-carbon industries that may be subject to risks associated with new technologies. Further, the effects of climate change activism may negatively impact regional and local economic activity, which could impact the economies of the communities the Company serves and in which we operate. The Company's business, reputation and ability to attract and retain employees and customers may also be harmed if our response to ESG activism is perceived to be excessive or insufficient. ~~Federal and state banking regulators and supervisory authorities, investors and other stakeholders have increasingly viewed financial institutions as a tool to effect ESG activism, both directly and with respect to their customers, which may result in financial institutions coming under increased pressure regarding the disclosure and management of ESG matters. Given that ESG matters could impose systemic risks upon the financial sector, either via disruptions in economic activity resulting from activism, the Company faces increasing focus on our resilience to ESG risks.~~ Ongoing legislative or regulatory uncertainties and changes regarding ESG risk management and practices may result in higher regulatory, compliance, credit and reputational risks and costs **and may subject us to potentially conflicting requirements**. Item 1B. Unresolved Staff Comments.