

PEOPLES BANCORP OF NORTH CAROLINA INC
Form 10-K
March 21, 2014

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 10-K

ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(D)
OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the fiscal year ended: December 31, 2013

Peoples Bancorp of North Carolina, Inc.
(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in Its Charter)

North Carolina
(State or Other Jurisdiction of Incorporation)

000-27205
(Commission File No.)

56-2132396
(IRS Employer Identification No.)

518 West C Street, Newton, North Carolina
(Address of Principal Executive Offices)

28658
(Zip Code)

(828) 464-5620
(Registrant's Telephone Number, Including Area Code)
Securities Registered Pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act: None
Securities Registered Pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act:
Common Stock, no par value
(title of class)

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act.
Yes No

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Act.
Yes No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days.
Yes No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Web site, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T (§ 232.405 of this chapter) during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files).
Yes No

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Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers in response to Item 405 of Regulation S-K is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendment to the Form 10-K.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer or a smaller reporting company.

Large Accelerate Filer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Accelerated Filer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Accelerated Filer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Smaller Reporting Company	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act).

Yes No

State the aggregate market value of the voting and non-voting common equity held by non-affiliates computed by reference to the price at which the common equity was last sold, or the average bid and asked prices of such common equity, as of the last business day of the registrant's most recently completed second fiscal quarter. \$55,780,675 based on the closing price of such common stock on June 30, 2013, which was \$12.90 per share.

Indicate the number of shares outstanding of each of the registrant's classes of common stock, as of the latest practicable date.

5,613,495 shares of common stock, outstanding at February 28, 2014.

DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

Portions of the Annual Report of Peoples Bancorp of North Carolina, Inc. for the year ended December 31, 2013 (the “Annual Report”), which will be included as Appendix A to the Proxy Statement for the 2014 Annual Meeting of Shareholders, are incorporated by reference into Part I and Part II and included as Exhibit 13 to the Form 10-K.

Portions of the Proxy Statement for the 2014 Annual Meeting of Shareholders of Peoples Bancorp of North Carolina, Inc. to be held on May 1, 2014 (the “Proxy Statement”), are incorporated by reference into Part III.

This report contains certain forward-looking statements with respect to the financial condition, results of operations and business of Peoples Bancorp of North Carolina, Inc. (the “Company”). These forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties and are based on the beliefs and assumptions of management of the Company and on the information available to management at the time that these disclosures were prepared. These statements can be identified by the use of words like “expect,” “anticipate,” “estimate” and “believe,” variations of these words and other similar expressions. Readers should not place undue reliance on forward-looking statements as a number of important factors could cause actual results to differ materially from those in the forward-looking statements. Factors that could cause actual results to differ materially include, but are not limited to, (1) competition in the markets served by Peoples Bank, (2) changes in the interest rate environment, (3) general national, regional or local economic conditions may be less favorable than expected, resulting in, among other things, a deterioration in credit quality and the possible impairment of collectibility of loans, (4) legislative or regulatory changes, including changes in accounting standards, (5) significant changes in the federal and state legal and regulatory environment and tax laws, (6) the impact of changes in monetary and fiscal policies, laws, rules and regulations and (7) other risks and factors identified in the Company’s other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The Company undertakes no obligation to update any forward-looking statements.

PEOPLES BANCORP OF NORTH CAROLINA, INC.
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PART I

ITEM 1. BUSINESS

General

Peoples Bancorp of North Carolina, Inc. (the “Company”), was formed in 1999 to serve as the holding company for Peoples Bank (the “Bank”). The Company is a bank holding company registered with the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (the “Federal Reserve”) under the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956, as amended (the “BHCA”). The Company’s principal source of income is dividends declared and paid by the Bank on its capital stock, if any. The Company has no operations and conducts no business of its own other than owning the Bank and Community Bank Real Estate Solutions, LLC (“CBRES”). Accordingly, the discussion of the business which follows concerns the business conducted by the Bank, unless otherwise indicated.

The Bank, founded in 1912, is a state-chartered commercial bank serving the citizens and business interests of the Catawba Valley and surrounding communities through 22 banking offices, as of December 31, 2013, located in Lincolnton, Newton, Denver, Catawba, Conover, Maiden, Claremont, Hiddenite, Hickory, Charlotte, Monroe, Cornelius, Mooresville and Raleigh, North Carolina. The Bank closed its Gateway office, which served as a satellite location of the Mooresville office, on February 14, 2014. The Bank also operates a loan production office in Denver, North Carolina. At December 31, 2013, the Company had total assets of \$1.0 billion, net loans of \$607.5 million, deposits of \$799.4 million, total securities of \$302.9 million, and shareholders’ equity of \$83.7 million.

The Bank operates four offices focused on the Latino population under the name Banco de la Gente (“Banco”). These offices are operated as a division of the Bank. Banco offers normal and customary banking services as are offered in the Bank’s other branches such as the taking of deposits and the making of loans and therefore is not considered a reportable segment of the Company.

The Bank has a diversified loan portfolio, with no foreign loans and few agricultural loans. Real estate loans are predominately variable rate commercial property loans, which include residential development loans to commercial customers. Commercial loans are spread throughout a variety of industries with no one particular industry or group of related industries accounting for a significant portion of the commercial loan portfolio. The majority of the Bank’s deposit and loan customers are individuals and small to medium-sized businesses located in the Bank’s market area. The Bank’s loan portfolio also includes Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) mortgage loans generated through the Bank’s Banco offices. Additional discussion of the Bank’s loan portfolio and sources of funds for loans can be found in “Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations” on pages A-4 through A-26 of the Annual Report, which is included in this Form 10-K as Exhibit (13).

The operations of the Bank and depository institutions in general are significantly influenced by general economic conditions and by related monetary and fiscal policies of depository institution regulatory agencies, including the Federal Reserve, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (the “FDIC”) and the North Carolina Commissioner of Banks (the “Commissioner”).

The Company’s fiscal year ends December 31. This Form 10-K is also being used as the Bank’s Annual Disclosure Statement under FDIC Regulations. This Form 10-K has not been reviewed, or confirmed for accuracy or relevance by the FDIC.

At December 31, 2013, the Company employed 257 full-time employees and 34 part-time employees, which equated to 279 full-time equivalent employees.

Subsidiaries

The Bank is a subsidiary of the Company. The Bank has two subsidiaries, Peoples Investment Services, Inc. and Real Estate Advisory Services, Inc. Through a relationship with Raymond James Financial Services, Inc., Peoples Investment Services, Inc. provides the Bank's customers access to investment counseling and non-deposit investment products such as stocks, bonds, mutual funds, tax deferred annuities, and related brokerage services. Real Estate Advisory Services, Inc. provides real estate appraisal and real estate brokerage services.

In June 2006, the Company formed a wholly owned Delaware statutory trust, PEBK Capital Trust II (“PEBK Trust II”), which issued \$20.0 million of guaranteed preferred beneficial interests in the Company’s junior subordinated deferrable interest debentures. All of the common securities of PEBK Trust II are owned by the Company. The proceeds from the issuance of the common securities and the trust preferred securities were used by PEBK Trust II to purchase \$20.6 million of junior subordinated debentures of the Company, which pay a floating rate equal to three-month LIBOR plus 163 basis points. The proceeds received by the Company from the sale of the junior subordinated debentures were used in December 2006 to repay the trust preferred securities issued in December 2001 by PEBK Capital Trust, a wholly owned Delaware statutory trust of the Company, and for general purposes. The debentures represent the sole asset of PEBK Trust II. PEBK Trust II is not included in the consolidated financial statements.

The trust preferred securities issued by PEBK Trust II accrue and pay quarterly at a floating rate of three-month LIBOR plus 163 basis points. The Company has guaranteed distributions and other payments due on the trust preferred securities to the extent PEBK Trust II does not have funds with which to make the distributions and other payments. The net combined effect of the trust preferred securities transaction is that the Company is obligated to make the distributions and other payments required on the trust preferred securities.

These trust preferred securities are mandatorily redeemable upon maturity of the debentures on June 28, 2036, or upon earlier redemption as provided in the indenture. The Company has the right to redeem the debentures purchased by PEBK Trust II, in whole or in part, which became effective on June 28, 2011. As specified in the indenture, if the debentures are redeemed prior to maturity, the redemption price will be the principal amount plus any accrued but unpaid interest.

The Company established a new subsidiary, CBRES, in 2009. CBRES serves as a “clearing-house” for appraisal services for community banks. Other banks are able to contract with CBRES to find and engage appropriate appraisal companies in the area where the property is located. This type of service ensures that the appraisal process remains independent from the financing process within the bank.

Market Area

The Bank’s primary market consists of the communities in an approximate 50-mile radius around its headquarters office in Newton, North Carolina. This area includes Catawba County, Alexander County, Lincoln County, Iredell County and portions of northeast Gaston County. The Bank is located only 40 miles north of Charlotte, North Carolina and the Bank’s primary market area is and will continue to be significantly affected by its close proximity to this major metropolitan area. The Bank has two Banco offices in Mecklenburg County, one Banco office in Union County and one Banco office in Wake County specifically designed to serve the growing Latino market.

Employment in the Bank’s primary market area is diversified among manufacturing, retail and wholesale trade, technology, services and utilities. Catawba County’s largest employers include Catawba County Schools, Frye Regional Medical Center, Catawba Valley Medical Center, Merchant Distributors, Inc (wholesale food distributor), Catawba County, CommScope, Inc. (manufacturer of fiber optic cable and accessories), Corning Cable Systems (manufacturer of fiber optic cable and accessories), Ethan Allen (furniture manufacturer), HSM (manufacturing) and Advance Pierre Foods (restaurants and bakeries).

Competition

The Bank has operated in the Catawba Valley region for over 100 years and is the only financial institution headquartered in Newton. Nevertheless, the Bank faces strong competition both in attracting deposits and making loans. Its most direct competition for deposits has historically come from other commercial banks, credit unions and

brokerage firms located in its primary market area, including large financial institutions. One national money center commercial bank is headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina. Based upon June 30, 2013 comparative data, the Bank had 23.38% of the deposits in Catawba County, placing it second in deposit size among a total of 12 banks with branch offices in Catawba County; 9.45% of the deposits in Lincoln County, placing it sixth in deposit size among a total of 10 banks with branch offices in Lincoln County; and 13.14% of the deposits in Alexander County, placing it fifth in deposit size among a total of seven banks with branch offices in Alexander County.

The Bank also faces additional significant competition for investors' funds from short-term money market securities and other corporate and government securities. The Bank's core deposit base has grown principally due to economic growth in the Bank's market area coupled with the implementation of new and competitive deposit products. The ability of the Bank to attract and retain deposits depends on its ability to generally provide a rate of return, liquidity and risk comparable to that offered by competing investment opportunities.

The Bank experiences strong competition for loans from commercial banks and mortgage banking companies. The Bank competes for loans primarily through the interest rates and loan fees it charges and the efficiency and quality of services it provides to borrowers. Competition is increasing as a result of the continuing reduction of restrictions on the interstate operations of financial institutions.

Supervision and Regulation

Bank holding companies and commercial banks are extensively regulated under both federal and state law. The following is a brief summary of all material statutes and rules and regulations that affect or will affect the Company, the Bank and any subsidiaries. Supervision, regulation and examination of the Company and the Bank by the regulatory agencies are intended primarily for the protection of depositors rather than shareholders of the Company. Statutes and regulations which contain wide-ranging proposals for altering the structures, regulations and competitive relationship of financial institutions are introduced regularly. The Company cannot predict whether or in what form any proposed statute or regulation will be adopted or the extent to which the business of the Company and the Bank may be affected by such statute or regulation.

General. There are a number of obligations and restrictions imposed on bank holding companies and their depository institution subsidiaries by law and regulatory policy that are designed to minimize potential loss to the depositors of such depository institutions and the FDIC insurance funds in the event the depository institution becomes in danger of default or in default. For example, to avoid receivership of an insured depository institution subsidiary, a bank holding company is required to guarantee the compliance of any insured depository institution subsidiary that may become “undercapitalized” with the terms of the capital restoration plan filed by such subsidiary with its appropriate federal banking agency up to the lesser of (i) an amount equal to 5% of the bank’s total assets at the time the bank became undercapitalized or (ii) the amount which is necessary (or would have been necessary) to bring the bank into compliance with all acceptable capital standards as of the time the bank fails to comply with such capital restoration plan. The Company, as a registered bank holding company, is subject to the regulation of the Federal Reserve. Under a policy of the Federal Reserve with respect to bank holding company operations, a bank holding company is required to serve as a source of financial strength to its subsidiary depository institutions and to commit resources to support such institutions in circumstances where it might not do so absent such policy. The Federal Reserve under the BHCA also has the authority to require a bank holding company to terminate any activity or to relinquish control of a nonbank subsidiary (other than a nonbank subsidiary of a bank) upon the Federal Reserve’s determination that such activity or control constitutes a serious risk to the financial soundness and stability of any bank subsidiary of the bank holding company.

In addition, insured depository institutions under common control are required to reimburse the FDIC for any loss suffered by its deposit insurance funds as a result of the default of a commonly controlled insured depository institution or for any assistance provided by the FDIC to a commonly controlled insured depository institution in danger of default. The FDIC may decline to enforce the cross-guarantee provisions if it determines that a waiver is in the best interest of the deposit insurance funds. The FDIC’s claim for damages is superior to claims of stockholders of the insured depository institution or its holding company but is subordinate to claims of depositors, secured creditors and holders of subordinated debt (other than affiliates) of the commonly controlled insured depository institutions.

As a result of the Company’s ownership of the Bank, the Company is also registered under the bank holding company laws of North Carolina. Accordingly, the Company is also subject to regulation and supervision by the Commissioner.

Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (the “Dodd-Frank Act”). The Dodd-Frank Act significantly changed bank regulation and has affected the lending, investment, trading and operating activities of depository institutions and their holding companies.

The Dodd-Frank Act also created a new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau with extensive powers to supervise and enforce consumer protection laws. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has broad rule-making authority for a wide range of consumer protection laws that apply to all banks and savings institutions, including the authority to prohibit “unfair, deceptive or abusive” acts and practices. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau also has examination and enforcement authority over all banks and savings institutions with more than \$10 billion in assets. Banks and savings institutions with \$10 billion or less in assets, such as the Bank, will continue to be examined by their applicable federal bank regulators. The Dodd-Frank Act also gave state attorneys general the ability to enforce applicable federal consumer protection laws.

The Dodd-Frank Act broadened the base for FDIC assessments for deposit insurance, permanently increased the maximum amount of deposit insurance to \$250,000 per depositor. The legislation also, among other things, requires originators of certain securitized loans to retain a portion of the credit risk, stipulates regulatory rate-setting for certain debit card interchange fees, repealed restrictions on the payment of interest on commercial demand deposits and contains a number of reforms related to mortgage originations. The Dodd-Frank Act increased the ability of shareholders to influence boards of directors by requiring companies to give shareholders a non-binding vote on executive compensation and so-called “golden parachute” payments. The legislation also directed the Federal Reserve to promulgate rules prohibiting excessive compensation paid to company executives, regardless of whether the company is publicly traded or not. Many of the provisions of the Dodd-Frank Act are subject to delayed effective dates or require the implementing regulations and, therefore, their impact on our operations cannot be fully determined at this time. However, it is likely that the Dodd-Frank Act will increase the regulatory burden, compliance costs and interest expense for the Bank and Company.

Capital Adequacy Guidelines for Holding Companies. The Federal Reserve has adopted capital adequacy guidelines for bank holding companies and banks that are members of the Federal Reserve System and have consolidated assets of \$150 million or more. Bank holding companies subject to the Federal Reserve’s capital adequacy guidelines are required to comply with the Federal Reserve’s risk-based capital guidelines. Under these regulations, the minimum ratio of total capital to risk-weighted assets is 8%. At least half of the total capital is required to be “Tier I capital,” principally consisting of common stockholders’ equity, noncumulative perpetual preferred stock, and a limited amount of cumulative perpetual preferred stock, less certain goodwill items. The remainder (“Tier II capital”) may consist of a limited amount of subordinated debt, certain hybrid capital instruments and other debt securities, perpetual preferred stock, and a limited amount of the general loan loss allowance. In addition to the risk-based capital guidelines, the Federal Reserve has adopted a minimum Tier I capital (leverage) ratio, under which a bank holding company must maintain a minimum level of Tier I capital to average total consolidated assets of at least 3% in the case of a bank holding company which has the highest regulatory examination rating and is not contemplating significant growth or expansion. All other bank holding companies are expected to maintain a Tier I capital (leverage) ratio of at least 1% to 2% above the stated minimum. The Company exceeded all applicable capital adequacy guidelines as of December 31, 2013. At December 31, 2013, the Company’s Tier I risk-based capital and total risk-based capital were 14.83% and 16.14%, respectively.

In July 2013, the Federal Reserve approved a new rule that implements the “Basel III” regulatory capital reforms and changes required by the Dodd-Frank Act. The final rule includes new risk-based capital and leverage ratios, which are effective January 1, 2015, and revise the definition of what constitutes “capital” for purposes of calculating those ratios. See “Capital Requirements for the Bank”, below.

Capital Requirements for the Bank. As a North Carolina chartered, FDIC-insured commercial bank which is not a member of the Federal Reserve System, the Bank is subject to capital requirements imposed by the FDIC. Under the FDIC’s regulations, state nonmember banks that (a) receive the highest rating during the examination process and (b) are not anticipating or experiencing any significant growth, are required to maintain a minimum leverage ratio of 3% of total consolidated assets; all other banks are required to maintain a minimum ratio of 1% or 2% above the stated minimum, with a minimum leverage ratio of not less than 4%. The Bank exceeded all applicable capital adequacy guidelines as of December 31, 2013. At December 31, 2013, the Bank’s Tier I risk-based capital and total risk-based capital were 14.43% and 15.73%, respectively.

In July 2013, the Federal Reserve and the FDIC approved revisions to their capital adequacy guidelines and prompt corrective action rules that implement the revised standards of the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision, commonly called Basel III, and address relevant provisions of the Dodd-Frank Act. “Basel III” refers to two consultative documents released by the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision in December 2009, the rules text released in December 2010, and loss absorbency rules issued in January 2011, which include significant changes to bank capital,

leverage and liquidity requirements.

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The rules include new risk-based capital and leverage ratios, which are effective January 1, 2015, and revise the definition of what constitutes “capital” for purposes of calculating those ratios. The new minimum capital level requirements applicable to the Company and the Bank will be: (i) a new common equity Tier 1 capital ratio of 4.5%; (ii) a Tier 1 capital ratio of 6% (increased from 4%); (iii) a total capital ratio of 8% (unchanged from current rules); and (iv) a Tier 1 leverage ratio of 4% for all institutions. The rules eliminate the inclusion of certain instruments, such as trust preferred securities, from Tier 1 capital. Instruments issued prior to May 19, 2010 will be grandfathered for companies with consolidated assets of \$15 billion or less. The rules also establish a “capital conservation buffer” of 2.5% above the new regulatory minimum capital requirements, which must consist entirely of common equity Tier 1 capital and would result in the following minimum ratios: (i) a common equity Tier 1 capital ratio of 7.0%, (ii) a Tier 1 capital ratio of 8.5%, and (iii) a total capital ratio of 10.5%. The new capital conservation buffer requirement will be phased in beginning in January 2016 at 0.625% of risk-weighted assets and would increase by that amount each year until fully implemented in January 2019. An institution would be subject to limitations on paying dividends, engaging in share repurchases, and paying discretionary bonuses if its capital level falls below the buffer amount. These limitations would establish a maximum percentage of eligible retained income that could be utilized for such actions.

Dividend and Repurchase Limitations. The Company must obtain Federal Reserve approval prior to repurchasing its common stock in excess of 10% of its net worth during any twelve-month period unless the Company (i) both before and after the redemption satisfies capital requirements for “well capitalized” state member banks; (ii) received a one or two rating in its last examination; and (iii) is not the subject of any unresolved supervisory issues.

Neither the Commissioner nor the FDIC have promulgated any regulations specifically limiting the right of the Company to pay dividends and repurchase shares. However, the ability of the Company to pay dividends or repurchase shares may be dependent upon the Company’s receipt of dividends from the Bank.

Dividends may be paid by the Bank from undivided profits, which are determined by deducting and charging certain items against actual profits. An insured depository institution, such as the Bank, is prohibited from making capital distributions, including the payment of dividends, if, after making such distribution, the institution would become “undercapitalized” (as such term is defined in the applicable law and regulations).

Deposit Insurance. The Bank’s deposits are insured up to applicable limits by the Deposit Insurance Fund (“DIF”) of the FDIC. The Bank’s deposits, therefore, are subject to FDIC deposit insurance assessment.

On November 12, 2009, the FDIC amended its regulations requiring certain insured institutions to prepay their estimated quarterly risk-based assessments for the fourth quarter of 2009, and for all of 2010, 2011, and 2012. The Bank’s prepaid assessment for these periods was \$5.0 million and was paid on December 30, 2009, along with its regular quarterly risk-based deposit insurance assessment for the third quarter of 2009. The prepayment has been treated as a prepaid expense on the books of the Bank, and recognized as an expense in the period for which the assessment is effective. The FDIC issued refunds of any unused prepaid assessment credits in June 2013. The Bank received a prepaid assessment refund of \$1.2 million.

The Dodd-Frank Act permanently increases the maximum deposit insurance amount for banks, savings institutions and credit unions to \$250,000 per depositor, and extended unlimited deposit insurance to non-interest bearing transaction accounts through December 31, 2012. The Dodd-Frank Act also broadens the base for FDIC insurance assessments. Assessments will now be based on the average consolidated total assets less tangible equity capital of a financial institution. The Dodd-Frank Act requires the FDIC to increase the reserve ratio of the DIF from 1.15% to 1.35% of insured deposits by 2020 and eliminates the requirement that the FDIC pay dividends to insured depository institutions when the reserve ratio exceeds certain thresholds.

Federal Home Loan Bank System. The Federal Home Loan Bank (“FHLB”) system provides a central credit facility for member institutions. As a member of the FHLB of Atlanta, the Bank is required to own capital stock in the FHLB of Atlanta in an amount at least equal to 0.20% (or 20 basis points) of the Bank’s total assets at the end of each calendar year, plus 4.5% of its outstanding advances (borrowings) from the FHLB of Atlanta under the new activity-based stock ownership requirement. On December 31, 2013, the Bank was in compliance with this requirement.

Community Reinvestment. Under the Community Reinvestment Act (“CRA”), as implemented by regulations of the FDIC, an insured institution has a continuing and affirmative obligation consistent with its safe and sound operation to help meet the credit needs of its entire community, including low and moderate income neighborhoods. The CRA does not establish specific lending requirements or programs for financial institutions, nor does it limit an institution’s discretion to develop, consistent with the CRA, the types of products and services that it believes are best suited to its particular community. The CRA requires the federal banking regulators, in connection with their examinations of insured institutions, to assess the institutions’ records of meeting the credit needs of their communities, using the ratings of “outstanding,” “satisfactory,” “needs to improve,” or “substantial noncompliance,” and to take that record into account in its evaluation of certain applications by those institutions. All institutions are required to make public disclosure of their CRA performance ratings. The Bank received a “satisfactory” rating in its last CRA examination, which was conducted during July 2010.

Prompt Corrective Action. The FDIC has broad powers to take corrective action to resolve the problems of insured depository institutions. The extent of these powers will depend upon whether the institution in question is “well capitalized,” “adequately capitalized,” “undercapitalized,” “significantly undercapitalized,” or “critically undercapitalized.” Under the regulations, an institution is considered: (A) “well capitalized” if it has (i) a total risk-based capital ratio of 10% or greater, (ii) a Tier I risk-based capital ratio of 6% or greater, (iii) a leverage ratio of 5% or greater and (iv) is not subject to any order or written directive to meet and maintain a specific capital level for any capital measure; (B) “adequately capitalized” if it has (i) a total risk-based capital ratio of 8% or greater, (ii) a Tier I risk-based capital ratio of 4% or greater and (iii) a leverage ratio of 4% or greater (or 3% or greater in the case of an institution with the highest examination rating); (C) “undercapitalized” if it has (i) a total risk-based capital ratio of less than 8%, (ii) a Tier I risk-based capital ratio of less than 4% or (iii) a leverage ratio of less than 4% (or 3% in the case of an institution with the highest examination rating); (D) “significantly undercapitalized” if it has (i) a total risk-based capital ratio of less than 6%, or (ii) a Tier I risk-based capital ratio of less than 3% or (iii) a leverage ratio of less than 3%; and (E) “critically undercapitalized” if the institution has a ratio of tangible equity to total assets equal to or less than 2%. At December 31, 2013, the Bank has requisite capital levels to qualify as “well capitalized”.

Changes in Control. The BHCA prohibits the Company from acquiring direct or indirect control of more than 5% of the outstanding voting stock or substantially all of the assets of any bank or savings bank or merging or consolidating with another bank holding company or savings bank holding company without prior approval of the Federal Reserve. Similarly, Federal Reserve approval (or, in certain cases, non-disapproval) must be obtained prior to any person acquiring control of the Company. Control is conclusively presumed to exist if, among other things, a person acquires more than 25% of any class of voting stock of the Company or controls in any manner the election of a majority of the directors of the Company. Control is presumed to exist if a person acquires more than 10% of any class of voting stock and the stock is registered under Section 12 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended from time to time (the “Exchange Act”), or the acquiror will be the largest shareholder after the acquisition.

Federal Securities Law. The Company has registered its common stock with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC”) pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Exchange Act. As a result of such registration, the proxy and tender offer rules, insider trading reporting requirements, annual and periodic reporting and other requirements of the Exchange Act are applicable to the Company.

Transactions with Affiliates. Under current federal law, depository institutions are subject to the restrictions contained in Section 22(h) of the Federal Reserve Act with respect to loans to directors, executive officers and principal shareholders. Under Section 22(h), loans to directors, executive officers and shareholders who own more than 10% of a depository institution (18% in the case of institutions located in an area with less than 30,000 in population), and certain affiliated entities of any of the foregoing, may not exceed, together with all other outstanding loans to such person and affiliated entities, the institution’s loans-to-one-borrower limit (as discussed below). Section 22(h) also prohibits loans above amounts prescribed by the appropriate federal banking agency to directors, executive officers and shareholders who own more than 10% of an institution, and their respective affiliates, unless such loans are approved in advance by a majority of the board of directors of the institution. Any “interested” director may not participate in the voting. The FDIC has prescribed the loan amount (which includes all other outstanding loans to such person), as to which such prior board of director approval is required, as being the greater of \$25,000 or 5% of capital and surplus (up to \$500,000). Further, pursuant to Section 22(h), the Federal Reserve requires that loans to directors, executive officers, and principal shareholders be made on terms substantially the same as offered in comparable transactions with non-executive employees of the Bank. The FDIC has imposed additional limits on the amount a bank can loan to an executive officer.

Loans to One Borrower. The Bank is subject to the Commissioner’s loans-to-one-borrower limits which are substantially the same as those applicable to national banks. Under these limits, no loans and extensions of credit to any borrower outstanding at one time and not fully secured by readily marketable collateral shall exceed 15% of the

Bank's total equity capital. At December 31, 2013, this limit was \$15.1 million. This limit is increased by an additional 10% of the Bank's total equity capital, or \$25.1 million as of December 31, 2013, for loans and extensions of credit that are fully secured by readily marketable collateral.

Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act. The federal Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (the "GLB Act") dramatically changed various federal laws governing the banking, securities and insurance industries. The GLB Act expanded opportunities for banks and bank holding companies to provide services and engage in other revenue-generating activities that previously were prohibited. In doing so, it increased competition in the financial services industry, presenting greater opportunities for our larger competitors, which were more able to expand their service and products than smaller, community-oriented financial institutions, such as the Bank.

USA Patriot Act of 2001. The Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act (the “Patriot Act”) was enacted in response to the terrorist attacks that occurred in New York, Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C. on September 11, 2001. The Patriot Act was intended to strengthen the ability of U.S. law enforcement and the intelligence community to work cohesively to combat terrorism on a variety of fronts. The impact of the Patriot Act on financial institutions of all kinds has been significant and wide ranging. The Patriot Act contains sweeping anti-money laundering and financial transparency laws and requires various regulations, including standards for verifying customer identification at account opening, and rules to promote cooperation among financial institutions, regulators, and law enforcement entities in identifying parties that may be involved in terrorism or money laundering.

Interstate Banking and Branching. The BHCA was amended by the Interstate Banking Act. The Interstate Banking Act provides that adequately capitalized and managed financial and bank holding companies are permitted to acquire banks in any state.

State law prohibiting interstate banking or discriminating against out-of-state banks are preempted. States are not permitted to enact laws opting out of this provision; however, states are allowed to adopt a minimum age restriction requiring that target banks located within the state be in existence for a period of years, up to a maximum of five years, before a bank may be subject to the Interstate Banking Act. The Interstate Banking Act, as amended by the Dodd-Frank Act, establishes deposit caps which prohibit acquisitions that result in the acquiring company controlling 30% or more of the deposits of insured banks and thrift institutions held in the state in which the target maintains a branch or 10% or more of the deposits nationwide. States have the authority to waive the 30% deposit cap. State-level deposit caps are not preempted as long as they do not discriminate against out-of-state companies, and the federal deposit caps apply only to initial entry acquisitions.

Under the Dodd-Frank Act, national banks and state banks are able to establish branches in any state if that state would permit the establishment of the branch by a state bank chartered in that state. North Carolina law permits a state bank to establish a branch of the bank anywhere in the state. Accordingly, under the Dodd-Frank Act, a bank with its headquarters outside the State of North Carolina may establish branches anywhere within North Carolina.

Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002. The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 is federal legislation issued to address accounting, corporate governance and disclosure issues. The impact of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act has been wide-ranging as it applied to all public companies and imposed significant new requirements for public company governance and disclosure requirements.

In general, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act mandated important corporate governance and financial reporting requirements intended to enhance the accuracy and transparency of public companies’ reported financial results. It established new responsibilities for corporate chief executive officers, chief financial officers and audit committees in the financial reporting process and created a new regulatory body to oversee auditors of public companies. It backed these requirements with SEC enforcement tools, increased criminal penalties for federal mail, wire and securities fraud, and created new criminal penalties for document and record destruction in connection with federal investigations. It also increased the opportunity for more private litigation by lengthening the statute of limitations for securities fraud claims and provided federal corporate whistleblower protection.

The economic and operational effects of this legislation on public companies, including us, have been significant in terms of the time, resources and costs associated with complying with the law.

Government Monetary Policies and Economic Controls. Our earnings and growth, as well as the earnings and growth of the banking industry, are affected by the credit policies of monetary authorities, including the Federal Reserve. An important function of the Federal Reserve is to regulate the national supply of bank credit in order to combat recession

and curb inflationary pressures. Among the instruments of monetary policy used by the Federal Reserve to implement these objectives are open market operations in U.S. government securities, changes in reserve requirements against member bank deposits, and changes in the Federal Reserve discount rate. These means are used in varying combinations to influence overall growth of bank loans, investments, and deposits, and may also affect interest rates charged on loans or paid for deposits. The monetary policies of the Federal Reserve authorities have had a significant effect on the operating results of commercial banks in the past and are expected to continue to have such an effect in the future.

In view of changing conditions in the national economy and in money markets, as well as the effect of credit policies by monetary and fiscal authorities, including the Federal Reserve, no prediction can be made as to possible future changes in interest rates, deposit levels, and loan demand, or their effect on our business and earnings or on the financial condition of our various customers.

Limits on Rates Paid on Deposits and Brokered Deposits. FDIC regulations limit the ability of insured depository institutions to accept, renew or roll-over deposits by offering rates of interest which are significantly higher than the prevailing rates of interest on deposits offered by other insured depository institutions having the same type of charter in such depository institution's normal market area. Under these regulations, "well capitalized" depository institutions may accept, renew or roll-over such deposits without restriction, "adequately capitalized" depository institutions may accept, renew or roll-over such deposits with a waiver from the FDIC (subject to certain restrictions on payments of rates) and "undercapitalized" depository institutions may not accept, renew, or roll-over such deposits. Definitions of "well capitalized," "adequately capitalized" and "undercapitalized" are the same as the definitions adopted by the FDIC to implement the prompt corrective action provisions discussed above.

Other. Additional regulations require annual examinations of all insured depository institutions by the appropriate federal banking agency, with some exceptions for small, well-capitalized institutions and state chartered institutions examined by state regulators. Additional regulations also establish operational and managerial, asset quality, earnings and stock valuation standards for insured depository institutions, as well as compensation standards.

The Bank is subject to examination by the FDIC and the Commissioner. In addition, the Bank is subject to various other state and federal laws and regulations, including state usury laws, laws relating to fiduciaries, consumer credit and equal credit, fair credit reporting laws and laws relating to branch banking. The Bank, as an insured North Carolina commercial bank, is prohibited from engaging as a principal in activities that are not permitted for national banks, unless (i) the FDIC determines that the activity would pose no significant risk to the appropriate deposit insurance fund and (ii) the Bank is, and continues to be, in compliance with all applicable capital standards.

Future Requirements. Statutes and regulations, which contain wide-ranging proposals for altering the structures, regulations and competitive relationships of financial institutions, are introduced regularly. Neither the Company nor the Bank can predict whether or what form any proposed statute or regulation will be adopted or the extent to which the business of the Company or the Bank may be affected by such statute or regulation.

ITEM 1A. RISK FACTORS

The following are potential risks that management considers material and that could affect the future operating results and financial condition of the Bank and the Company. The risks are not listed in any particular order of importance, and there is the potential that there are other risks that have either not been identified or that management believed to be immaterial but which could in fact adversely affect the Bank's operating results and financial condition.

Our business has been and may continue to be adversely affected by current conditions in the financial markets and economic conditions generally.

The global, U.S. and North Carolina economies, have not fully recovered from disruptions in the capital and credit markets that first occurred during 2008. Since 2008, dramatic declines in the housing market, with falling home prices and increasing foreclosures and unemployment, have resulted in significant write-downs of asset values by financial institutions, including government-sponsored entities and major commercial and investment banks. A sustained weakness or weakening in business and economic conditions generally or specifically in the principal markets in which we do business could have one or more of the following adverse effects on our business: