

# **Sterling Financial Planning, Inc.**

SEC File Number: 801 – 56025

## **Part 2A, Firm Brochure Dated February 3, 2014**

Contact: Bruce Tucker, Chief Compliance Officer  
60 Blue Heron Road, Suite 201  
Sparta, New Jersey 07871  
[www.sterlingadvice.com](http://www.sterlingadvice.com)

This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Sterling Financial Planning, Inc. If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact us at (973) 729-1234 or [btucker@sterlingadvice.com](mailto:btucker@sterlingadvice.com). The information in this brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or by any state securities authority.

Additional information about Sterling Financial Planning, Inc. also is available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov).

References herein to Sterling Financial Planning, Inc. as a “registered investment adviser” or any reference to being “registered” does not imply a certain level of skill or training.

## **Item 2           Material Changes**

There have been no material changes made to Sterling Financial Planning, Inc's disclosure statement since last year's Annual Amendment filing on March 21, 2013.

## **Item 3           Table of Contents**

Item 1	Cover Page.....	1
Item 2	Material Changes.....	2
Item 3	Table of Contents.....	2
Item 5	Fees and Compensation .....	5
Item 6	Performance-Based Fees and Side-by-Side Management .....	6
Item 7	Types of Clients.....	6
Item 8	Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss.....	6
Item 9	Disciplinary Information .....	8
Item 10	Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations .....	8
Item 11	Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions and Personal Trading.....	8
Item 12	Brokerage Practices .....	9
Item 13	Review of Accounts.....	11
Item 14	Client Referrals and Other Compensation .....	12
Item 15	Custody.....	12
Item 16	Investment Discretion.....	12
Item 17	Voting Client Securities.....	13
Item 18	Financial Information .....	13

#### **Item 4            Advisory Business**

- A. Sterling Financial Planning, Inc. (the “Registrant”) is a corporation formed on November 20, 1992 in the State of New Jersey. The Registrant became registered as an Investment Adviser Firm in February 1993. The Registrant is principally owned by Nicholas A. Nicolette, Bruce Tucker and Stephen W. Wescott. Messrs. Nicolette, Tucker and Wescott are the Registrant’s Principals.
- B. As discussed below, the Registrant offers to its clients (individuals, pension and profit sharing plans, business entities and trusts, etc.) investment advisory services, and, to the extent specifically requested by a client, financial planning and related consulting services.

#### **INVESTMENT ADVISORY SERVICES**

The client can determine to engage the Registrant to provide discretionary and/or non-discretionary investment advisory services on a *fee* basis. The Registrant’s annual investment advisory fee is based upon a percentage (%) of the market value of the assets placed under the Registrant’s management, generally between 0.40% and 1.00%.

#### **FINANCIAL PLANNING AND CONSULTING SERVICES (STAND-ALONE)**

To the extent requested by a client, the Registrant *may* determine to provide financial planning and/or consulting services (including investment and non-investment related matters, including estate planning, insurance planning, etc.) on a stand-alone separate fee basis. Registrant’s planning and consulting fees are negotiable, but generally range from \$2,000 to \$6,000 on a fixed fee basis, and from \$150 to \$250 on an hourly rate basis, depending upon the level and scope of the service(s) required and the professional(s) rendering the service(s). Prior to engaging the Registrant to provide planning or consulting services, clients are generally required to enter into a *Financial Planning and Consulting Agreement* with Registrant setting forth the terms and conditions of the engagement (including termination), describing the scope of the services to be provided, and the portion of the fee that is due from the client prior to Registrant commencing services. If requested by the client, Registrant may recommend the services of other professionals for implementation purposes, including the Registrant’s supervised persons in their individual capacities as licensed insurance agents. (*See* disclosure at Item 10 C.8). The client is under no obligation to engage the services of any such recommended professional. The client retains absolute discretion over all such implementation decisions and is free to accept or reject any recommendation from the Registrant. **Please Note:** If the client engages any such recommended professional, and a dispute arises thereafter relative to such engagement, the client agrees to seek recourse exclusively from and against the engaged professional. **Please Also Note:** It remains the client’s responsibility to promptly notify the Registrant if there is ever any change in his/her/its financial situation or investment objectives for the purpose of reviewing/evaluating/revising Registrant’s previous recommendations and/or services.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS**

**Non-Investment Consulting/Implementation Services.** To the extent requested by the client, the Registrant *may* provide consulting services regarding non-investment related matters, such as estate planning, tax planning, insurance, etc. Neither the Registrant, nor any of its supervised persons, serves as an attorney or accountant, and no portion of the Registrant’s services should be construed as same. To the extent requested by a client, the

Registrant may recommend the services of other professionals for certain non-investment implementation purposes (i.e. attorneys, accountants, insurance, etc.), including supervised persons of the Registrant in their separate licensed capacities as discussed below. The client is under no obligation to engage the services of any such recommended professional. The client retains absolute discretion over all such implementation decisions and is free to accept or reject any recommendation from the Registrant. **Please Note:** If the client engages any such recommended professional, and a dispute arises thereafter relative to such engagement, the client agrees to seek recourse exclusively from and against the engaged professional. **Please Also Note:** It remains the client's responsibility to promptly notify the Registrant if there is ever any change in his/her/its financial situation or investment objectives for the purpose of reviewing/evaluating/revising Registrant's previous recommendations and/or services.

**Please Note: Non-Discretionary Service Limitations.** Clients that determine to engage the Registrant on a non-discretionary investment advisory basis **must be willing to accept** that the Registrant cannot effect any account transactions without obtaining prior verbal or written consent to any such transaction(s) from the client. Thus, in the event of a market correction during which the client is unavailable, the Registrant will be unable to effect any account transactions (as it would for its discretionary clients) **without first obtaining the client's verbal or written consent.**

**Please Note: Cash Positions.** At any specific point in time, depending upon perceived or anticipated market conditions/events (there being **no guarantee** that such anticipated market conditions/events will occur), the Registrant **may** maintain cash positions for defensive purposes. All cash positions (money markets, etc.) shall be included as part of assets under management for purposes of calculating the Registrant's advisory fee. **The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, Bruce Tucker remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above fee billing practice.**

**Client Obligations.** In performing its services, Registrant shall not be required to verify any information received from the client or from the client's other professionals, and is expressly authorized to rely thereon. Moreover, each client is advised that it remains his/her/its responsibility to promptly notify the Registrant if there is ever any change in his/her/its financial situation or investment objectives for the purpose of reviewing/evaluating/revising Registrant's previous recommendations and/or services.

**Disclosure Statement.** A copy of the Registrant's written Brochure as set forth on Part 2A of Form ADV shall be provided to each client prior to, or contemporaneously with, the execution of the *Investment Advisory Agreement or Financial Planning and Consulting Agreement*.

- B. The Registrant shall provide investment advisory services specific to the needs of each client. Prior to providing investment advisory services, an investment adviser representative will ascertain each client's investment objective(s). Thereafter, the Registrant shall allocate and/or recommend that the client allocate investment assets consistent with the designated investment objective(s). The client may, at anytime, impose reasonable restrictions, in writing, on the Registrant's services.
- C. The Registrant does not participate in a wrap fee program.

- D. As of December 31, 2013, the Registrant had \$353,804,613 in assets under management on a non-discretionary basis and \$2,890,313 in assets under management on a discretionary basis

## Item 5 Fees and Compensation

A.

### INVESTMENT ADVISORY SERVICES

If a client determines to engage the Registrant to provide discretionary and/or non-discretionary investment advisory services on a *fee-only* basis, the Registrant's annual investment advisory fee shall be based upon a percentage (%) of the market value and type of assets placed under the Registrant's management (between 0.40% and 1.00%) as follows:

#### Annual Fees

	Account Value	Account Fees	
		<u>Per Quarter</u>	<u>Annualized</u>
First	\$0–\$500,000	0.25%	1.00% of Market Value
Next	\$500,000–\$1,000,000	0.20%	0.80% of Market Value
Next	\$1,000,000–\$2,000,000	0.125%	0.50% of Market Value
	Over \$2,000,000	0.10%	0.40% of Market Value

**\*Fees are adjusted for cash inflows and outflows, in excess of \$5,000, during any given quarter.**

### FINANCIAL PLANNING AND CONSULTING SERVICES (STAND-ALONE)

To the extent specifically requested by a client, the Registrant *may* determine to provide financial planning and/or consulting services (including investment and non-investment related matters, including estate planning, insurance planning, etc.) on a stand-alone fee basis. Registrant's planning and consulting fees are negotiable, but generally range from \$2,000 to \$6,000 on a fixed fee basis, and from \$100 to \$250 on an hourly rate basis, depending upon the level and scope of the service(s) required and the professional(s) rendering the service(s).

- B. Clients will have the Registrant's advisory fees deducted from their custodial account. Both Registrant's *Investment Advisory Agreement* and the custodial/ clearing agreement may authorize the custodian to debit the account for the amount of the Registrant's investment advisory fee and to directly remit that management fee to the Registrant in compliance with regulatory procedures. The Registrant shall deduct fees quarterly in arrears, based upon the market value of the assets on the last business day of the previous quarter.
- C. As discussed below, unless the client directs otherwise or an individual client's circumstances require, the Registrant shall generally recommend that Charles Schwab and Co., Inc. ("*Schwab*"), Fidelity Investments ("*Fidelity*") and/or National Advisers Trust Company ("*NATC*") serve as the broker-dealer/custodian for client investment management assets. Broker-dealers such as *Schwab*, *Fidelity* and *NATC* charge brokerage commissions and/or transaction fees for effecting certain securities transactions (i.e.

transaction fees are charged for certain no-load mutual funds, commissions are charged for individual equity and fixed income securities transactions). In addition to Registrant's investment management fee, brokerage commissions and/or transaction fees, clients will also incur, relative to all mutual fund and exchange traded fund purchases, charges imposed at the fund level (e.g. management fees and other fund expenses).

- D. Registrant's annual investment advisory fee shall be prorated and paid quarterly, in arrears, based upon the market value of the assets on the last business day of the previous quarter.

The *Investment Advisory Agreement* between the Registrant and the client will continue in effect until terminated by either party by written notice in accordance with the terms of the *Investment Advisory Agreement*. Upon termination, a pro-rated portion of the earned but unpaid advanced advisory fee shall be due.

- E. Neither the Registrant, nor its supervised persons accept compensation from the sale of securities or other investment products.

## **Item 6            Performance-Based Fees and Side-by-Side Management**

Neither the Registrant nor any supervised person of the Registrant accepts performance-based fees.

## **Item 7            Types of Clients**

The Registrant's clients shall generally include individuals, pension and profit sharing plans, business entities and trusts. The Registrant generally requires a minimum asset level of \$500,000 for investment advisory services. The Registrant, in its sole discretion, may charge a lesser investment management fee and/or waive or reduce its minimum asset requirement based upon certain criteria (i.e. anticipated future earning capacity, anticipated future additional assets, dollar amount of assets to be managed, related accounts, account composition, negotiations with client, etc.).

## **Item 8            Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss**

- A. The Registrant may utilize the following methods of security analysis:
- Fundamental - (analysis performed on historical and present data, with the goal of making financial forecasts)
  - Technical – (analysis performed on historical and present data, focusing on price and trade volume, to forecast the direction of prices)

The Registrant may utilize the following investment strategies when implementing investment advice given to clients:

- Long Term Purchases (securities held at least a year)
- Short Term Purchases (securities sold within a year)
- Trading (securities sold within thirty (30) days)

- Options (contract for the purchase or sale of a security at a predetermined price during a specific period of time)

**Please Note: Investment Risk.** Different types of investments involve varying degrees of risk, and it should not be assumed that future performance of any specific investment or investment strategy (including the investments and/or investment strategies recommended or undertaken by the Registrant) will be profitable or equal any specific performance level(s).

- B. The Registrant's methods of analysis and investment strategies do not present any significant or unusual risks.

However, every method of analysis has its own inherent risks. To perform an accurate market analysis the Registrant must have access to current/new market information. The Registrant has no control over the dissemination rate of market information; therefore, unbeknownst to the Registrant, certain analyses may be compiled with outdated market information, severely limiting the value of the Registrant's analysis. Furthermore, an accurate market analysis can only produce a forecast of the direction of market values. There can be no assurances that a forecasted change in market value will materialize into actionable and/or profitable investment opportunities.

The Registrant's primary investment strategies - Long Term Purchases, Short Term Purchases, and Trading - are fundamental investment strategies. However, every investment strategy has its own inherent risks and limitations. For example, longer term investment strategies require a longer investment time period to allow for the strategy to potentially develop. Shorter term investment strategies require a shorter investment time period to potentially develop but, as a result of more frequent trading, may incur higher transactional costs when compared to a longer term investment strategy. Trading, an investment strategy that requires the purchase and sale of securities within a thirty (30) day investment time period, involves a very short investment time period but will incur higher transaction costs when compared to a short term investment strategy and substantially higher transaction costs than a longer term investment strategy.

In addition to the fundamental investment strategies discussed above, the Registrant may also implement and/or recommend the use of options transactions. With the use of this strategy comes a high level of inherent risk.

The use of options transactions as an investment strategy involves a high level of inherent risk. Option transactions establish a contract between two parties concerning the buying or selling of an asset at a predetermined price during a specific period of time. During the term of the option contract, the buyer of the option gains the right to demand fulfillment by the seller. Fulfillment may take the form of either selling or purchasing a security depending upon the nature of the option contract. Generally, the purchase or the recommendation to purchase an option contract by the Registrant shall be with the intent of offsetting/"hedging" a potential market risk in a client's portfolio. **Please Note:** Although the intent of the options-related transactions that may be implemented by the Registrant is to hedge against principal risk, certain of the options-related strategies (i.e. straddles, short positions, etc), may, in and of themselves, produce principal volatility and/or risk. Thus, a client must be willing to accept these enhanced volatility and principal risks associated with such strategies. In light of these enhanced risks, client may

direct the Registrant, in writing, not to employ any or all such strategies for his/her/their/its accounts.

- C. Currently, Registrant recommends that certain clients allocate investment assets among various mutual funds, exchange traded funds and or individual debt and/or equity securities, in accordance with the client's designated investment objective(s).

## **Item 9            Disciplinary Information**

The Registrant has not been the subject of any disciplinary actions.

## **Item 10          Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations**

- A. Neither the Registrant, nor its supervised persons, are registered or have an application pending to register, as a broker-dealer or a registered representative of a broker-dealer.
- B. Neither the Registrant, nor its supervised persons, are registered or have an application pending to register, as a futures commission merchant, commodity pool operator, a commodity trading advisor, or a representative of the foregoing.
- C.
  - 1. **Licensed Insurance Agents.** Certain of Registrant's supervised persons are licensed insurance agents of Sterling Financial Group, Inc., t/a Sterling Advisors, a New Jersey licensed insurance agency, and in their individual capacities, may recommend the purchase of certain insurance products on a commission basis. As referenced in Item 4.B above, clients can engage certain of Registrant's supervised persons to effect insurance transactions on a commission basis.
    - **Conflict of Interest:** The recommendation by Registrant's supervised persons that a client purchase an insurance commission product presents a ***conflict of interest***, as the receipt of commissions may provide an incentive to recommend insurance products based on commissions to be received, rather than on a particular client's need. No client is under any obligation to purchase any commission products from Registrant's supervised persons. Clients are reminded that they may purchase insurance products recommended by Registrant through other, non-affiliated insurance agents. **The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, Bruce Tucker, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above conflict of interest.**
- D. The Registrant does not receive, directly or indirectly, compensation from investment advisors that it recommends or selects for its clients.

## **Item 11          Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions and Personal Trading**

- A. The Registrant maintains an investment policy relative to personal securities transactions. This investment policy is part of Registrant's overall Code of Ethics, which serves to establish a standard of business conduct for all of Registrant's supervised persons that is



based upon fundamental principles of openness, integrity, honesty and trust, a copy of which is available upon request.

In accordance with Section 204A of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, the Registrant also maintains and enforces written policies reasonably designed to prevent the misuse of material non-public information by the Registrant or any person associated with the Registrant.

- B. Neither the Registrant nor any related person of Registrant recommends, buys, or sells for client accounts, securities in which the Registrant or any related person of Registrant has a material financial interest.
- C. The Registrant and/or supervised persons of the Registrant *may* buy or sell securities that are also recommended to clients. This practice may create a situation where the Registrant and/or supervised persons of the Registrant are in a position to benefit from the sale or purchase of those securities. Therefore, this situation creates a potential conflict of interest. Practices such as “scalping” (i.e., a practice whereby the owner of shares of a security recommends that security for investment and then immediately sells it at a profit upon the rise in the market price which follows the recommendation) could take place if the Registrant did not have adequate policies in place to detect such activities. In addition, this requirement can help detect insider trading, “front-running” (i.e., personal trades executed prior to those of the Registrant’s clients) and other potentially abusive practices.

In accordance with the Registrant’s transaction policy, in advance of the purchase of any equity security, supervised persons must receive prior approval from the Registrant’s Chief Compliance Officer, Bruce Tucker, or Ross Weiner.

The Registrant has a personal securities transaction policy in place to monitor the personal securities transactions and securities holdings of each of the Registrant’s “Access Persons”. The Registrant’s securities transaction policy requires that the Access Person of the Registrant must provide the Chief Compliance Officer or his/her designee with a written report of their current securities holdings within ten (10) days after becoming an Access Person. Additionally, each Access Person must provide the Chief Compliance Officer or his/her designee with a written report of the Access Person’s current securities holdings at least once each twelve (12) month period thereafter on a date the Registrant selects.

- D. The Registrant and/or supervised persons of the Registrant *may* buy or sell securities, at or around the same time as those securities are recommended to clients. This practice creates a situation where the Registrant and/or supervised persons of the Registrant are in a position to materially benefit from the sale or purchase of those securities. Therefore, this situation creates a potential conflict of interest. As indicated above in Item 11.C, the Registrant has a personal securities transaction policy in place to monitor the personal securities transaction and securities holdings of each of Registrant’s Access Persons.

## **Item 12 Brokerage Practices**

- A. In the event that the client requests that the Registrant recommend a broker-dealer/custodian for execution and/or custodial services (exclusive of those clients that may direct the Registrant to use a specific broker-dealer/custodian), Registrant generally recommends that investment management accounts be maintained at *Schwab, Fidelity*

and/or *NATC*. Prior to engaging Registrant to provide investment management services, the client will be required to enter into a formal *Investment Advisory Agreement* with Registrant setting forth the terms and conditions under which Registrant shall manage the client's assets, and a separate custodial/clearing agreement with each designated broker-dealer/custodian.

Factors that the Registrant considers in recommending *Schwab*, *Fidelity* and/or *NATC* (or any other broker-dealer/custodian to clients) include historical relationship with the Registrant, financial strength, reputation, execution capabilities, pricing, research, and service. Although the commissions and/or transaction fees paid by Registrant's clients shall comply with the Registrant's duty to obtain best execution, a client may pay a commission that is higher than another qualified broker-dealer might charge to effect the same transaction where the Registrant determines, in good faith, that the commission/transaction fee is reasonable in relation to the value of the brokerage and research services received. In seeking best execution, the determinative factor is not the lowest possible cost, but whether the transaction represents the best qualitative execution, taking into consideration the full range of a broker-dealer services, including the value of research provided, execution capability, commission rates, and responsiveness. Accordingly, although Registrant will seek competitive rates, it may not necessarily obtain the lowest possible commission rates for client account transactions. The brokerage commissions or transaction fees charged by the designated broker-dealer/custodian are exclusive of, and in addition to, Registrant's investment management fee. The Registrant's best execution responsibility is qualified if securities that it purchases for client accounts are mutual funds that trade at net asset value as determined at the daily market close.

#### Research and Additional Benefits

Although not a material consideration when determining whether to recommend that a client utilize the services of a particular broker-dealer/custodian, Registrant may receive from *Schwab*, *Fidelity* and/or *NATC* (or another broker-dealer/custodian, investment platform and/or mutual fund sponsor) without cost (and/or at a discount) support services and/or products, certain of which assist the Registrant to better monitor and service client accounts maintained at such institutions. Included within the support services that may be obtained by the Registrant may be investment-related research, pricing information and market data, software and other technology that provide access to client account data, compliance and/or practice management-related publications, discounted or gratis consulting services, discounted and/or gratis attendance at conferences, meetings, and other educational and/or social events, marketing support, computer hardware and/or software and/or other products used by Registrant in furtherance of its investment advisory business operations.

As indicated above, certain of the support services and/or products that *may* be received may assist the Registrant in managing and administering client accounts. Others do not directly provide such assistance, but rather assist the Registrant to manage and further develop its business enterprise.

Registrant's clients do not pay more for investment transactions effected and/or assets maintained at *Schwab*, *Fidelity* and/or *NATC* as a result of this arrangement. There is no corresponding commitment made by the Registrant to *Schwab*, *Fidelity* and/or *NATC* or any other entity to invest any specific amount or percentage of client assets in any specific mutual funds, securities or other investment products as a result of the above arrangement.

The Registrant does not receive referrals from broker-dealers.

The Registrant does not generally accept directed brokerage arrangements (when a client requires that account transactions be effected through a specific broker-dealer). In such client directed arrangements, the client will negotiate terms and arrangements for their account with that broker-dealer, and Registrant will not seek better execution services or prices from other broker-dealers. As a result, client may pay higher commissions or other transaction costs or greater spreads, or receive less favorable net prices, on transactions for the account than would otherwise be the case.

**Please Note:** In the event that the client directs Registrant to effect securities transactions for the client's accounts through a specific broker-dealer, the client correspondingly acknowledges that such direction may cause the accounts to incur higher commissions or transaction costs than the accounts would otherwise incur had the client determined to effect account transactions through alternative clearing arrangements that may be available through Registrant.

**The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, Bruce Tucker, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above arrangement.**

- B. To the extent that the Registrant provides investment management services to its clients, the transactions for each client account generally will be effected independently, unless the Registrant decides to purchase or sell the same securities for several clients at approximately the same time. The Registrant may (but is not obligated to) combine or "bunch" such orders to obtain best execution, to negotiate more favorable commission rates or to allocate equitably among the Registrant's clients differences in prices and commissions or other transaction costs that might have been obtained had such orders been placed independently. Under this procedure, transactions will be averaged as to price and will be allocated among clients in proportion to the purchase and sale orders placed for each client account on any given day. The Registrant shall not receive any additional compensation or remuneration as a result of such aggregation.

### **Item 13      Review of Accounts**

- A. For those clients to whom Registrant provides investment supervisory services, account reviews are conducted on an ongoing basis by the Registrant's Principals and/or supervised persons. All investment supervisory and financial planning clients are advised that it remains their responsibility to advise the Registrant of any changes in their investment objectives and/or financial situation. All clients (in person or via telephone) are encouraged to review financial planning issues, investment objectives and account performance with the Registrant on an annual basis, as applicable.
- B. The Registrant *may* conduct account reviews on another than periodic basis upon the occurrence of a triggering event, such as a change in client investment objectives and/or financial situation, market corrections and client request.
- C. Clients are provided with transaction confirmation notices and regular summary account statements directly from the broker-dealer/custodian for the client accounts. Those

clients to whom Registrant provides investment supervisory services will also receive a quarterly report from the Registrant summarizing account activity and performance.

#### **Item 14      Client Referrals and Other Compensation**

- A. As referenced in Item 12.A.1 above, the Registrant may receive an indirect economic benefit from *Schwab*, *Fidelity* and/or *NATC*. The Registrant, without cost (and/or at a discount), may receive support services and/or products from *Schwab*, *Fidelity* and/or *NATC*.

Registrant's clients do not pay more for investment transactions effected and/or assets maintained at *Schwab*, *Fidelity* and/or *NATC* as a result of this arrangement. There is no corresponding commitment made by the Registrant to *Schwab*, *Fidelity* and/or *NATC* or any other entity to invest any specific amount or percentage of client assets in any specific mutual funds, securities or other investment products as a result of the above arrangement.

- B. Neither the Registrant nor any related person of the Registrant directly or indirectly compensates any person for client referrals.

#### **Item 15      Custody**

The Registrant shall have the ability to have its advisory fee for each client debited by the custodian on a quarterly basis. Clients are provided with transaction confirmation notices and regular summary account statements directly from the broker-dealer/custodian for the client accounts. Those clients to whom Registrant provides investment supervisory services will also receive a quarterly report from the Registrant summarizing account activity and performance.

**Please Note:** To the extent that the Registrant provides clients with periodic account statements or reports, the client is urged to compare any statement or report provided by the Registrant with the account statements received from the account custodian. **Please Also Note:** The account custodian does not verify the accuracy of the Registrant's advisory fee calculation.

#### **Item 16      Investment Discretion**

The client can determine to engage the Registrant to provide investment advisory services on a discretionary basis. Prior to the Registrant assuming discretionary authority over a client's account, the client shall be required to execute an *Investment Advisory Agreement*, naming the Registrant as the client's attorney and agent in fact, granting the Registrant full authority to buy, sell, or otherwise effect investment transactions involving the assets in the client's name found in the discretionary account.

Clients who engage the Registrant on a discretionary basis may, at anytime, impose restrictions, **in writing**, on the Registrant's discretionary authority (i.e. limit the types/amounts of particular securities purchased for their account, exclude the ability to purchase securities with an inverse relationship to the market, limit or proscribe the Registrant's use of margin, etc.).

## **Item 17      Voting Client Securities**

- A. The Registrant does not vote client proxies. Clients maintain exclusive responsibility for: (1) directing the manner in which proxies solicited by issuers of securities beneficially owned by the client shall be voted, and (2) making all elections relative to any mergers, acquisitions, tender offers, bankruptcy proceedings or other type events pertaining to the client's investment assets.
- B. Clients will receive their proxies or other solicitations directly from their custodian. Clients may contact the Registrant to discuss any questions they may have with a particular solicitation.

## **Item 18      Financial Information**

- A. The Registrant does not solicit fees of more than \$1,200, per client, six months or more in advance.
- B. The Registrant is unaware of any financial condition that is reasonably likely to impair its ability to meet its contractual commitments relating to its discretionary authority over certain client accounts.
- C. The Registrant has not been the subject of a bankruptcy petition.

**ANY QUESTIONS: The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, Bruce Tucker, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above disclosures and arrangements.**