

## **Item I: Cover Page**

# **Tull Financial Group, Inc.**

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## **Firm Brochure**

(Part 2A of Form ADV)

This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Tull Financial Group, Inc. If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact us at phone number (757) 436-1122, toll-free (888) 296-7526, or by e-mail to [KLH@TullFinancial.com](mailto:KLH@TullFinancial.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. Registration as an investment adviser does not imply any certain level of skill or training.

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

**March 17, 2016**

## Item 2: Material Changes

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### **Annual Updates to this Brochure**

This brochure will be updated annually (within the first 90 days of TFG's fiscal year-end of December 31<sup>st</sup>), and also "promptly" as needed, when material changes occur since the previous annual release of the Firm Brochure.

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### **Material Changes since the Last Update**

There are no material changes to report.

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### Item 3: Table of Contents

Item 1:	Cover Page.....	1
Item 2:	Material Changes.....	2
	Material Changes since the Last Update .....	2
Item 3:	Table of Contents .....	4
Item 4:	Advisory Business .....	6
	Firm Description.....	6
	Types of Advisory Services.....	6
	Financial Planning .....	6
	Investment Proposal .....	7
	Investment Supervisory Services.....	7
	Larger Business Retirement Plan Support.....	7
	Hourly Services.....	7
	Personalized Services.....	8
	Assets Under Management .....	8
Item 5:	Fees and Compensation.....	8
	Description.....	8
	Financial Planning.....	8
	Investment Proposal or Retirement Projection (without a Financial Plan) .....	8
	Investment Supervisory Services.....	9
	Former Clients of LiveOak LLC.....	9
	Small Business Retirement Plan Support.....	9
	Larger Business Retirement Plan Support.....	9
	Hourly Services.....	10
	Fee Billing.....	10
	Other Fees.....	10
	Past Due Accounts and Termination of Agreement .....	10
	Compensation for Sales of Investment Products .....	11
Item 6:	Performance-Based Fees .....	11
	Sharing of Capital Gains.....	11
Item 7:	Types of Clients.....	11
Item 8:	Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss.....	12
	Methods of Analysis.....	12
	Investment Strategies.....	12
	Risk of Loss.....	13
Item 9:	Disciplinary Information .....	15
	Legal and Disciplinary .....	15
Item 10:	Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations.....	15
	Activities .....	15
	Affiliations .....	15
	Other Relationships.....	16
Item 11:	Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions and Personal Trading.....	16
	Code of Ethics .....	16
	Participation or Interest in Client Transactions .....	16
Item 12:	Brokerage Practices.....	17
	Selecting Brokerage Firms .....	17
	Soft Dollars.....	17
	Directed Brokerage.....	18
Item 13:	Review of Accounts.....	18
	Periodic Reviews .....	18

Review Triggers .....	18
Regular Reports .....	19
Item 14: Client Referrals and Other Compensation.....	19
Incoming Referrals .....	19
Referrals to Other Professionals .....	19
Item 15: Custody .....	19
Account Statements .....	19
Item 16: Investment Discretion.....	19
Discretionary Authority for Trading.....	19
Limited Power of Attorney.....	20
Item 17: Voting Client Securities .....	20
Proxy Votes.....	20
Item 18: Financial Information .....	20
Financial Condition .....	20

## Item 4: Advisory Business

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### Firm Description

Tull Financial Group, Inc. (TFG, the firm) was first incorporated as R.W. Tull & Associates, Inc. in 1992 by Robert W. Tull, Jr. The principals owners of the Firm are Robert W. Tull, Jr. and Cathy C. Tull. There are currently 6 full-time employees including two Certified Financial Planner™ designees, one Registered Paraplanner®, and one Registered Financial Consultant also credentialed with National Social Security Advisors<sup>SM</sup>. Also, TFG will, from time to time, contract with other individuals on an “as needed” basis, including marketing and paraplanning support. The firm is federally registered with the SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission) as a Registered Investment Adviser.

Tull Financial Group, Inc. offers investment management and financial planning to individuals, families, and their related trusts and family businesses. TFG works with clients to define their financial concerns, goals, and objectives, and to develop strategies for reaching those objectives, some of which may include: cash flow and spending plan management, tax planning, college planning, investment planning, insurance and risk review, retirement planning, and estate planning, company retirement plan evaluations, Social Security and Medicare options, and/or other issues specific to the client.

We may recommend other professionals (such as lawyers, accountants, insurance agents, etc.) at the request of the client. Other professionals are engaged directly by the client on an as-needed basis even when recommended by the Advisor. Any conflicts of interest will be disclosed to the client and managed in the best interest of the client.

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### Types of Advisory Services

The primary type of advisory service offered by Tull Financial Group, Inc. is investment supervisory services (also called asset management). TFG also offers financial planning services to accompany and/or enhance client investment supervisory services. Other services requested by clients that are isolated in scope are handled on an hourly basis. It is always TFG’s intent that a financial plan or investment proposal will culminate in an ongoing relationship with the client as their Trusted Advisor.

In performing its services, Tull Financial Group, Inc. is not required to verify any information received from the client or from the client’s other professionals. Each client is advised that it remains his/her responsibility to promptly notify Tull Financial Group, Inc. when there is any change in his/her financial situation and/or financial objectives for the purpose of reviewing, evaluating, or revising previous recommendations and/or services.

The following are typical planning arrangements offered to clients:

#### **Financial Planning**

This offered service includes modular (topic-specific) or broader financial planning as appropriate for the client, through implementation of the Financial Planning Association’s 6 steps to the financial planning procedure: Clarifying goals & objectives, gathering data, analyzing the situation, recommending a strategy, implementation of the plan, and ongoing monitoring. The topics can include cash flow and spending plan management, tax planning, college planning, investment planning, insurance and risk review, retirement planning, estate evaluation, company retirement plan evaluations, and/or other issues specific to the client. A written evaluation of the client’s current situation and their goals is provided to the client.

Recommendations are given in each area specifically requested by the client. This service typically includes two meetings in addition to the introductory meeting.

For clients whose relationship with TFG begins with a Financial Plan: Upon presentation of the client's financial plan (the 'recommendations' step), a client may choose to engage TFG for implementation of the plan, which may involve either Investment Supervisory Services, or hourly services.

### **Investment Proposal**

An Investment Proposal involves a process of identifying the client's portfolio and the goals and objectives, measuring the client's risk tolerance, the development of a mutually agreed upon Investment Policy Statement (IPS), and a recommended investment plan per account, complete with fund selections and allocations. This service can be offered singularly, or as part of a broader Financial Plan. The Investment Proposal is the beginning point for engaging TFG for Investment Supervisory Services.

### **Investment Supervisory Services**

The majority of services are provided by Tull Financial Group, Inc. to its clients through Investment Supervisory Services. Some clients opt to engage in Investment Supervisory services without financial planning, as TFG does not require financial planning to accompany this service. Investment Supervisory Services begin with the Investment Proposal described above, which culminates in a mutually agreed upon Investment Policy Statement (IPS). The IPS is the contract by which we guide the client's portfolio allocation, and it provides the benchmark by which a client can understand portfolio performance in light of their risk level. Each client's IPS is periodically reviewed with the client, and mutually agreed upon adjustments are occasionally applied to the client's IPS over time as appropriate to the client's situation. A client engages TFG for Investment Supervisory Services by signing a MAP ("Managed Asset Portfolio") Agreement.

### **Small Business Retirement Plan Support**

TFG provides investment account structure and administrative support for small business owners who offer Simple IRA, 401(k), or other retirement programs to their employees. TFG provides support for enrollment meetings, account application setup, fund selections, and trading support for participants. TFG uses Charles Schwab as custodian for its small business retirement plans, and uses adopted plan administration materials also provided by Schwab (as needed).

### **Larger Business Retirement Plan Support**

TFG provides similar support for larger companies offering 401(k) and Profit Sharing plans to its employees, through a fixed-percentage-fee arrangement as the Advisor associated with that plan. The current custodian for these plans is First Mercantile Trust Company. TFG assists with the plan's transition or setup with the custodian, the fund selections, enrollment meetings, and other support for plan participants.

### **Hourly Services**

From time to time, a client may require financial services isolated in scope, which do not require a financial plan or Investment Supervisory Services. TFG responds to these service requests by clarifying the objective of the project, providing an estimate of hours expected to complete the project, and the hourly rates for this service. An Hourly Services Fee Agreement is signed.

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## **Personalized Services**

Tull Financial Group, Inc. places a top priority on customizing services to suit the individual needs of the client. Client goals and objectives are diagnosed in meetings and through correspondence, and are used to determine the course of action for each individual client. The goals and objectives for each client are documented in our client relationship management system.

Should a client desire to invest in securities outside of TFG's recommendations, they may do so by establishing and funding a non-managed account. The performance for non-managed accounts and investment positions are excluded from TFG's quarterly reporting processes.

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## **Assets Under Management**

As of December 31, 2015, Tull Financial Group, Inc. managed approximately \$168,000,000 in assets for about 223 clients. Of these accounts, roughly \$155,000,000 is managed on a discretionary basis.

## **Item 5: Fees and Compensation**

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### **Description**

Tull Financial Group, Inc. bases its fees on a percentage of Assets Under Management (AUM), hourly charges, and fixed fees. All fees are negotiable at the sole discretion of TFG.

### **Financial Planning**

Initial financial planning fees are determined according to estimated hours and level of complexity based on individual situations and requested areas of review. Fees are determined at the outset, with half payable upon the signing of the Financial Plan Fee Agreement, and the other half payable upon completion and presentation of the plan. The minimum fee charged for a Comprehensive Financial Plan is \$3,000, which includes an Investment Proposal with the Plan. A Modular Financial Plan has a minimum fee of \$2,000 and may not include an Investment Proposal with the Plan.

Occasionally an existing Client engaged in our Investment Supervisory Services will request a Financial Plan, if one was not developed at the beginning of our relationship. In these situations, a Financial Plan will be developed for a one-time fee of \$1,000 or an hourly rate with estimated hours, whichever is less. Reviews of the client's financial planning in the future would take place as needed, at no additional cost to the client.

### **Investment Proposal or Retirement Projection (without a Financial Plan)**

At times a client may request only an Investment Proposal or Retirement Projection for their portfolio. The minimum cost for the Investment Proposal service is \$750. The minimum cost for Retirement Projection service is \$1500. As with Financial Plans, an Investment Proposal or Retirement Projection is half payable upon the signing of the Fee Agreement, and the other half payable upon presentation of the Proposal/Projection.

### **Investment Supervisory Services**

Clients who seek Investment Supervisory Services at Tull Financial Group, Inc. sign the Managed Asset Portfolio (“MAP”) Agreement. This Agreement outlines the parameters of the investment program, including the specific duties of TFG and those of the client, as well as the accounts to be managed by TFG.

The Fees are bracketed, and determined according to these annual percentages:

Fee Brackets				Annual Fee
-0-	through	\$1,000,000	(first \$1 Million in Assets)	= 1.00%
\$1,000,001	through	\$2,000,000	(Next \$1,000,000)	= 0.75%
\$2,000,001	through	\$3,000,000	(Next \$1,000,000)	= 0.50%
\$3,000,001	through	\$20,000,000	(Value exceeding \$2 Million)	= 0.25%

This Fee Bracket system applies to managed portfolios by client household, whether consisting of one account, several accounts, personal investment accounts, retirement accounts / qualified retirement plans, custodial accounts for the benefit of minors, accounts held away from TFG’s recommended custodians, or any combination of these.

The management fee is assessed and applied to client portfolios on a quarterly basis. The client’s fee is based on the market value of the client portfolio as of the last business day of the calendar quarter. The fee schedule, described in annual terms above, is adjusted to one-fourth in order to cover services provided for the subsequent quarter only. (For example, a portfolio valued at \$700,000 on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015 will be assessed a management fee of \$1,750, which is ¼ of 1%. That fee will cover services provided from April 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>.) Fee calculations are fully disclosed to the client in a bill which is included with every Quarter-end report.

Depending upon the extent of service involved, a one-time service fee may be charged to establish the account(s), based upon hourly rates. Management services are considered in-force and billable upon signing the Managed Asset Portfolio Agreement; however, TFG may choose to begin billing once assets have been successfully transferred to TFG’s investment supervision.

### **Former Clients of LiveOak LLC**

In 2012, TFG acquired the assets of LiveOak LLC, a Virginia registered investment adviser. Former clients of LiveOak have fee schedules that were in place while the client was serviced by LiveOak, and these fee structures will continue until at least 2016. Further, these accounts are billed in arrears, while other TFG clients are billed in advance.

### **Small Business Retirement Plan Support**

An initial setup fee is assessed for establishing Small Business Retirement Plan support, and is priced according to the size of the plan and estimated administrative setup time. From here, TFG directly bills a quarterly flat fee of \$ 375 to the business for which Small Business Retirement Plan services are rendered. Fees are made payable by check to TFG.

### **Larger Business Retirement Plan Support**

Retirement Plans involving a professionally-drafted Plan Document and Third Party Administrator are placed in custody with First Mercantile Trust Company, with Tull Financial Group, Inc. described as the Advisor to the plan. Annual Fixed percentage fees are negotiated per plan, between the Business, First



Mercantile Trust, and Tull Financial Group, Inc.

### **Hourly Services**

TFG offers one-time services to clients seeking clarity on a specific subject related to either financial planning or investment management; however, the services will not involve the full development of a financial plan, Investment Proposal or other involved services. For requested services with a clear objective and point of completion, TFG will provide estimated hours for the proposed service, and present a Fee Agreement. Hourly rates range from \$100 to \$300.00. One-half will be billable upon signing the Agreement, and the last half will be paid upon presentation.

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### **Fee Billing**

Financial Plan, Retirement Projections and Investment Proposal fees: These fees are charged ½ upon agreement to engage TFG to develop the Plan and/or Proposal, and the second ½ payable upon presentation. Fees are paid directly from the client to TFG, by check.

Investment Supervisory Services: Currently, clients under the MAP Program have quarterly fees deducted from a designated brokerage account at their qualified custodian to facilitate billing. These clients sign consent in advance to direct debiting of their investment account for MAP quarterly fees. In some limited circumstances, clients may pay for investment supervisory services via check.

Hourly Services: Fees for hourly services are estimated up-front, and included in a signed Agreement of services. Half of the estimate is paid upon agreement, and the other half upon completion of services. Clients may pay by check directly to TFG.

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### **Other Fees**

Custodians may charge transaction fees on purchases or sales of certain mutual funds, stocks, bonds, and exchange-traded funds. These transaction charges are usually relatively small and are incidental to the purchase or sale of a security. In some cases, custodians also charge monthly, quarterly or annual custody fees. Fees for custody are disclosed to clients when this type of arrangement is recommended.

Mutual funds and exchange-traded funds generally charge a management fee for their services as investment managers. The management fee is included within the investment's Operating Expense Ratio (OER). Mutual fund fees also include transaction charges for the purchase or sale of securities within the fund and may charge other fees as disclosed in the fund prospectus. These fees are in addition to the fees paid by the client to Tull Financial Group, Inc.

Please see the Item 12 of this brochure, entitled "Brokerage Practices" for more information.

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### **Past Due Accounts and Termination of Agreement**

Tull Financial Group, Inc. reserves the right to stop work on any account that is more than 60 days overdue. In addition, TFG reserves the right to terminate any financial planning engagement where a client has willfully concealed or has refused to provide pertinent information about financial situations when necessary and appropriate to providing proper financial advice, per the judgment of TFG. Clients

may terminate their agreement with TFG at any time by providing written notice.

Terminating MAP Clients **who are billed in advance of services** will receive an itemized bill detailing services paid but not received (fees are paid to cover services for the following quarter, not the past quarter). Calculations are based on number of days remaining in the quarter that have not received service. Any unused portion of fees collected in advance will be refunded within 30 days.

Terminating MAP Clients **who are billed in arrears of services** will have a partial management fee applied to their account for services rendered but not yet paid. Calculations are based on number of days of service since the prior quarter-end that have not yet received payment. The partial fee will be applied prior to completing the client's disengagement from TFG.

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### Compensation for Sales of Investment Products

The firm's compensation is solely from fees paid directly by clients. The firm does not receive commission based on the client's purchase of any financial product, including insurance. No commissions in any form are accepted.

## Item 6: Performance-Based Fees

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### Sharing of Capital Gains

Tull Financial Group, Inc. does not use a performance-based fee structure because of the potential conflict of interest. Performance-based compensation may create an incentive for the adviser to recommend an investment that may carry a higher degree of risk to the client. However, the nature of asset-based fees allows TFG to participate in the growth of the client's wealth. This also means that our fees can decline when the client's portfolio declines in value.

## Item 7: Types of Clients

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Tull Financial Group, Inc. generally provides investment advice to individuals, families, trusts and estates. Advice may extend to entities related to the client such as small businesses and charitable organizations, including foundations and endowments. Client relationships vary in scope and length of service.

While Tull Financial Group, Inc. does not impose minimum dollar values of assets for individual accounts, we do set the aggregate portfolio for a MAP client's household of managed assets at a minimum of \$500,000, which amount may be waived in TFG's discretion.

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

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### Methods of Analysis

Security analysis methods at Tull Financial Group, Inc. include fundamental analysis. The main sources of information include Litman/Gregory Research ([AdvisorIntelligence.com](http://AdvisorIntelligence.com) web-based subscription), Morningstar reports and research, fund prospectuses, financial newspapers and magazines, research materials prepared by others, filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, and annual reports.

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### Investment Strategies

The primary investment strategy we use for client accounts is tactical asset allocation. Though not standard practice, we may use passively-managed index and exchange-traded funds when appropriate for the client and actively-managed funds, dividend paying stocks, and individual bonds, Municipal bonds and CDs where there are opportunities to make a difference by security selection. Portfolios are generally globally diversified to control the risk associated with traditional markets.

Tull Financial Group, Inc. uses a family of designed portfolios, the contents of which are adjusted as market opportunities are found, and the market dynamics change over time. TFG does not engage in market timing or charting.

The investment strategy determined for a specific client is based upon the objectives, income needs, client's comfort with risk, and tax situation stated by the client during consultations. The client's goals and objectives are documented during meetings and summarized in a signed Investment Policy Statement. The client may change these objectives at any time. This process identifies which portfolio model is best suited to fulfill the client's objectives.

Blended benchmarks are matched to each model portfolio, its performance included alongside the client's portfolio performance in TFG's Quarterly Report.

The portfolios utilized by TFG include:

The **Defensive Balanced Portfolio (80% Fixed Income and 20% Equity)** seeks the highest return possible consistent with a low probability of a loss in excess of 2.5% over a 12-month period. The portfolio is best suited for highly defensive investors, including those nearing or in retirement or requiring withdrawals of some of their invested assets within a three-to-five-year time frame.

The **Conservative Balanced Portfolio (60% Fixed Income and 40% Equity)** seeks the highest return possible consistent with a low probability of a loss in excess of 5% over a 12-month period. The portfolio is best suited for highly conservative investors, including those nearing or in retirement or requiring withdrawals of some of their invested assets within a three-to-five-year time frame.

The **Balanced Portfolio (40% Fixed Income and 60% Equity)** seeks to maximize returns consistent with a low probability of a loss greater than 10% over any 12-month period. The portfolio is well suited for investors uncomfortable with an aggressive all equity strategy who nevertheless require a greater return to reach their specific investment goals.

The **Equity-Tilted Balanced Portfolio (25% Fixed Income and 75% Equity)** seeks to maximize returns consistent with a low probability of a loss in excess of 15% over a 12-month period. The portfolio is appropriate for investors with longer time horizons who are willing to assume above-average short-term volatility in pursuit of long-term growth.

The **Enhanced Equity Portfolio (100% Equity)** seeks to maximize returns consistent with a low probability of a loss in excess of 20% over a 12-month period. It is suitable for long-term investors willing to accept greater (S&P 500-level) risk in pursuit of greater growth.

As assets are transitioned from a client's prior advisors to TFG, clients may hold legacy securities and may place restrictions on individual securities or security types. Legacy securities are those that a client owned prior to or separate from its TFG portfolio. Accordingly, these investments will be placed in a separate account, in order to ensure that the legacy securities are not sold when TFG rebalances accounts. These investments may or may not be included in the assets on which TFG charges its fee. Because these securities are not recommended by TFG, there is no expectation that TFG is monitoring these securities with the same amount of diligence as it is monitoring securities it recommends for clients, but TFG will include these securities in written reports to clients. Due to the fact that these securities are included in reports to clients, they will also be included in the calculation of performance of a client's overall portfolio, which may have an effect on the performance stated to clients on the reports sent to clients each quarter as opposed to the statements provided directly from the custodian.

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## Risk of Loss

All investment programs have certain risks that are borne by the investor. Our investment approach keeps the risk of loss in mind. However, as with all investments, clients face investment risks including the following:

- **Political Risks.** Most investments have a global component, even domestic stocks. Political events anywhere in the world may have unforeseen consequences to markets around the world.
- **General Market Risks.** Markets can, as a whole, go up or down on various news releases or for no understandable reason at all. This sometimes means that the price of specific securities could go up or down without real reason, and may take some time to recover any lost value. Adding additional securities does not help to minimize this risk since all securities may be affected by market fluctuations.
- **Currency Risk.** When investing in another country using another currency, the changes in the value of the currency can change the value of your security value in your portfolio.
- **Regulatory Risk.** Changes in laws and regulations from any government can change the value of a given company and its accompanying securities. Certain industries are more susceptible to government regulation. Changes in zoning, tax structure or laws impact the return on these investments.
- **Tax Risks Related to Short Term Trading:** Clients should note that Tull Financial Group, Inc. may engage in short-term trading transactions. These transactions may result in short term gains or losses for federal and state tax purposes, which may be taxed at a higher rate than long term strategies. Tull Financial Group, Inc. endeavors to invest client assets in a tax efficient manner, but all clients are advised to consult with their tax professionals regarding the transactions in client accounts.
- **Purchasing Power Risk.** Purchasing power risk is the risk that your investment's value will decline as the price of goods rises (inflation). The investment's value itself does not decline, but its

relative value does, which is the same thing. Inflation can happen for a variety of complex reasons, including a growing economy and a rising money supply.

- **Business Risk.** This can be thought of as certainty or uncertainty of income. Management comes under business risk. Cyclical companies (like automobile companies) have more business risk because of the less steady income stream. On the other hand, fast food chains tend to have steadier income streams and therefore, less business risk.
- **Financial Risk.** The amount of debt or leverage determines the financial risk of a company.
- **Default Risk.** This risk pertains to the ability of a company to service their debt. Ratings provided by several rating services help to identify those companies with more risk. Obligations of the U.S. government are said to be free of default risk.
- **Margin Risk.** “Margin” is a tool used to maximize returns on a given investment by using securities in a client account as collateral for a loan from the custodian to the client. The proceeds of that loan are then used to buy more securities. In a positive result, the additional securities provide additional return on the same initial investment. In a negative result, the additional securities provide additional losses. Margin therefore carries a higher degree of risk than investing without margin. Any client account that will use margin will do so in accordance with Regulation T. Tull Financial Group, Inc. may utilize margin on a limited basis for clients with higher risk tolerances.
- **Short Sales.** “Short sales” are a way to implement a trade in a security Tull Financial Group, Inc. feels is overvalued. In a “long” trade, the investor is hoping the security increases in price. Thus in a long trade, the amount of the investor’s loss (without margin) is the amount paid for the security. In a short sale, the investor is hoping the security decreases in price. However, unlike a long trade where the price of the security can only go from the purchase price to zero, in a short sale, the price of the security can go infinitely upwards. Thus in a short sale, the potential for loss is unlimited and unknown, where the potential for loss in a long trade is limited and knowable. Tull Financial Group, Inc. utilizes short sales only when the client’s risk tolerances permit.
- **Strategy Risk.** When investments are made through a strategy, rather than individualized investment considerations, there is always the possibility that individualized investment choices would have produced a more positive result for a client than an approach where investments are made for a group of individuals with common characteristics.
- **Risks specific to private placements, sub-advisors and other managers.** If we invest some of your assets with another advisor, including a private placement, there are additional risks. These include risks that the other manager is not as qualified as we believe them to be, that the investments they use are not as liquid as we would normally use in your portfolio, or that their risk management guidelines are more liberal than we would normally employ.
- **Information Risk.** All investment professionals rely on research in order to make conclusions about investment options. This research is always a mix of both internal (proprietary) and external (provided by third parties) data and analyses. Even an adviser who says they rely solely on proprietary research must still collect data from third parties. This data, or outside research is chosen for its perceived reliability, but there is no guarantee that the data or research will be completely accurate. Failure in data accuracy or research will translate to a compromised ability by the adviser to reach satisfactory investment conclusions.
- **Small Companies.** Some investment opportunities in the marketplace involve smaller issuers. These companies may be starting up, or are historically small. While these companies sometimes have potential for outsized returns, they also have the potential for losses because the reasons the company is small are also risks to the company’s future. For example, a company’s management may lack experience, or the company’s capital for growth may be restricted. These small companies also tend to trade less frequently than larger companies, which can add to the risks associated with their securities because the ability to sell them at an appropriate price may be limited as compared to the markets as a whole. Not only do these companies have investment risk, if a client is invested in such small companies and requests immediate or short term liquidity, these securities may require

a significant discount to value in order to be sold in a shorter time frame.

- **Concentration Risk.** While Tull Financial Group, Inc. selects individual securities, including mutual funds, for client portfolios based on an individualized assessment of each security, this evaluation comes without an overlay of general economic or sector specific issue analysis. This means that a client's equity portfolio may be concentrated in a specific sector, geography, or sub-sector (among other types of potential concentrations), so that if an unexpected event occurs that affects that specific sector or geography, for example, the client's equity portfolio may be affected negatively, including significant losses.
- **Transition risk.** As assets are transitioned from a client's prior advisers to Tull Financial Group, Inc. there may be securities and other investments that do not fit within the asset allocation strategy selected for the client. Accordingly, these investments will need to be sold in order to reposition the portfolio into the asset allocation strategy selected by Tull Financial Group, Inc.. However, this transition process may take some time to accomplish. Some investments may not be unwound for a lengthy period of time for a variety of reasons that may include unwarranted low share prices, restrictions on trading, contractual restrictions on liquidity, or market-related liquidity concerns. In some cases, there may be securities or investments that are never able to be sold. The inability to transition a client's holdings into recommendations of Tull Financial Group, Inc. may adversely affect the client's account values, as Tull Financial Group, Inc.'s recommendations may not be able to be fully implemented.
- **Restriction Risk.** Clients may at all times place reasonable restrictions on the management of their accounts. However, placing these restrictions may make managing the accounts more difficult, thus lowering the potential for returns.
- **Risks Related to Investment Term & Liquidity.** Securities do not follow a straight line up in value. All securities will have periods of time when the current price of the security is not an accurate measure of its value. If you require us to liquidate your portfolio during one of these periods, you will not realize as much value as you would have had the investment had the opportunity to regain its value. Further, some investments are made with the intention of the investment appreciating over an extended period of time. Liquidating these investments prior to their intended time horizon may result in losses.

## Item 9: Disciplinary Information

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### Legal and Disciplinary

The firm and its employees have not been involved in any legal or disciplinary events related to past or present activities.

## Item 10: Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations

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### Activities

Tull Financial Group, Inc. does not participate in any other industry business activities.

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### Affiliations

Tull Financial Group, Inc. does not have arrangements that are material to its advisory business or its

clients with any related person.

### **Other Relationships**

TFG subscribes to research and other web-based services published by Litman Gregory Analytics, and may receive a discount on its subscription fee based on the amount of its clients' assets it invests in investment products managed or advised by affiliated Litman Gregory companies. These investment products include various third-party turnkey asset management platforms through which Litman Gregory Asset Management investment strategies are offered. Because Litman Gregory affiliates earn revenue from other advisers' investments in Litman Gregory Analytics publications. These discounts create a conflict of interest for TFG because the potential to reduce its operating expenses gives TFG a financial incentive to invest its clients' assets in Litman Gregory products.

TFG has an arrangement with First Mercantile Trust Company ("FMC"), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company ("MassMutual"), a retirement plan provider, to make FMC's corporate retirement plan services available to TFG's clients and have TFG market and promote FMC to certain TFG customers. Neither MassMutual nor FMC are affiliated with TFG. TFG receives compensation from these activities, and TFG therefore would have incentive to recommend FMC programs to clients based on the compensation to be received, rather than on a client's needs. The compensation for these activities is therefore a conflict of interest, in cases where TFG clients are involved with FMC and such clients should be aware of this conflict when considering whether to engage TFG. TFG attempts to mitigate this conflict of interest by disclosing to clients, and informing the client that they are free to engage other companies or professionals that are not recommended by TFG. TFG also attempts to mitigate the conflict of interest by requiring employees to acknowledge in the firm's Code of Ethics, their individual fiduciary duty to the clients of TFG, which requires that employees put the interests of clients ahead of their own.

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

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### **Code of Ethics**

A copy of our Code of Ethics is available upon request. Our Code of Ethics includes discussions of our fiduciary duty to clients, political contributions, gifts, entertainment, and trading guidelines.

### **Participation or Interest in Client Transactions**

On occasion, an employee of TFG may purchase for his or her own account securities which are also recommended for clients, and may occasionally purchase the securities at the same time the clients purchase the securities. Our Code of Ethics details rules for employees regarding personal trading and avoiding conflicts of interest related to trading in one's own account. To avoid placing a trade before a client or after a client, all employee trades must be reviewed by the Compliance Officer. All employee trades must either take place in the same block as a client trade or sufficiently apart in time from the client trade so the employee receives no added benefit. Employee statements are reviewed to confirm compliance with the trading procedures.

## Item 12: Brokerage Practices

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### Selecting Brokerage Firms

Tull Financial Group, Inc. recommends that investment accounts be held in custody by Fidelity Institutional Brokerage Group (“Fidelity”) Schwab Advisor Services (“Schwab”). Schwab and Fidelity offer enhanced services to independent investment advisors. These services include custody of securities, trade execution platforms, and access to research not available to the general public. Both Schwab and Fidelity are wholly independent from TFG. It is expected that most, if not all, transactions in a given client account will be cleared through the custodian of that account in its capacity as a broker-dealer.

TFG has chosen to recommend Schwab and Fidelity to its clients based on a variety of factors. These include, but are not limited to, commission costs. Both Schwab and Fidelity have what can be considered discounted commission rates. However, in choosing a broker-dealer or custodian to recommend, we are most concerned with the value the client receives for the cost paid, not just the cost. Schwab and Fidelity add value beyond commission cost. Other factors that may be considered in determining overall value include speed and accuracy of execution, financial strength, knowledge and experience of staff, research and service. Schwab and Fidelity also have arrangements with many mutual funds that enable us to purchase these mutual funds for client accounts at reduced transaction charges (as opposed to other broker-dealers). Schwab and Fidelity have very high market shares of the investment adviser business which makes them the most experienced in matters likely to arise for our clients. TFG re-evaluates the use of Schwab and Fidelity at least annually to determine if they are still the best value for our clients.

For Company retirement plans of significant size, TFG recommends the use of Trust companies for administration of the plan, such as First Mercantile Trust. TFG receives a fixed fee, based on a percentage of plan assets, in connection with the service provided to the Company, upon contractual agreement with the Company.

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### Soft Dollars

Schwab and Fidelity provide us with some non-cash benefits (not available to retail customers) in return for placing client assets with them or executing trades through them. Such non-cash benefits are referred to as “soft dollars”. Currently, these benefits come in the form of investment research and sponsored attendance at various investment seminars. We may also receive such items as investment software, books and research reports. These products, services, or educational seminars are items that will play a role in determining how to invest client accounts. If there is any item that has a multi-use aspect, mixed between investment and non-investment purposes, TFG will determine a reasonable allocation of investment to non-investment use and soft dollars will be allocated only to the investment portion of the product (and we will pay the remaining cost). TFG receives a benefit from these services, as otherwise we would be compiling the same research ourselves. This may cause us, or another adviser, to want to place more client accounts with a broker-dealer/custodian such as Schwab or Fidelity, solely because of these added benefits. However, the value to all of our clients of these benefits is included in our evaluation of custodians. Products and services received via soft dollars will generally be used for the benefit of all clients. However, it is possible that a given client’s trades will generate soft dollars that acquire products and/or services that are not ultimately utilized for that same client’s account. Soft dollars provide additional value, and are accordingly considered in determining which broker-dealer or custodian to utilize as part of our best execution analysis.



We do not consider whether Schwab, Fidelity or any other broker-dealer/custodian, refers clients to TFG as part of our evaluation of these broker-dealers.

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### **Directed Brokerage**

TFG will, on occasion and on a case-by-case basis, allow 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 TFG will not seek better execution services or prices from other broker-dealers or be able to “batch” the client's transactions for execution through other broker-dealers with orders for other accounts managed by TFG. 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.

We do not direct brokerage for specific client transactions except, on rare occasions, individual CDs or bonds, for which we select the best pricing and return on each purchase.

Commission costs per client may be lower on a particular trade if all clients in whose accounts the trade is to be made are executed at the same time. This is called aggregating trades. Instead of placing a number of trades for the same security for each account, we will, when appropriate, execute one trade for all accounts and then allocate the trades to each account after execution. If an aggregate trade is not fully executed, the securities will be allocated to client accounts on a pro rata basis, except where doing so would create an unintended adverse consequence (For example,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a share, or a position in the account or less than 1%.)

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

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### **Periodic Reviews**

MAP Clients: While the frequency of reviews is individually negotiated with each client, TFG seeks a minimum of an Annual MAP Client Review, preferably within the month of the contractual anniversary date with TFG. This in no way restricts requested appointments at other times of the year, and is only a strategy utilized to ensure all TFG clients receive occasional and anticipated reviews with careful attention. Reviews may vary in focus specific to a client's situation and may include asset allocation updates and rebalancing, performance reviews, tax and estate plan reviews, investment reviews, cash flow monitoring, and more.

Account reviews are performed by Robert Tull, Jr., and / or Kirstin Hark. All investment plans are reviewed by either Robert or Kirstin prior to distribution to clients. The number of households for which each reviewer is responsible varies.

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### **Review Triggers**

Account reviews for Comprehensive Financial Planning clients are performed more frequently when market conditions dictate, or when a client's objectives change. A review may be triggered by client

request, a client's annual review, changes in market condition, new information about an investment, changes in tax laws, or other important changes.

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### **Regular Reports**

Written reports are sent to MAP Clients from Tull Financial Group, Inc. every quarter- end (March 31<sup>st</sup>, June 30<sup>th</sup>, September 30<sup>th</sup>, and December 31<sup>st</sup>). The reports consist of a Quarter-end Newsletter from TFG, a statement of the client's accounts (listed by account registration, account number, and investment positions as of quarter-end by number of shares, price per shares, and value), a performance page providing account return over most recent 3- and 12-months, and a detailed invoice for the quarter end.

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

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### **Incoming Referrals**

Tull Financial Group, Inc. has been fortunate to receive many client referrals over the years. The referrals have come from current clients, attorneys, accountants / CPAs, personal friends of employees and other sources. The firm does not pay for referrals.

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### **Referrals to Other Professionals**

Tull Financial Group, Inc. does not directly or indirectly compensate any person who is not advisory personnel when a prospect or clients is referred to them.

## **Item 15: Custody**

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### **Account Statements**

TFG deducts fees from client accounts, but would not have custody of client funds otherwise. Clients will receive statements directly from Fidelity and Schwab, and copies of all trade confirmations directly from Fidelity and Schwab.

We encourage clients to carefully review the statements and confirmations sent to them by their custodian, and to compare the information on your quarterly report prepared by TFG against the information in the statements provided directly from Fidelity and Schwab. Please alert us of any discrepancies.

## **Item 16: Investment Discretion**

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### **Discretionary Authority for Trading**

Tull Financial Group, Inc. accepts discretionary authority to manage securities accounts on behalf of clients. This discretion is exercised within the limitations of the client's Investment Policy Statement. TFG

has the authority to determine, without obtaining prior specific client consent, the securities to be bought or sold. Discretionary trading authority facilitates placing trades in clients' accounts on their behalf so that we may promptly implement the investment policy that they have approved in advance.

On occasion, Tull Financial Group, Inc. may offer services on a non-discretionary basis. TFG monitors the accounts the same way as for discretionary services, but the difference is that changes to your account will not be made until we have confirmed with you (either verbally or in writing) that our proposed change is acceptable to you.

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### **Limited Power of Attorney**

Clients must sign a limited power of attorney per account in order for Tull Financial Group, Inc. to be granted discretionary authority. The limited power of attorney is included in the qualified custodian's account application for our main custodians. For accounts not held with our main custodians, clients may sign a separate limited power of attorney document giving similar discretionary authority to Tull Financial Group, Inc.

## **Item 17: Voting Client Securities**

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### **Proxy Votes**

Tull Financial Group, Inc. does not receive, nor vote proxies for client securities. Copies of our Proxy Voting Policies are available upon request.

From time to time, shareholders of stocks, mutual funds, exchange traded funds or other securities may be permitted to vote on various types of corporate actions. Examples of these actions include mergers, tender offers, or board elections. Clients are required to vote proxies related to their investments, or to choose not to vote their proxies. TFG will not accept authority to vote client securities. Clients will receive their proxies directly from the custodian for the client account. TFG may give clients advice on how to vote proxies.

## **Item 18: Financial Information**

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### **Financial Condition**

Tull Financial Group, Inc. does not have any financial impairment that will preclude the firm from meeting contractual commitments to clients. A balance sheet is not required to be provided because Tull Financial Group, Inc. does not serve as custodian for client funds or securities, and does not require prepayment of fees of more than \$1,200 per client, six months or more in advance.