

# PFS Partners, LLC

## Brochure

**Dated: September 22, 2017**

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This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of PFS Partners, LLC. If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact us at (973) 927-6300 or [david.vollmer@pfs-inc.com](mailto:david.vollmer@pfs-inc.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 PFS Partners, LLC also is available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov).

References herein to PFS Partners, LLC 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 several material changes to this Brochure since PFS Partners, LLC's last Annual Amendment filing made on March 11, 2016. As of March 31, 2017, Michael Babyak transferred his ownership in the firm to David Vollmer. Mr. Vollmer is now the sole owner of PFS Partners, LLC. This Brochure has also been amended at Item 9 to reflect certain disclosures relevant to a FINRA letter of acceptance, waiver and consent Mr. Babyak's entered into on October 19, 2016.

**ANY QUESTIONS: PFS Partners' Chief Compliance Officer, David Vollmer, remains available to address any questions that an existing or prospective client may have regarding this Brochure.**

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

- A. PFS Partners, LLC (the “Registrant”) is a limited liability company formed in June 2008 in the State of New Jersey. The Registrant became registered as an Investment Adviser Firm in November 2008. The Registrant is solely owned by David Vollmer. Mr. Vollmer is also the Registrant’s Managing Member.
- B. As discussed below, the Registrant offers to its clients (individuals, business entities, pension and profit sharing plans, trusts, estates and charitable organizations, etc.) investment advisory services, and, to the extent specifically requested by a client, on a separate stand-alone basis, 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 wrap or non-wrap *fee* basis. (*See* discussion below). If a client determines to engage the Registrant on a wrap fee basis the client will pay a single fee for bundled services (i.e. investment advisory, brokerage, custody). The services included in a wrap fee agreement will depend upon each client’s particular need. If the client determines to engage the Registrant on a non-wrap fee basis the client will select individual services on an unbundled basis, paying for each service separately (i.e. investment advisory, brokerage, custody).

#### **NON-WRAP FEE BASIS**

The client can determine to engage the Registrant to provide discretionary and/or non-discretionary investment advisory services on a non-wrap *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 negotiable and 1.50%.

#### **PFS PARTNERS WRAP PROGRAM**

The Registrant sponsors the PFS Partners Wrap Program (the “Program”) through which it offers discretionary or non-discretionary investment management services on a wrap fee basis. The services offered under, and the corresponding terms and conditions pertaining to, the Program are discussed in the Wrap Fee Program Brochure, a copy of which is presented to all prospective Program participants. Under the Program, the Registrant is able to offer participants discretionary or non-discretionary investment management services, for a single specified annual Program fee, inclusive of trade execution, custody, reporting, account maintenance, investment management fees, and in some instances, fees charged by independent managers and/or separately managed accounts. However, clients may be responsible for, but not limited to, fees for trades executed away from the account’s custodian, trustee fees, mutual fund expenses, ETF expenses, mark-ups, mark-downs, transfer taxes, fees charged by independent managers and/or separately managed accounts (when such managers require the client to enter into a dual contract relationship) odd lot differentials, exchange fees, interest charges, American Depository Receipt agency processing fees, and any charges, taxes or other fees mandated by any federal, state or other applicable law or otherwise agreed to with regard to client accounts (Such fees are in addition to any fees paid by the client to the Registrant and are between the client and the account custodian). Furthermore, clients

who maintain a retirement account with their custodian are generally charged an annual maintenance fee. Clients are charged approximately \$35.00 per year to maintain a retirement account with NFS. This fee would be in addition to the Registrant's Program fee.

The current annual Program fee ranges from negotiable to 1.50%, depending upon the complexity of the account, the amount of the client assets in the Program and the independent/separately managed accounts utilized by the client's investment portfolio.

The terms and conditions for client participation in the Program are set forth in detail in the Wrap Fee Program Brochure, which is presented to all prospective Program participants in accordance with disclosure requirements. All prospective Program participants should read both the Brochure and the Wrap Fee Program Brochure, and ask any corresponding questions that they may have, prior to participation in the Program.

Please Note: As indicated in the Wrap Fee Program Brochure, participation in the Program may cost more or less than purchasing such services separately. When managing a client's account on a wrap fee basis, the Registrant shall receive as payment for its asset management services, the balance of the wrap fee after all other costs (including account transaction fees) incorporated into the wrap fee have been deducted. As also indicated in the Wrap Fee Program Brochure, the Program fee charged by the Registrant for participation in the Program may be higher or lower than those charged by other sponsors of comparable wrap fee programs.

Conflict of Interest: Because Program transaction fees and/or commissions are being paid by the Registrant to the account custodian/broker-dealer, the Registrant could have an economic incentive to maximize its compensation by seeking to minimize the number of trades in the client's account. The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the corresponding conflict of interest a wrap fee arrangement may create.

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

The Registrant may be engaged 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 \$15,000 on a fixed fee basis, and from \$150 to \$300 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 certain of the Registrant's representatives in their individual capacities as registered representatives of Leigh Baldwin & Co. ("LBC") and/or in their capacities as licensed insurance agents. (*See* disclosure below at Items 10.C below). The client is under no obligation to engage the services of any such recommended professionals. 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 their financial situation or investment objectives for the purpose of reviewing, evaluating or revising Registrant's previous recommendations and/or services.

### **RETIREMENT CONSULTING**

The Registrant also provides pension consulting services, pursuant to which it assists sponsors of self-directed retirement plans with the selection and/or monitoring of investment alternatives (generally open-end mutual funds) from which plan participants shall choose in self-directing the investments for their individual plan retirement accounts. In addition, to the extent requested by the plan sponsor, the Registrant shall also provide participant education designed to assist participants in identifying the appropriate investment strategy for their retirement plan accounts. The terms and conditions of the engagement shall generally be set forth in a *Retirement Plan Consulting Agreement* between the Registrant and the plan sponsor.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

**Limitations of Financial Planning and Non-Investment Consulting/Implementation Services.** As indicated above, to the extent requested by a client, Registrant may provide financial planning and related consulting services regarding non-investment related matters, such as estate planning, tax planning, insurance, etc. Registrant **does not** serve as an attorney or accountant, and no portion of its services should be construed as legal or accounting services. Accordingly, Registrant **does not** prepare estate planning documents or tax returns. To the extent requested by a client, Registrant may recommend the services of other professionals for certain non-investment implementation purpose (i.e. attorneys, accountants, insurance agents, etc.), including representatives of Registrant in their separate individual capacities as representatives of Leigh Baldwin & Co. ("LBC"), a FINRA member broker-dealer and/or as licensed insurance agents. 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 Registrant and/or its representatives. **Please Note:** If the client engages any recommended unaffiliated 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-Conflict of Interest:** The recommendation by Registrant's representative that a client purchase a securities or insurance commission product through Registrant's representative in his/her separate and individual capacity as a registered representative of LBC and/or as an insurance agent, presents a **conflict of interest**, as the receipt of commissions may provide an incentive to recommend investment or 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 securities or insurance commission products through such a representative. Clients are reminded that they may purchase securities and insurance products recommended by Registrant through other, non-affiliated broker-dealers and/or insurance agencies. **Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, David Vollmer remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above conflict of interest.**

**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

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 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 maintains 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. **Please Further Note:** When the account is holding cash positions, those cash positions will be subject to the same fee schedule as set forth below. **The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, David Vollmer, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above fee billing practice.**

**Retirement Plan Rollovers – No Obligation / Potential for Conflict of Interest:** A client or prospective client leaving an employer typically has four options regarding an existing retirement plan (and may engage in a combination of these options): (i) leave the money in the former employer's plan, if permitted, (ii) roll over the assets to the new employer's plan, if one is available and rollovers are permitted, (iii) roll over to an Individual Retirement Account ("IRA"), or (iv) cash out the account value (which could, depending upon the client's age, result in adverse tax consequences). If the Registrant recommends that a client roll over their retirement plan assets into an account to be managed by the Registrant, such a recommendation creates a conflict of interest if the Registrant will earn an advisory fee on the rolled over assets. **No client is under any obligation to roll over retirement plan assets to an account managed by Registrant. The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, David Vollmer, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the potential for conflict of interest presented by such rollover recommendation.**

**Use of Mutual Funds:** While the Registrant may recommend allocating investment assets to mutual funds that are not available directly to the public, the Registrant may also recommend that clients allocate investment assets to publicly-available mutual funds that the client could obtain without engaging Registrant as an investment adviser. However, if a client or prospective client determines to allocate investment assets to publicly-available mutual funds without engaging Registrant as an investment adviser, the client or prospective client would not receive the benefit of Registrant's initial and ongoing investment advisory services. Other mutual funds, such as those issued by Dimensional Fund Advisors ("DFA"), are generally only available through selected registered investment advisers. Registrant may allocate client investment assets to DFA mutual funds. Therefore, upon the termination of Registrant's services to a client, restrictions regarding transferability and/or additional purchases of, or reallocation among DFA funds will apply. **Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, David Vollmer, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above.**

**eMoney Advisor Platform.** Registrant may provide its clients with access to an online platform hosted by "eMoney Advisor" ("eMoney"). The eMoney platform allows a client to view their complete asset allocation, including those assets that Registrant does not manage (the "Excluded Assets"). Registrant does not provide investment management, monitoring, or implementation services for the Excluded Assets. Therefore, Registrant

shall not be responsible for the investment performance of the Excluded Assets. The client may choose to engage Registrant to manage some or all of the Excluded Assets pursuant to the terms and conditions of an *Investment Advisory Agreement* between Registrant and the client. The eMoney platform also provides access to other types of information, including financial planning concepts, which should not, in any manner whatsoever, be construed as services, advice, or recommendations provided by Registrant. Finally, Registrant shall not be held responsible for any adverse results a client may experience if the client engages in financial planning or other functions available on the eMoney platform without Registrant's assistance or oversight.

**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 their responsibility to promptly notify the Registrant if there is ever any change in their financial situation or investment objectives for the purpose of reviewing, evaluating or 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*.

- C. 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.
- D. There is no significant difference between how the Registrant manages wrap fee accounts and non-wrap fee accounts. However, as stated above, if a client determines to engage the Registrant on a wrap fee basis the client will pay a single fee for bundled services (i.e. investment advisory, brokerage, custody) (*See* Item 4.B). The services included in a wrap fee agreement will depend upon each client's particular need. If the client determines to engage the Registrant on a non-wrap fee basis the client will select individual services on an unbundled basis, paying for each service separately (i.e. investment advisory, brokerage, custody). **Please Note:** When managing a client's account on a wrap fee basis, the Registrant shall receive as payment for its investment advisory services, the balance of the wrap fee after all other costs incorporated into the wrap fee have been deducted.
- E. As of December 31, 2016, the Registrant had \$219,061,575 in assets under management on a discretionary basis and \$463,323 on a non-discretionary basis.

## **Item 5 Fees and Compensation**

A.

### **INVESTMENT ADVISORY SERVICES**

The client can determine to engage the Registrant to provide discretionary and/or non-discretionary investment advisory services on a wrap or non-wrap *fee* basis. (*See* discussion below). If a client determines to engage the Registrant on a wrap fee basis the

client will pay a single fee for bundled services (i.e. investment advisory, brokerage, custody).

### **NON-WRAP FEE BASIS**

If a client determines to engage the Registrant to provide discretionary and/or non-discretionary investment advisory services on a non-wrap *fee* basis, the Registrant's annual investment advisory fee shall vary from negotiable up to 1.50% of the total assets placed under the Registrant's management/advisement and shall be based upon various **objective and subjective factors**.

**Fee Differentials**. As indicated above, Registrant shall receive an investment advisory fee based upon a percentage (%) of the market value of the assets placed under management generally between negotiable and 1.50%. However, fees shall vary depending upon various objective and subjective factors, including but not limited to: the representative assigned to the account, the amount of assets to be invested, the complexity of the engagement, the anticipated number of meetings and servicing needs, related accounts, future earning capacity, anticipated future additional assets, and negotiations with the client. As a result, similar clients could pay different fees, which will correspondingly impact a client's net account performance. Moreover, the services to be provided by the Registrant to any particular client could be available from other advisers at lower fees. All clients and prospective clients should be guided accordingly. Since the Registrant's representative shall receive a portion of the advisory fee charged to the client, a **material conflict of interest** arises, because an increase in the management fee paid by the client may result in increased compensation received by the Registrant's representative.

### **PFS PARTNERS WRAP PROGRAM**

Under the Program, the Registrant is able to offer participants discretionary or non-discretionary investment management services, for a single specified annual Program fee, inclusive of trade execution, custody, reporting, account maintenance, investment management fees, and in some instances, fees charged by independent managers and/or separately managed accounts. However, clients may be responsible for, but not limited to, fees for trades executed away from the account's custodian, trustee fees, mutual fund expenses, ETF expenses, mark-ups, mark-downs, transfer taxes, fees charged by independent managers and/or separately managed accounts (when such managers require the client to enter into a dual contract relationship) odd lot differentials, exchange fees, interest charges, American Depository Receipt agency processing fees, and any charges, taxes or other fees mandated by any federal, state or other applicable law or otherwise agreed to with regard to client accounts (Such fees are in addition to any fees paid by the client to the Registrant and are between the client and the account custodian). The current annual Program fee ranges from negotiable to 1.50%, depending upon the complexity of the account, the amount of the client assets in the Program and the independent/separately managed accounts utilized by the client's investment portfolio.

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

The Registrant may be engaged 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 \$15,000 on a fixed fee basis, and



from \$150 to \$300 on an hourly rate basis, depending upon the level and scope of the service(s) required and the professional(s) rendering the service(s).

### **RETIREMENT CONSULTING**

The Registrant also provides pension consulting services, pursuant to which it assists sponsors of self-directed retirement plans with the selection and/or monitoring of investment alternatives (generally open-end mutual funds) from which plan participants shall choose in self-directing the investments for their individual plan retirement accounts. The Registrant charges an annual fee for Retirement Consulting Services which ranges from 0.10% to 1.00% of plan assets depending on the services requested and the size of the plan.

- B. Clients may elect to 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. In the limited event that the Registrant bills the client directly, payment is due upon receipt of the Registrant's invoice. The Registrant shall deduct fees and/or bill clients quarterly in advance, 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 & Co. Inc. ("Schwab") and/or National Financial Services, LLC, ("NFS") a Fidelity Investments company, serve as the broker-dealer/custodian for client investment management assets. Broker-dealers such as Schwab and/or NFS 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). Clients who maintain a retirement account with their custodian are generally charged an annual maintenance fee. Clients are charged approximately \$35.00 per year to maintain a retirement account with NFS.

**Asset Based Pricing Limitations.** Registrant may recommend that it clients enter into an asset based pricing agreement with the account custodian. Under an asset based pricing arrangement, the amount paid to the custodian for account commission/transaction fees is based upon a percentage (%) of the market value of the client's account (generally, the greater the market value, the lower the %). This differs from transaction-based pricing, which assesses a separate commission/transaction fee against the client's account for each account transaction. Account investment decisions are driven by security selection and anticipated market conditions and not the amount of transaction fees payable by the client to the account custodian. The client can request at any time to switch from asset based pricing to transactions based pricing, however, there can be no assurance that the volume of transactions will be consistent from year-to-year given changes in market events and security selection. Thus, given the variances in trading volume, any decision by the client to switch to transaction based pricing could prove to be economically disadvantageous.

- D. Registrant's annual investment advisory fee shall be prorated and paid quarterly, in advance, 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, the Registrant shall refund the pro-rated portion of the advanced advisory fee paid based upon the number of days remaining in the billing quarter.

- E. **Securities Commission Transactions.** In the event that the client desires, the client can engage Registrant's representatives, in their individual capacities, as registered representatives of Leigh Baldwin & Co. ("LBC"), a FINRA member broker-dealer, to implement investment recommendations on a commission basis. In the event the client chooses to purchase investment products through LBC, LBC will charge brokerage commissions to effect securities transactions, a portion of which commissions LBC shall pay to Registrant's representatives, as applicable. The brokerage commissions charged by LBC may be higher or lower than those charged by other broker-dealers. In addition, LBC, relative to commission mutual fund purchases, may also receive additional ongoing 12b-1 trailing commission compensation directly from the mutual fund company during the period that the client maintains the mutual fund investment.

1. **Conflict of Interest:** The recommendation that a client purchase a commission product from LBC presents a conflict of interest, as the receipt of commissions may provide an incentive to recommend investment 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 representatives. **The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, David Vollmer, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above conflict of interest.**
2. **Please Note:** Clients may purchase investment products recommended by Registrant through other, non-affiliated broker dealers or agents.
3. The Registrant does not receive more than 50% of its revenue from advisory clients as a result of commissions or other compensation for the sale of investment products the Registrant recommends to its clients.
4. When Registrant's representatives sell an investment product on a commission basis, the Registrant does not charge an advisory fee in addition to the commissions paid by the client for such product. When providing services on an advisory fee basis, the Registrant's representatives do not also receive commission compensation for such advisory services. **However,** a client may engage the Registrant to provide investment management services on an advisory fee basis and separate from such advisory services purchase an investment product from Registrant's representatives on a separate commission basis.

## **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, business entities, pension and profit sharing plans, trusts, estates and charitable organizations. The Registrant generally requires an asset level \$20,000 per each client account. The Registrant, in its sole discretion, may charge a lesser investment management fee 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)
  - Cyclical – (analysis performed on historical relationships between price and market trends, 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)

**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). Investing in securities involves risk of loss that clients should be prepared to bear.

- B. The Registrant's method of analysis and investment strategy does 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 and Short Term Purchases - 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.

- C. Currently, the Registrant primarily allocates client investment assets among various exchange traded funds and mutual funds, individual equities (stocks) and debt instruments (bonds) on a discretionary and/or non-discretionary basis in accordance with the client's designated investment objective(s).

## **Item 9           Disciplinary Information**

On October 19, 2016, Mr. Babyak agreed to a FINRA letter of acceptance, waiver and consent relating to his participation in an outside business activity while engaged as a registered representative of a FINRA Member firm. Mr. Babyak was subsequently barred from associating with an FINRA member firm.

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

- A. **Registered Representative of LBC.** As disclosed above in Item 5.E, certain of Registrant's representatives are also registered representatives of LBC, a FINRA member broker-dealer.
- B. Neither the Registrant, nor its representatives, 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. **Registered Representatives of a Broker Dealer.** As disclosed above in Item 5.E, certain of Registrant's representatives are registered representatives of LBC, a FINRA member broker-dealer. Clients can choose to engage Registrant's representatives, in their individual capacities, to effect securities brokerage transactions on a commission basis. **Conflict of Interest:** The recommendation by Registrant's representatives, that a client purchase a securities commission product presents a conflict of interest, as the receipt of commissions may provide an incentive to recommend investment products based on commissions received, rather than on a particular client's need. No client is under any obligation to purchase any commission products from Registrant's representatives. Clients are reminded that they may purchase securities products recommended by Registrant through other, non-affiliated registered representatives. **The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, David Vollmer, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above conflicts of interest.**

**Licensed Insurance Agency and Agents.** Precision Financial Services Inc. is an affiliated life insurance agency. The Registrant may refer certain clients to Precision Financial Inc. for insurance services and/or commission products. The recommendation

by the Registrant that a client engage the insurance services of Precision Financial Inc. presents a conflict of interest as certain related persons, including the Registrant's Managing Members, may receive a direct economic benefit from any such referral. No client is under any obligation to engage the services of Precision Financial Inc. Furthermore, clients are reminded that they may purchase insurance commission products recommended by Registrant through other, non-affiliated insurance agencies and/or agents. **The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, David Vollmer, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above conflicts of interest.**

**Licensed Insurance Agency and Agent.** BJ Associates is a related life insurance agency. The Registrant may refer certain clients to BJ Associates for insurance services and/or commission products. The recommendation by the Registrant that a client engage the insurance services of BJ Associates presents a conflict of interest as certain related persons may receive a direct economic benefit from any such referral. No client is under any obligation to engage the services of BJ Associates. Furthermore, clients are reminded that they may purchase insurance commission products recommended by Registrant through other, unrelated insurance agency. **The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, David Vollmer, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above conflicts of interest.**

**Pension Consultant.** Squire Retirement Plan & Consulting Services, Inc. is a related pension consulting firm owned by an investment adviser representative of the Registrant. The recommendation by any investment adviser representative or the Registrant that a client engage the services of Squire Retirement Plan & Consulting Services, Inc. presents a conflict of interest. No client is under any obligation to engage the services of Squire Retirement Plan & Consulting Services, Inc. Furthermore, clients are reminded that they may chose to engage other, unrelated, pension consultants. **The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, David Vollmer, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above conflicts of interest.**

- D. The Registrant does not recommend or select other investment advisors for its clients for which it receives a fee.

## **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 Representatives 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 representatives 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 representatives 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. 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.

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 Access Person of the Registrant must provide the Chief Compliance Officer or his/her designee with a written report of the 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; provided, however that at any time that the Registrant has only one Access Person, he or she shall not be required to submit any securities report described above.

- D. The Registrant and/or representatives 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 representatives 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 11C, 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 and/or NFS. 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 and/or NFS (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 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 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.

1. 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 and/or NFS (or another broker-dealer/custodian, investment platform, unaffiliated investment manager, vendor, unaffiliated product/fund sponsor, or vendor) 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 and/or NFS as a result of this arrangement. There is no corresponding commitment made by the Registrant to Schwab and/or NFS 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's Chief Compliance Officer, David Vollmer, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above arrangement and any corresponding perceived conflict of interest such arrangement may create.**

2. The Registrant does not receive referrals from broker-dealers.
3. 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 or be able to "batch" the client's transactions for execution through other broker-dealers with orders for other accounts managed by Registrant. 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. Higher transaction costs adversely impact account performance. **Please Also Note:** Transactions for directed accounts will generally be executed following the execution of portfolio transactions for non-directed accounts.

**The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, David Vollmer, 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 a periodic basis by the Registrant's Principal, at least annually. All investment supervisory 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 (to the extent applicable), investment objectives and account performance with the Registrant on an annual basis.
- B. The Registrant may conduct account reviews on an other 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, at least quarterly, with written transaction confirmation notices and regular written summary account statements directly from the broker-dealer/custodian



and/or program sponsor for the client accounts. The Registrant may also provide a written periodic report 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 economic benefit from Schwab and/or NFS. The Registrant, without cost (and/or at a discount), may receive support services and/or products from Schwab and/or NFS.

Registrant's clients do not pay more for investment transactions effected and/or assets maintained at Schwab and/or NFS as a result of this arrangement. There is no corresponding commitment made by the Registrant to Schwab and/or NFS 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's Chief Compliance Officer, David Vollmer, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above arrangement and any corresponding perceived conflict of interest any such arrangement may create.**

- B. Neither the Registrant nor any of its representatives compensates any person other than its supervised persons 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, at least quarterly, with written transaction confirmation notices and regular written summary account statements directly from the broker-dealer/custodian and/or program sponsor for the client accounts. The Registrant may also provide a written periodic report 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, client shall be required to execute an *Investment Advisory Agreement*, naming the Registrant as 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, David Vollmer, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above disclosures and arrangements.**