

## Item 1 Cover Page

### **Bentham Wealth Advisors Inc.**

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Telephone: (716) 580-1500

**October 10, 2024**

#### **FORM ADV PART 2A BROCHURE**

This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Bentham Wealth Advisors Inc., "BW". If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, contact us at (716) 580-1500 or [steve@benthamwealth.com](mailto:steve@benthamwealth.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.

BW is a registered investment adviser. Registration with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or any state securities authority does not imply a certain level of skill or training.

Additional information about Bentham Wealth Advisors Inc. is available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov). CRD number 332035

## **Item 2 Summary of Material Changes**

Since our initial filing on August 23, 2024 of this brochure there are no material changes to report.

### **Future Changes**

From time to time, we may amend this Disclosure Brochure to reflect changes in our business practices, changes in regulations and routine annual updates as required by the securities regulators. This complete Disclosure Brochure or a Summary of Material Changes shall be provided to each Client annually and if a material change occurs in the business practices of Bentham Wealth Advisors Inc. Advisors Inc..

At any time, you may view the current Disclosure Brochure on-line at the SEC's Investment Adviser Public Disclosure website at <http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov> by searching for our firm name or by our CRD number 332035.

You may also request a copy of this Disclosure Brochure at any time, by contacting us at (716) 580-1500

## **Item 3 Table of Contents**

<b>Item 1 Cover Page</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Item 2 Summary of Material Changes</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Item 3 Table of Contents</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Item 4 Advisory Business</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Item 5 Fees and Compensation</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Item 6 Performance-Based Fees and Side-By-Side Management</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Item 7 Types of Clients</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Item 8 Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Item 9 Disciplinary Information</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Item 10 Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Item 11 Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions and Personal Trading</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Item 12 Brokerage Practices</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Item 13 Review of Accounts</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Item 14 Client Referrals and Other Compensation</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Item 15 Custody</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Item 16 Investment Discretion</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Item 17 Voting Client Securities</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Item 18 Financial Information</b>	<b>13</b>

## **Item 4 Advisory Business**

### **Description of Firm**

Bentham Wealth Advisors Inc. is registered as an investment adviser with the SEC as of July 2024. We were founded in June of 2024, by Steve Witter and George Harris, who are the principal owners of BW. Kingston Hollman is the firm's Chief Compliance Officer. We are organized as a corporation under the laws of the State of New York.

The following paragraphs describe our services and fees. Refer to the description of each investment advisory service listed below for information on how we tailor our advisory services to your individual needs. As used in this brochure, the words "we," "our," and "us" refer to Bentham Wealth Advisors Inc., or BW and the words "you," "your," and "client" refer to you as either a client or prospective client of our firm.

### **Portfolio Management Services**

Bentham Wealth Advisors Inc. provides discretionary and non-discretionary investment management and related advisory services to its Clients. Bentham Wealth Advisors Inc. primarily employs an investment strategy which reflects a Client's goals and risk tolerance. The process begins with building a profile of where the Client is today and where they want to be in the future. Their goals, in combination with their risk tolerance, will determine the appropriate asset allocation. As the market dictates, Steve Witter will rebalance when necessary. A client may have multiple goals and each goal may have its own asset allocation if appropriate. For example, a retirement account will likely have a different allocation compared to saving for a down payment on a house.

If you participate in our discretionary portfolio management services, we require you to grant our firm discretionary authority to manage your account. Discretionary authorization will allow us to determine the specific securities, and the amount of securities, to be purchased or sold for your account without your approval prior to each transaction. Discretionary authority is typically granted by the investment advisory agreement you sign with our firm and the appropriate trading authorization forms.

You may limit our discretionary authority (for example, limiting the types of securities that can be purchased or sold for your account) by providing our firm with your restrictions and guidelines in writing.

We also offer non-discretionary portfolio management services. If you enter into non-discretionary arrangements with our firm, we must obtain your approval prior to executing any transactions on behalf of your account. You have an unrestricted right to decline to implement any advice provided by our firm on a non-discretionary basis.

### **Ongoing Financial Planning**

This service involves working one-on-one with a planner over an extended period of time. By paying a fixed monthly fee, Clients get to work with a planner who will work with them to develop and implement their plan. The planner will monitor the plan, recommend any changes and ensure the plan is up to date.

Upon desiring a comprehensive plan, a Client will be taken through establishing their goals and values around money. They will be required to provide information to help complete the following areas of analysis: net worth, cash flow, insurance, credit scores/reports, employee benefits, retirement planning,

investments, college planning, and estate planning. Once the Client's information is reviewed, their plan will be built and analyzed, and then the findings, analysis and potential changes to their current situation will be reviewed with the Client. Clients subscribing to this service will receive a written or an electronic report, providing the Client with a detailed financial plan designed to achieve his or her stated financial goals and objectives. If a follow-up meeting is required, we will meet at the Client's convenience. The plan and the Client's financial situation and goals will be monitored throughout the year and follow-up phone calls and emails will be made to the Client to confirm that any agreed upon action steps have been carried out. On an annual basis, there will be a full review of this plan to ensure its accuracy and ongoing appropriateness. Any needed updates will be implemented at that time.

### **Project Based Financial Planning Services**

We provide project based financial planning services on various financial planning topics such as, but not limited to: retirement planning, risk management, college savings, cash flow, debt management, work benefits, and estate and incapacity planning.

### **Employee Benefit Plan Services**

Our firm provides employee benefit plan services to employer plan sponsors on an ongoing basis. Generally, such services consist of assisting employer plan sponsors in establishing, monitoring and reviewing their company's participant-directed retirement plan. As the needs of the plan sponsor dictate, areas of advising could include: investment options, plan structure, and participant education.

In providing employee benefit plan services, our firm does not provide any advisory services with respect to the following types of assets: employer securities, real estate (excluding real estate funds and publicly traded REITS), participant loans, non-publicly traded securities or assets, other illiquid investments, or brokerage window programs (collectively, "Excluded Assets").

### **Wrap Fee Programs**

We do not participate in wrap fee programs.

### **Types of Investments**

We primarily offer advice on Mutual Funds, and ETFs. Refer to the *Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss* below for additional disclosures on this topic.

Additionally, we may advise you on various types of investments based on your stated goals and objectives. We may also provide advice on any type of investment held in your portfolio at the inception of our advisory relationship.

### **Assets Under Management**

We currently report \$74,000,000 discretionary, and \$0 non-discretionary Assets Under Management. Assets Under Management were calculated as of October 10, 2024.

## **Item 5 Fees and Compensation**

### **Portfolio Management Services**

Our fee for portfolio management services is based on a percentage of the assets in your account and is set forth in the following annual fee schedule:

<b>Assets Under Management</b>	<b>Annual Advisory Fee</b>
<b>\$0 - \$2,500,000</b>	1.25%
<b>\$2,500,001 - \$5,000,000</b>	1.00%
<b>\$5,000,001 and Above</b>	Negotiable

The annual fees are negotiable, pro-rated and paid in arrears on a monthly basis. The advisory fee is a tiered fee and is calculated by assessing the percentage rates using the predefined levels of assets as shown in the above chart and applying the fee to the account value as of the last day of the previous month. No increase in the annual fee shall be effective without agreement from the Client by signing a new agreement or amendment to their current advisory agreement.

We calculate period-end account values after all dividends settle in the account, therefore, the account value used to calculate advisory fees may differ from that of the custodial account statement. Our billing invoice will indicate the total account value used to calculate the advisory fee.

Advisory fees are directly debited from Client accounts, or the Client may choose to pay by check. An account may be terminated with written notice at least 15 calendar days in advance. Since fees are paid in arrears, no refund will be needed upon termination of the account.

### **Ongoing Financial Planning**

Ongoing Financial Planning consists of an upfront fee ranging from \$500 - \$2,500 and an ongoing fee that is paid monthly, in arrears, at a rate ranging from \$250 to \$500 per month. The fee may be negotiable in certain cases. Fees for this service may be paid by electronic funds transfer or check. This service may be terminated with 30 days' notice. Upon termination of any agreement, the fee will be prorated and any unearned fee will be refunded to the Client.

The upfront portion of the Comprehensive Financial Planning fee is for Client onboarding, data gathering, and setting the basis for the financial plan. This work will commence immediately after the fee is paid, and will be completed within the first 30 days of the date the fee is paid. Therefore, the upfront portion of the fee will not be paid more than 6 months in advance.

### **Project Based Financial Planning Fixed Fee**

Financial Planning will generally be offered on a fixed fee basis. The fixed fee will be agreed upon before the start of any work. The fixed fee can range between \$500 and \$15,000. The fee is negotiable. If a fixed fee program is chosen, it is payable in arrears. Bentham Wealth Advisors Inc. will not bill an amount above \$1,200.00 more than 6 months in advance. Fees for this service may be paid by electronic funds transfer or check. In the event of early termination any prepaid but unearned fees will be refunded to the Client and any completed deliverables of the project will be provided to the Client and no further fees will be charged.

## Employee Benefit Plan Services

Account Value	Bentham Wealth Advisors Inc.'s Fee
<b>\$0 - \$1,000,000</b>	1.25%
<b>\$1,000,001 - \$3,000,000</b>	1.00%
<b>\$3,000,001 - \$5,000,000</b>	0.85%
<b>\$5,000,000 and Above</b>	0.50%

BW will be compensated for Employee Benefit Plan services according to the value of plan assets not to exceed 1.25% of total plan assets. This includes fees to other parties, such as RecordKeepers, Custodians, or Third-Party-Administrators. Fees for this service are either paid directly by the plan sponsor or deducted directly from the plan assets by the Custodian on a monthly basis, and BW's fee is remitted to BW.

## Additional Fees and Expenses

As part of our investment advisory services to you, we may invest, or recommend that you invest, in mutual funds and exchange traded funds. The fees that you pay to our firm for investment advisory services are separate and distinct from the fees and expenses charged by mutual funds or exchange traded funds (described in each fund's prospectus) to their shareholders. These fees will generally include a management fee and other fund expenses. You will also incur transaction charges and/or brokerage fees when purchasing or selling securities. These charges and fees are typically imposed by the broker-dealer or custodian through whom your account transactions are executed. We do not share in any portion of the brokerage fees/transaction charges imposed by the broker-dealer or custodian. To fully understand the total cost you will incur, you should review all the fees charged by mutual funds, exchange traded funds, our firm, and others. For information on our brokerage practices, refer to the *Brokerage Practices* section of this brochure.

## Item 6 Performance-Based Fees and Side-By-Side Management

We do not accept performance-based fees or participate in side-by-side management. Performance-based fees are fees that are based on a share of a capital gains or capital appreciation of a client's account. Side-by-side management refers to the practice of managing accounts that are charged performance-based fees while at the same time managing accounts that are not charged performance-based fees. Our fees are calculated as described in the *Fees and Compensation* section above, and are not charged on the basis of a share of capital gains upon, or capital appreciation of, the funds in your advisory account.

## Item 7 Types of Clients

We offer investment advisory services to Individuals or families (other than high net worth individuals) and High net worth individuals or families.

We do not require a minimum dollar amount to open and maintain an advisory account.

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

## Our Methods of Analysis and Investment Strategies

We may use one or more of the following methods of analysis or investment strategies when providing investment advice to you:

**Technical analysis** involves using chart patterns, momentum, volume, and relative strength in an effort to pick sectors that may outperform market indices. However, there is no assurance of accurate forecasts or that trends will develop in the markets we follow. In the past, there have been periods without discernible trends and similar periods will presumably occur in the future. Even where major trends develop, outside factors like government intervention could potentially shorten them.

Furthermore, one limitation of technical analysis is that it requires price movement data, which can translate into price trends sufficient to dictate a market entry or exit decision. In a trendless or erratic market, a technical method may fail to identify trends requiring action. In addition, technical methods may overreact to minor price movements, establishing positions contrary to overall price trends, which may result in losses. Finally, a technical trading method may underperform other trading methods when fundamental factors dominate price moves within a given market.

**Cyclical analysis** is a type of technical analysis that involves evaluating recurring price patterns and trends based upon business cycles. Economic/business cycles may not be predictable and may have many fluctuations between long-term expansions and contractions. The lengths of economic cycles may be difficult to predict with accuracy and therefore the risk of cyclical analysis is the difficulty in predicting economic trends and consequently the changing value of securities that would be affected by these changing trends.

### Modern Portfolio Theory

The underlying principles of MPT are:

- Investors are risk averse. The only acceptable risk is that which is adequately compensated by an expected return. Risk and investment return are related and an increase in risk requires an increased expected return.
- Markets are efficient. The same market information is available to all investors at the same time. The market prices every security fairly based upon this equal availability of information.
- The design of the portfolio as a whole is more important than the selection of any particular security. The appropriate allocation of capital among asset classes will have far more influence on long-term portfolio performance than the selection of individual securities.
- Investing for the long-term (preferably longer than ten years) becomes critical to investment success because it allows the long-term characteristics of the asset classes to surface.
- Increasing diversification of the portfolio with lower correlated asset class positions can decrease portfolio risk. Correlation is the statistical term for the extent to which two asset classes move in tandem or opposition to one another.

## Material Risks Involved

**All investing strategies we offer involve risk and may result in a loss of your original investment which you should be prepared to bear.** Many of these risks apply equally to stocks, bonds, commodities, and any other investment or security. Material risks associated with our investment strategies are listed below.

**Market Risk:** Market risk involves the possibility that an investment's current market value will fall because of a general market decline, reducing the value of the investment regardless of the operational success of the issuer's operations or its financial condition.



**Strategy Risk:** The Adviser's investment strategies and/or investment techniques may not work as intended.

**Interest Rate Risk:** Bond (fixed income) prices generally fall when interest rates rise, and the value may fall below par value or the principal investment. The opposite is also generally true: bond prices generally rise when interest rates fall. In general, fixed income securities with longer maturities are more sensitive to these price changes. Most other investments are also sensitive to the level and direction of interest rates.

**Inflation:** Inflation may erode the buying power of your investment portfolio, even if the dollar value of your investments remains the same.

## **Risks Associated with Securities**

Apart from the general risks outlined above which apply to all types of investments, specific securities may have other risks.

**Exchange Traded Funds** prices may vary significantly from the Net Asset Value due to market conditions. Certain Exchange Traded Funds may not track underlying benchmarks as expected. ETFs are also subject to the following risks: (i) an ETF's shares may trade at a market price that is above or below their net asset value; (ii) the ETF may employ an investment strategy that utilizes high leverage ratios; or (iii) trading of an ETF's shares may be halted if the listing exchange's officials deem such action appropriate, the shares are de-listed from the exchange, or the activation of market-wide "circuit breakers" (which are tied to large decreases in stock prices) halts stock trading generally. The Adviser has no control over the risks taken by the underlying funds in which the Clients invest.

**Mutual Funds** When a Client invests in open-end mutual funds or ETFs, the Client indirectly bears its proportionate share of any fees and expenses payable directly by those funds. Therefore, the Client will incur higher expenses, many of which may be duplicative. In addition, the Client's overall portfolio may be affected by losses of an underlying fund and the level of risk arising from the investment practices of an underlying fund (such as the use of derivatives).

## **Recommendation of Particular Types of Securities**

We primarily practice passive investment management. Passive investing involves building portfolios that are composed of various distinct asset classes. The asset classes are weighted in a manner to achieve the desired relationship between correlation, risk, and return. Funds that passively capture the returns of the desired asset classes are placed in the portfolio. The funds that are used to build passive portfolios are typically index mutual funds or exchange-traded funds.

Passive investment management is characterized by low portfolio expenses (i.e. the funds inside the portfolio have low internal costs), minimal trading costs (due to infrequent trading activity), and relative tax efficiency (because the funds inside the portfolio are tax efficient and turnover inside the portfolio is minimal).

In contrast, active management involves a single manager or managers who employ some method, strategy or technique to construct a portfolio that is intended to generate returns that are greater than the broader market or a designated benchmark.

## **Item 9 Disciplinary Information**

We are required to disclose the facts of any legal or disciplinary events that are material to a client's evaluation of our advisory business or the integrity of our management. We do not have any required disclosures under this item.

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

No BW employee is registered, or have an application pending to register, as a broker-dealer or a registered representative of a broker-dealer.

No BW employee is registered, or have an application pending to register, as a futures commission merchant, commodity pool operator or a commodity trading advisor.

BW does not have any related parties. As a result, we do not have a relationship with any related parties.

BW only receives compensation directly from Clients. We do not receive compensation from any outside source. We do not have any conflicts of interest with any outside party.

Steve Witter is currently a licensed insurance agent, however, he no longer sells commissioned based insurance products. Steve Witter may sell non commissioned based insurance products to clients or prospective clients of BW.

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

### **Description of Our Code of Ethics**

We strive to comply with applicable laws and regulations governing our practices. Therefore, our Code of Ethics includes guidelines for professional standards of conduct for persons associated with our firm. Our goal is to protect your interests at all times and to demonstrate our commitment to our fiduciary duties of honesty, good faith, and fair dealing with you. All persons associated with our firm are expected to adhere strictly to these guidelines. Persons associated with our firm are also required to report any violations of our Code of Ethics. Additionally, we maintain and enforce written policies reasonably designed to prevent the misuse or dissemination of material, non-public information about you or your account holdings by persons associated with our firm.

Clients or prospective clients may obtain a copy of our Code of Ethics by contacting us at the telephone number on the cover page of this brochure.

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

Neither our firm nor any persons associated with our firm has any material financial interest in client transactions beyond the provision of investment advisory services as disclosed in this brochure.

### **Advisory Firm Purchase of Same Securities Recommended to Clients and Conflicts of Interest**

Our firm or persons associated with our firm may buy or sell the same securities that we recommend to you or securities in which you are already invested. A conflict of interest exists in such cases because we have the ability to trade ahead of you and potentially receive more favorable prices than you will receive. To mitigate this conflict of interest, it is our policy that neither our firm nor persons associated

with our firm shall have priority over your account in the purchase or sale of securities.

## **Item 12 Brokerage Practices**

We recommend the brokerage and custodial services of Altruist. Your assets must be maintained in an account at a "qualified custodian," generally a broker-dealer or bank. In recognition of the value of the services the Custodian provides, you may pay higher commissions and/or trading costs than those that may be available elsewhere.

We seek to recommend a custodian/broker that will hold your assets and execute transactions on terms that are, overall, the most favorable compared to other available providers and their services. We consider various factors, including:

- Capability to buy and sell securities for your account itself or to facilitate such services.
- The likelihood that your trades will be executed.
- Availability of investment research and tools.
- Overall quality of services.
- Competitiveness of price.
- Reputation, financial strength, and stability.
- Existing relationship with our firm and our other clients.

### **Research and Other Soft Dollar Benefits**

Soft dollars are revenue programs offered by broker-dealers/custodians whereby an advisor enters into an agreement to place security trades with a broker-dealer/custodian in exchange for research and other services. BW does not participate in soft dollar programs sponsored or offered by Altruist. Please see Item 14 below.

### **Brokerage for Client Referrals**

We receive no referrals from a broker-dealer or third party in exchange for using that broker-dealer or third party.

### **Clients Directing Which Broker/Dealer/Custodian to Use**

We do recommend a specific custodian for Clients to use, however, Clients may custody their assets at a custodian of their choice. Clients may also direct us to use a specific broker-dealer to execute transactions. By allowing Clients to choose a specific custodian, we may be unable to achieve the most favorable execution of Client transaction and this may cost Clients money over using a lower-cost custodian.

### **The Custodian and Brokers We Use Altruist**

BW offers investment advisory services through the custodial platform offered by Altruist Financial LLC, an unaffiliated SEC-registered broker dealer and FINRA/SIPC member. Altruist offers a fully digital account opening process, with a variety of available investments, and integration with software tools that can benefit BW and its clients.

### **Economic Benefits**

As a registered investment adviser, we have access to the institutional platform of your account custodian. As such, we will also have access to research products and services from your account custodian and/or other brokerage firm. These products may include financial publications, information

about particular companies and industries, research software, and other products or services that provide lawful and appropriate assistance to our firm in the performance of our investment decision-making responsibilities. Such research products and services are provided to all investment advisers that utilize the institutional services platforms of these firms, and are not considered to be paid for with soft dollars. However, you should be aware that the commissions charged by a particular broker for a particular transaction or set of transactions may be greater than the amounts another broker who did not provide research services or products might charge.

## **Block Trades**

Generally, we combine multiple orders for shares of the same securities purchased for advisory accounts we manage (this practice is commonly referred to as “block trading”). We will then distribute a portion of the shares to participating accounts in a fair and equitable manner. The distribution of the shares purchased is typically proportionate to the size of the account, but it is not based on account performance or the amount or structure of management fees. Subject to our discretion, regarding particular circumstances and market conditions, when we combine orders, each participating account pays an average price per share for all transactions and pays a proportionate share of all transaction costs. Accounts owned by our firm or persons associated with our firm may participate in block trading with your accounts; however, they will not be given preferential treatment.

## **Item 13 Review of Accounts**

Steve Witter, principal owner will monitor your accounts on an ongoing basis and will conduct account reviews at least Annually, to ensure the advisory services provided to you are consistent with your investment needs and objectives.

In addition to the investment monitoring noted above, each Client account shall be reviewed at least annually. Reviews may be conducted more frequently at the Client’s request. Accounts may be reviewed as a result of major changes in economic conditions, known changes in the Client’s financial situation, and/or large deposits or withdrawals in the Client’s account[s]. The Client is encouraged to notify Steve Witter if changes occur in the Client’s personal financial situation that might adversely affect the Client’s investment plan. Additional reviews may be triggered by material market, economic or political events.

The Client will receive brokerage statements no less than quarterly from the Custodian. These brokerage statements are sent directly from the Custodian to the Client. The Client may also establish electronic access to the Custodian’s website so that the Client may view these reports and their account activity. Client brokerage statements will include all positions, transactions and fees relating to the Client’s account[s]. The Advisor will not provide Clients with periodic reports regarding their holdings, allocations, and performance.

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

We do not receive any compensation from any third party in connection with providing investment advice to you nor do we compensate any individual or firm for client referrals.

Refer to the *Brokerage Practices* section above for disclosures on research and other benefits we may receive resulting from our relationship with your account custodian.

## Item 15 Custody

BW does not accept custody of Client funds except in the instance of withdrawing Client fees.

For Client accounts in which BW directly debits their advisory fee:

- i. BW will send a copy of its invoice to the custodian at the same time that it sends the Client a copy.
- ii. The custodian will send at least monthly statements to the Client showing all disbursements for the account, including the amount of the advisory fee.
- iii. The Client will provide written authorization to BW, permitting them to be paid directly for their accounts held by the custodian.

Clients should receive at least quarterly statements from the broker-dealer, bank or other qualified custodian that holds and maintains Client's investment assets. We urge you to carefully review such statements and compare such official custodial records to the account statements or reports that we may provide to you. Our statements or reports may vary from custodial statements based on accounting procedures, reporting dates, or valuation methodologies of certain securities.

## Item 16 Investment Discretion

Before we can buy or sell securities on your behalf, you must first sign our discretionary management agreement and the appropriate trading authorization forms.

You may grant our firm discretion over the selection and amount of securities to be purchased or sold for your account(s) without obtaining your consent or approval prior to each transaction. You may specify investment objectives, guidelines, and/or impose certain conditions or investment parameters for your account(s). For example, you may specify that the investment in any particular stock or industry should not exceed specified percentages of the value of the portfolio and/or restrictions or prohibitions of transactions in the securities of a specific industry or security. Refer to the *Advisory Business* section in this brochure for more information on our discretionary management services.

If you enter into non-discretionary arrangements with our firm, we will obtain your approval prior to the execution of any transactions for your account(s). You have an unrestricted right to decline to implement any advice provided by our firm on a non-discretionary basis.

## Item 17 Voting Client Securities

We will not vote proxies on behalf of your advisory accounts. At your request, we may offer you advice regarding corporate actions and the exercise of your proxy voting rights. If you own shares of applicable securities, you are responsible for exercising your right to vote as a shareholder.

In most cases, you will receive proxy materials directly from the account custodian. However, in the event we were to receive any written or electronic proxy materials, we would forward them directly to you by mail, unless you have authorized our firm to contact you by electronic mail, in which case, we would forward any electronic solicitations to vote proxies.

## Item 18 Financial Information

Our firm does not have any financial condition or impairment that would prevent us from meeting our contractual commitments to you. We do not take physical custody of client funds or securities, or serve as trustee or signatory for client accounts, and, we do not require the prepayment of more than \$1,200 in fees six or more months in advance. Therefore, we are not required to include a financial statement with this brochure. We have not filed a bankruptcy petition at any time in the past ten years.