

**GODSHALK WELSH CAPITAL MANAGEMENT, INC.**

**ADV Part 2A, Firm Brochure**

**Dated: March 27, 2024**

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This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Godshalk Welsh Capital Management, Inc. If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact us at (610) 971-0202 or [mwelsh@godshalkwelsh.com](mailto:mwelsh@godshalkwelsh.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 Godshalk Welsh Capital Management, Inc. also is available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov).

References herein to Godshalk Welsh Capital Management, Inc. as a "registered investment adviser" or any reference to being "registered" does not imply a certain level of skill or training.

## **Item 2           Material Changes**

Since last year's Annual Amendment filing on March 29, 2023, there have been no material changes to this Brochure.

The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, Matthew Welsh, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding any portion of the disclosures on this Brochure.

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

- A. Godshalk Welsh Capital Management, Inc. (the “Registrant”) is a corporation formed under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 1991. The Registrant is owned by Matthew Welsh. The Registrant was previously known as Eric M. Godshalk & Co.
- B. As discussed below, the Registrant offers to its clients (individuals, high net worth individuals, pension and profit-sharing plans, and charitable organizations) investment advisory services and financial planning and consulting services.

#### **INVESTMENT ADVISORY SERVICES**

The client can engage the Registrant to provide discretionary investment advisory services on a *fee-only* basis.

The Registrant provides investment advisory services specific to the needs of each client. Before providing investment advisory services, an investment adviser representative will ascertain each client’s investment objectives. Then, the Registrant will allocate and/or recommend that the client allocate investment assets consistent with the designated investment objectives.

The Registrant generally allocates or recommends that clients allocate investment assets among exchange-listed securities, securities traded over-the-counter, mutual fund shares, municipal bonds, corporate debt, exchange traded funds (“ETFs”), US government securities, and certificates of deposit on a discretionary basis in accordance with the client’s designated investment objective(s). Once allocated, the Registrant provides ongoing monitoring and review of account performance, asset allocation and client investment objectives.

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

To the extent requested by a client, the Registrant may also 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.

Before engaging the Registrant to provide stand-alone planning or consulting services, clients are 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 before Registrant commences services.

The client retains absolute discretion over all implementation decisions and is free to accept or reject any recommendation from the Registrant. The Registrant does not serve as an attorney, accountant, or insurance agency, and no portion of our services should be construed as same. Accordingly, we do not prepare estate planning documents, tax returns or sell insurance products. To the extent requested by a client, we may recommend the services of other professionals for certain implementation purpose (i.e., attorneys, accountants, insurance, etc.). The client is under no obligation to engage the services of any such recommended professional.

If the client engages any professional (i.e., attorney, accountant, insurance agent, etc.), recommended or otherwise, and a dispute arises thereafter relative to such engagement, the client agrees to seek recourse exclusively from the engaged professional. At all times, the engaged licensed professional(s), and not Registrant, shall be responsible for the quality and competency of the services provided.

Registrant's financial planning and consulting services do not include ongoing monitoring or updating of previously provided financial planning recommendations. It remains the client's responsibility to promptly notify the Registrant if there is ever any change in his/her/its financial situation or investment objectives and to request a review/evaluation/revision to Registrant's previous recommendations and/or services.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

**Limitations of Financial Planning and Non-Investment Consulting/Implementation Services.** 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. The Registrant does not serve as a law firm, accounting firm, or insurance agency, and no portion of Registrant's services should be construed as legal, accounting, or insurance implementation services. Accordingly, Registrant does not prepare estate planning documents, tax returns or sell insurance products. To the extent requested by a client, Registrant may recommend the services of other professionals for certain implementation purposes (i.e., attorneys, accountants, insurance agents, etc.). Clients are reminded that they are 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 made by Registrant or its representatives.

If the client engages any professional (i.e., attorney, accountant, insurance agent, etc.), recommended or otherwise, and a dispute arises thereafter relative to such engagement, the client agrees to seek recourse exclusively from the engaged professional. At all times, the engaged licensed professional(s), and not Registrant, shall be responsible for the quality and competency of the services provided.

**Use of Mutual and Exchange Traded Funds.** Registrant utilizes mutual funds and exchange traded funds for its client portfolios. In addition to Registrant's investment advisory fee described below, and transaction and/or custodial fees discussed above, 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).

In addition, certain clients may transfer certain previously acquired mutual funds to Registrant's management, including mutual funds issued by Dimensional Fund Advisors ("DFA"). DFA funds are generally only available through registered investment advisers. With respect to these transferred DFA fund positions, restrictions regarding additional purchases of, or reallocation among other, DFA funds will generally apply.

**Retirement Rollovers-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 Registrant recommends that a client roll over their retirement plan assets into an account to be managed by Registrant, such a recommendation creates a conflict of interest if Registrant will earn new (or increase its current) compensation as a result of the rollover. If Registrant provides a recommendation as to whether a client should engage in a rollover or not (whether it is from an employer’s plan or an existing IRA), Registrant is acting as a fiduciary within the meaning of Title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act and/or the Internal Revenue Code, as applicable, which are laws governing retirement accounts. No client is under any obligation to roll over retirement plan assets to an account managed by Registrant, whether it is from an employer’s plan or an existing IRA.

**Socially Responsible (ESG) Investing Limitations.** Socially Responsible Investing involves the incorporation of Environmental, Social and Governance (“ESG”) considerations into the investment due diligence process. ESG investing incorporates a set of criteria/factors used in evaluating potential investments: Environmental (i.e., considers how a company safeguards the environment); Social (i.e., the manner in which a company manages relationships with its employees, customers, and the communities in which it operates); and Governance (i.e., company management considerations). The number of companies that meet an acceptable ESG mandate can be limited when compared to those that do not and could underperform broad market indices. Investors must accept these limitations, including potential for underperformance. Correspondingly, the number of ESG mutual funds and exchange-traded funds are limited when compared to those that do not maintain such a mandate. As with any type of investment (including any investment and/or investment strategies recommended and/or undertaken by Registrant), there can be no assurance that investment in ESG securities or funds will be profitable or prove successful. Registrant does not maintain or advocate an ESG investment strategy but will seek to employ ESG if directed by a client to do so. If implemented, Registrant shall rely upon the assessments undertaken by the unaffiliated mutual fund, exchange traded fund or separate account portfolio manager to determine that the fund’s or portfolio’s underlying company securities meet a socially responsible mandate.

**Portfolio Activity.** Registrant has a fiduciary duty to provide services consistent with the client’s best interest. As part of its investment advisory services, Registrant will review client portfolios on an ongoing basis to determine if any changes are necessary based upon various factors, including, but not limited to, investment performance, account additions/withdrawals, mutual fund manager tenure, style drift, and/or a change in the client’s investment objective. Based upon these factors, there may be extended periods of time when Registrant determines that changes to a client’s portfolio are neither necessary nor prudent. Clients nonetheless remain subject to the fees described in Item 5 below during periods of account inactivity. Of course, as indicated below, there can be no assurance that investment decisions made by Registrant will be profitable or equal any specific performance level(s).

**Cryptocurrency:** For clients who want exposure to cryptocurrencies, including Bitcoin, the Registrant, may advise the client to consider a potential investment in corresponding exchange traded securities, or an allocation to separate account managers and/or private funds that provide cryptocurrency exposure. Crypto is a digital currency that can be used to buy goods and services but uses an online ledger with strong cryptography (i.e., a method of protecting information and communications through the use of codes) to

secure online transactions. Unlike conventional currencies issued by a monetary authority, cryptocurrencies are generally not controlled or regulated and their price is determined by the supply and demand of their market. Because cryptocurrency is currently considered to be a speculative investment, the Registrant will not exercise discretionary authority to purchase a cryptocurrency investment for client accounts. Rather, a client must expressly authorize the purchase of the cryptocurrency investment.

The Registrant does not recommend or advocate the purchase of, or investment in, cryptocurrencies. The Registrant considers such an investment to be speculative.

Clients who authorize the purchase of a cryptocurrency investment must be prepared for the potential for liquidity constraints, extreme price volatility and complete loss of principal.

**Cash Positions.** Depending upon perceived or anticipated market conditions/events (there being no guarantee that such anticipated market conditions/events will occur), the Registrant may maintain cash and cash equivalent positions (such as money market funds, etc.) for defensive, liquidity, or other purposes. Unless otherwise agreed in writing, all such cash positions are included as part of assets under management for purposes of calculating the Registrant's advisory fee.

**Cash Sweep Accounts.** Certain account custodians can require that cash proceeds from account transactions or new deposits, be swept to and/or initially maintained in a specific custodian designated sweep account. The yield on the sweep account will generally be lower than those available for other money market accounts. When this occurs, to help mitigate the corresponding yield dispersion Registrant shall (usually within 30 days thereafter) generally (with exceptions) purchase a higher yielding money market fund (or other type security) available on the custodian's platform, unless Registrant reasonably anticipates that it will utilize the cash proceeds during the subsequent 30-day period to purchase additional investments for the client's account. Exceptions and/or modifications can and will occur with respect to all or a portion of the cash balances for various reasons, including, but not limited to the amount of dispersion between the sweep account and a money market fund, the size of the cash balance, an indication from the client of an imminent need for such cash, or the client has a demonstrated history of writing checks from the account.

The above does not apply to the cash component maintained within a Registrant actively managed investment strategy (the cash balances for which shall generally remain in the custodian designated cash sweep account), an indication from the client of a need for access to such cash, assets allocated to an unaffiliated investment manager and cash balances maintained for fee billing purposes.

The client shall remain exclusively responsible for yield dispersion/cash balance decisions and corresponding transactions for cash balances maintained in any Registrant unmanaged accounts.

**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 designated professionals and is expressly authorized to rely thereon. Moreover, each client is advised that it remains their responsibility to promptly notify Registrant if there is ever any

change in their financial situation or investment objectives for the purpose of reviewing/evaluating/revising Registrant's previous recommendations and/or services.

**Cybersecurity Risk.** The information technology systems and networks that Registrant and its third-party service providers use to provide services to Registrant's clients employ various controls, which are designed to prevent cybersecurity incidents stemming from intentional or unintentional actions that could cause significant interruptions in Registrant's operations and result in the unauthorized acquisition or use of clients' confidential or non-public personal information. Clients and Registrant are nonetheless subject to the risk of cybersecurity incidents that could ultimately cause them to incur losses, including for example: financial losses, cost and reputational damage to respond to regulatory obligations, other costs associated with corrective measures, and loss from damage or interruption to systems. Although Registrant has established procedures to reduce the risk of cybersecurity incidents, there is no guarantee that these efforts will always be successful, especially considering that Registrant does not directly control the cybersecurity measures and policies employed by third-party service providers. Clients could incur similar adverse consequences resulting from cybersecurity incidents that more directly affect issuers of securities in which those clients invest, broker-dealers, qualified custodians, governmental and other regulatory authorities, exchange and other financial market operators, or other financial institutions.

**Disclosure Statement.** A copy of the Registrant's written Brochure as set forth on Part 2A of Form ADV and Form CRS (Client Relationship Summary) shall be provided to each client before, or contemporaneously with, the execution of the *Asset Management Agreement* or *Financial Planning and Consulting Agreement*.

- C. The Registrant shall provide investment advisory services specific to the needs of each client. Before 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 any time, impose reasonable restrictions, in writing, on the Registrant's services.
- D. The Registrant does not participate in a wrap fee program.
- E. As of February 29, 2024, the Registrant had \$255,258,995 in assets under management on a discretionary basis.

## **Item 5            Fees and Compensation**

A.

### **INVESTMENT ADVISORY SERVICES**

The client can engage the Registrant to provide discretionary investment advisory services on a *fee-only* basis. Registrant's negotiable annual investment advisory fee shall generally be based upon a percentage (%) of the market value and type of assets placed under Registrant's management, generally ranging from 0.50% to 1.00% as set forth on the *Asset Management Agreement* between the client and the Registrant.

**Fee Differentials.** The Registrant shall generally price its advisory services based upon various objective and subjective factors. As a result, our clients could pay diverse fees

based upon the market value of their assets, the complexity of the engagement, the level and scope of the overall investment advisory services to be rendered (including anticipated number of meetings), related accounts, future earning capacity, anticipated future additional assets, and negotiations with the client. As a result of these factors, similarly situated clients could pay diverse fees, and 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.

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

As previously indicated above, to the extent specifically requested by a client, Registrant *may* determine to provide financial planning and / or related consulting services (i.e., estate planning, insurance planning, etc.) on a stand-alone fee basis per the terms and conditions of a *Financial Planning and Consulting Agreement* executed by the Registrant and the client. Registrant's planning and consulting fees are negotiable, but generally the Registrant charges between \$1,000 and \$5,000 on a fixed fee basis, depending upon the level and scope of the service(s) required and the professional(s) rendering the service(s), or \$200 per hour on an hourly basis.

- B. Clients may elect to have the Registrant's advisory fees deducted from their custodial account. Both Registrant's *Asset Management 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 arrears, based upon the market value of the assets on the last business day of the previous quarter.
- C. As discussed below, unless the client directs otherwise or an individual client's circumstances require, Registrant shall generally recommend that Charles Schwab & Company, Inc. ("*Schwab*") serve as the broker-dealer / custodian for client investment management assets.

Broker-dealers such as *Schwab* charge brokerage commissions, transaction, and/or other type fees for effecting certain types of securities transactions (i.e., including transaction fees for certain mutual funds, and mark-ups and mark-downs charged for fixed income transactions, etc.). The types of securities for which transaction fees, commissions, and/or other type fees (as well as the amount of those fees) shall differ depending upon the broker-dealer/custodian. While certain custodians, including *Schwab*, generally (with the potential exception for large orders) do not currently charge fees on individual equity transactions (including ETFs), others do.

There can be no assurance that *Schwab* will not change their transaction fee pricing in the future.

*Schwab* may also assess fees to clients who elect to receive trade confirmations and account statements by regular mail rather than electronically.

Clients will incur, in addition to Registrant's investment management fee, brokerage commissions and/or transaction fees, and, relative to all mutual fund and exchange traded



fund purchases, charges imposed at the fund level (e.g. management fees and other fund expenses).

- D. The Registrant's annual investment advisory fee shall generally be paid quarterly in arrears, based upon the market value of the assets on the last business day of the previous quarter, unadjusted for account deposits and withdrawals during the billing period. Exceptions to this general practice exist. For example, certain clients under legacy fee arrangements will have prorated fee adjustments made for account deposits or withdrawals of \$10,000 or more during a fee period. All clients are advised to consult their *Asset Management Agreement* for details.

The Registrant generally does not require a minimum annual investment advisory fee. However, in limited circumstances, the Registrant may require a minimum quarterly fee as expressly referenced in the *Asset Management Agreement*.

The *Asset Management 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 *Asset Management Agreement*. Upon termination, the Registrant may debit the account for the pro-rated portion of the unpaid advanced advisory fee based upon the number of days services were provided during the billing month or billing quarter, as applicable.

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

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

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

## **Item 7            Types of Clients**

The Registrant's clients shall generally include individuals, high net worth individuals, pensions and profit-sharing plans, and charitable organizations. The Registrant generally does not require a minimum annual investment advisory fee. However, in limited circumstances, the Registrant may require a minimum quarterly fee as expressly referenced in the *Asset Management Agreement*.

## **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)

- Charting - (analysis performed using patterns to identify current trends and trend reversals to forecast the direction of prices)

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

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

**Investment Risk.** Investing in securities involves risk of loss that clients should be prepared to bear. Different types of investments involve varying degrees of risk, and it should not be assumed that future performance of any specific investment or investment strategy (including the investments and / or investment strategies recommended or undertaken by the Registrant) will be profitable or equal any specific performance level(s).

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

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

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

Registrant does not generally recommend the use of margin loans as an investment strategy, in which the client would leverage borrowed assets as collateral for the purchase of additional securities. However, Registrant's clients may establish a margin account with the client's broker-dealer/custodian or their affiliated banks (each, a "Lender") to access margin loans for financial planning and cash flow management purposes. For example, Registrant's clients may determine to borrow money on margin to pay bills or other expenses such as financing the purchase, construction, or maintenance of a real estate project. Unlike a traditional real estate-backed loan, a margin loan has the potential benefit of: enabling borrowers to access to funds in a shorter period of time, providing greater repayment flexibility, and may also result in the borrower receiving certain tax

benefits. Clients interested in learning more about the potential tax benefits of borrowing money on margin should consult with an accountant or tax advisor.

The terms and conditions of each margin loan are contained in a separate agreement between the client and the Lender selected by the client, which terms and conditions may vary from client to client. Borrowing funds on margin is not suitable for all clients and is subject to certain risks, including but not limited to: increased market risk, increased risk of loss, especially in the event of a significant downturn; liquidity risk; the potential obligation to post collateral or repay the margin loan if the Lender determines that the value of collateralized securities is no longer sufficient to support the value of the margin loan; the risk that the Lender may liquidate the client's securities to satisfy its demand for additional collateral or repayment; the risk that the Lender may terminate the margin loan at any time. Before agreeing to participate in a margin loan program, clients should carefully review the applicable margin loan agreement and all risk disclosures provided by the Lender including the initial margin and maintenance requirements for the specific program in which the client enrolls, and the procedures for issuing "margin calls" and liquidating securities and other assets in the client's accounts. The following describes some of the risks associated with margin loan, which Registrant recommends that clients consider before participating in a margin loan program:

1. **Increased Portfolio Risk, Including the Risk for Potential Losses in the Event of a Downturn:** Borrowing money on margin to pay bills or other expenses increases a client's level of exposure to market risk and volatility. The more money a client borrows on margin, the greater the market risk. This is especially true in the event of a significant downturn in the value of the assets used to collateralize the margin loan. In some circumstances, clients may lose more money than they originally invested and borrowed. As the marginable investments in a client's portfolio provide the collateral for the margin loan, the value of that collateral fluctuates according to market activity, while the amount the client borrows stays the same.
2. **The Potential Obligation to Post Collateral or Repay the Margin Loan if the Lender Determines that the Value of Collateralized Securities is No Longer Sufficient to Support the Value of the Margin Loan:** The margin loan requires a certain minimum value of equity to continue service of the margin loan (the "Maintenance Requirement"). If the value of the client's portfolio securities decline in value, so does the value of the collateral supporting the margin loan. If the value of the collateral declines to an amount where it is no longer sufficient to support the borrower's line of credit or loan, the Lender will issue a "Maintenance Call" (also referred to as a "margin call"). In that event, the client would be required to post additional collateral or repay the margin loan within a specified period of time. The Lender is also commonly entitled to increase its Maintenance Requirement at any time, without having to provide prior written notice to the borrower. As a result, borrowers are subject to risk of repayment of the loan and should be aware of such risks when foregoing a traditional mortgage to finance a real estate purchase.
3. **The Risk that the Lender may Liquidate the Client's Securities to Satisfy its Demand for Additional Collateral or Repayment:** The Lender commonly reserves the right to render the borrower's repayment immediately due, and/or terminate the margin loan at any time without cause, at which point, the outstanding balance would become immediately due and payable. However, if the borrower is unable to add additional collateral to their account or repay the loan with readily available cash, the Lender

can typically liquidate the borrower's securities and keep the cash to satisfy the Maintenance Call. When liquidating the securities of the borrower's investment portfolio, the Lender usually reserves the right to decide which securities to sell to protect its interests and is not necessarily required to provide written notice of its intentions to liquidate. Accordingly, clients who borrow money through a margin loan should be aware of this risk and that such risk is not limited to the margin in the client's account which could result in the client having to owe additional money or collateral to the Lender after the positions are liquidated. It is therefore possible that a client can lose more money than what the client originally invested into the portfolio.

4. **Liquidity Risk:** Margin loans also have a significant effect on the liquidity of a client's portfolio. Namely, a security (whether an equity, mutual fund or ETF) that is used as collateral for a margin loan loses its liquidity as long as the margin loan is outstanding. Decreased liquidity increases portfolio risk and restricts a client's access to their funds, which clients should strongly consider before using a margin loan.
5. **Risk of Margin as an Investment Strategy, Impact on Fees, and Associated Conflict of Interest:** Although Registrant does not recommend the use of margin as an investment strategy, in which the client would borrow money leveraged against securities it holds to purchase additional securities, clients choosing to do so would be subjected to the risks described above. In addition, if a client determines to use margin to purchase assets that Registrant will manage, Registrant would include the entire market value of the margined assets when computing its advisory fee. Conversely, Registrant generally nets any margin balance owed by a client account against the account's market value when calculating its advisory fee. As a result, a potential of conflict of interest arises since the Registrant would have an economic disincentive to recommend that the client terminate the use of margin.

**Borrowing Against Assets/Risks.** A client who has a need to borrow money could determine to do so by using:

- **Margin-**The account custodian or broker-dealer lends money to the client. The custodian charges the client interest for the right to borrow money, and uses the assets in the client's brokerage account as collateral; and,
- **Pledged Assets Loan-** In consideration for a lender (i.e., a bank, etc.) to make a loan to the client, the client pledges investment assets held at the account custodian as collateral.

These above-described collateralized loans are generally utilized because they typically provide more favorable interest rates than standard commercial loans. These types of collateralized loans can assist with a pending home purchase, permit the retirement of more expensive debt, or enable borrowing in lieu of liquidating existing account positions and incurring capital gains taxes. However, such loans are not without potential material risk to the client's investment assets. The lender (i.e., custodian, bank, etc.) will have recourse against the client's investment assets in the event of loan default or if the assets fall below a certain level. For this reason, Registrant does not recommend such borrowing unless it is for specific short-term purposes (i.e., a bridge loan to purchase a new residence). Registrant does not recommend such borrowing for investment purposes (i.e., to invest borrowed funds in the market). Regardless, if the client was to determine to utilize margin or a pledged assets loan, the following economic benefits would inure to Registrant:

- by taking the loan rather than liquidating assets in the client's account, Registrant continues to earn a fee on such Account assets; and,
- if the client invests any portion of the loan proceeds in an account to be managed by Registrant, Registrant will receive an advisory fee on the invested amount; and,
- if Registrant's advisory fee is based upon the higher margined account value, Registrant will earn a correspondingly higher advisory fee. This could provide Registrant with a disincentive to encourage the client to discontinue the use of margin.

The Client must accept the above risks and potential corresponding consequences associated with the use of margin or a pledged assets loan.

- C. Registrant recommends asset allocations based on a particular client's economic situation, liquidity needs, risk tolerance, proposed investment period, need for diversification, reliance upon current income, present and anticipated tax situation. Registrant also considers historical yields, potential appreciation and marketability before making investment recommendations. Registrant recommends and manages many types of asset allocations, including: exchange-listed securities, mutual fund shares, corporate debt, ETFs, US government securities, real estate investment trusts, and certificates of deposit on a discretionary basis in accordance with the client's designated investment objective(s).

Risks associated with these asset types include:

1. Interest-rate Risk: Fluctuations in interest rates may cause investment prices to fluctuate. For example, when interest rates rise, yields on existing bonds become less attractive, causing their market values to decline.
2. Market Risk: The price of a security, bond, or mutual fund may drop in reaction to tangible and intangible events and conditions. This type of risk may be caused by external factors independent of the fund's specific investments as well as due to the fund's specific investments. Additionally, each security's price will fluctuate based on market movement and emotion, which may, or may not be due to the security's operations or changes in its true value. For example, political, economic and social conditions may trigger market events which are temporarily negative, or temporarily positive.
3. Inflation Risk: When any type of inflation is present, a dollar today will not buy as much as a dollar next year, because purchasing power is eroding at the rate of inflation.
4. Reinvestment Risk: This is the risk that future proceeds from investments may have to be reinvested at a potentially lower rate of return (i.e., interest rate). This primarily relates to fixed income securities.
5. Financial Risk: Excessive borrowing to finance a business' operations increases the risk of profitability, because the company must meet the terms of its obligations in

- good times and bad. During periods of financial stress, the inability to meet loan obligations may result in bankruptcy and/or a declining market value.
6. **Market Risk (Systematic Risk):** Even a long-term investment approach cannot guarantee a profit. Economic, political, and issuer-specific events will cause the value of securities to rise or fall. Because the value of your portfolio will fluctuate, there is a risk that you will lose money.
  7. **Unsystematic Risk:** Unsystematic risk is the company-specific or industry-specific risk in a portfolio. The combination of systematic (market risk) and unsystematic risk is defined as the portfolio risk that the investor bears. While the investor can do little to reduce systematic risk, he or she can affect unsystematic risk. Unsystematic risk may be significantly reduced through diversification. However, even a portfolio of well-diversified assets cannot escape all risk.
  8. **Credit Risk:** Credit risk is the risk that the issuer of a security may be unable to make interest payments and/or repay principal when due. A downgrade to an issuer's credit rating or a perceived change in an issuer's financial strength may affect a security's value, and thus, impact performance. Credit risk is greater for fixed income securities with ratings below investment grade (BB or below by Standard & Poor's Rating Group or Ba or below by Moody's Investors Service, Inc.). Fixed income securities that are below investment grade involve higher credit risk and are considered speculative.
  9. **Income Risk:** Income risk is the risk that falling interest rates will cause the investment's income to decline.
  10. **Call Risk:** Call risk is the risk that during periods of falling interest rates, a bond issuer will call or repay a higher-yielding bond before its maturity date, forcing the investment to reinvest in bonds with lower interest rates than the original obligations.
  11. **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. Rising inflation means that if you have \$1,000 and inflation rises 5 percent in a year, your \$1,000 has lost 5 percent of its value, as it cannot buy what it could buy a year previous.
  12. **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.
  13. **Regulatory Risk:** Changes in laws and regulations from any government can change the market value of companies subject to such regulations. Certain industries are more susceptible to government regulation. Changes in zoning, tax structure or laws impact the return on these investments.
  14. **Risks Related to Investment Term:** 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 what we believe it is truly worth. 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.

An investment in a mutual fund or ETF involves risk, including the loss of principal. Mutual fund and ETF shareholders are necessarily subject to the risks stemming from the individual issuers of the fund's underlying portfolio securities. Such shareholders are also liable for taxes on any fund-level capital gains, as ETFs and mutual funds are required by law to distribute capital gains in the event they sell securities for a profit that cannot be offset by a corresponding loss. As such, a mutual fund or ETF client or investor may incur substantial tax liabilities even when the fund underperforms.

Shares of mutual funds are distributed and redeemed on an ongoing basis by the fund itself or a broker acting on its behalf. The trading price at which a share is transacted is equal to a fund's stated daily per share net asset value ("NAV"), plus any shareholders fees (e.g., sales loads, purchase fees, redemption fees). The per-share NAV of a mutual fund is calculated at the end of each business day, although the actual NAV fluctuates with intraday changes in the market value of the fund's holdings. The trading prices of a mutual fund's shares can differ significantly from the NAV during periods of market volatility, which may, among other factors, lead to the mutual fund's shares trading at a premium or discount to NAV.

Shares of ETFs are listed on securities exchanges and transacted at negotiated prices in the secondary market. Generally, ETF shares trade at or near their most recent NAV, which is generally calculated at least once daily for indexed-based ETFs and more frequently for actively managed ETFs. However, certain inefficiencies can cause the shares to trade at a premium or discount to their pro-rata NAV. There is also no guarantee that an active secondary market for such shares will develop or continue to exist. While clients and investors may be able to sell their ETF shares on an exchange, ETFs generally only redeems shares directly from shareholders when aggregated as creation units (usually 50,000 shares or more). Therefore, if a liquid secondary market ceases to exist for shares of a particular ETF, a shareholder may have no way to dispose of such shares.

## **Item 9           Disciplinary Information**

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

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

- A. Neither the Registrant, nor its representatives, are registered or have an application pending to register, as a broker-dealer or a registered representative of a broker-dealer.
- B. Neither the Registrant, nor its 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. The Registrant has no other relationship or arrangement with a related person that is material to its advisory business.
- D. The Registrant does not recommend or select other investment advisors for its clients.

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

- A. The Registrant maintains an investment policy relative to personal securities transactions. This investment policy is part of Registrant's overall Code of Ethics, which serves to establish a standard of business conduct for all of Registrant's 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 before 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 their current securities holdings within ten (10) days after becoming an Access Person. Furthermore, Access Persons must provide the Chief Compliance Officer with a quarterly transaction report, detail all trades in the Access Person's account during the previous quarter; and on an annual basis, each Access Person must provide the Chief Compliance Officer with a written report of the Access Person's current securities holdings. However, 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*. Prior to engaging Registrant to provide investment management services, the client will be required to enter into a formal *Asset Management 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* (or another broker-dealer /custodian, investment platform) 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 seek 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 a broker-dealer's 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 price 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. Non-Soft Dollar 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 can receive from *Schwab* (or another broker-dealer/custodian, investment platform, unaffiliated investment manager, mutual 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 can 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* as a result of this arrangement. There is no corresponding commitment made by the Registrant to *Schwab* 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.

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.

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.

Transactions for directed accounts will generally be executed following the execution of portfolio transactions for non-directed accounts.

- B. To the extent that the Registrant provides investment advisory services to its clients, the transactions for each client account generally will be affected 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 seek best execution, to negotiate more favorable commission rates or to allocate equitably among the Registrant's clients' differences in prices and commissions or other transaction costs that might have been obtained had such orders been placed independently. Under this procedure, transactions will be averaged as to price and will be allocated among clients in proportion to the purchase and sale orders placed for each client account on any given day. The Registrant shall not receive any additional compensation or remuneration as a result of such aggregation.

## **Item 13      Review of Accounts**

- A. For those clients to whom Registrant provides investment supervisory services, account reviews are conducted on an ongoing basis by the Registrant's Principal. 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 can receive an economic benefit from *Schwab* (and/or others). The Registrant, without cost (and/or at a discount), may receive support services and/or products from *Schwab* (which may include direct monetary assistance from *Schwab* to obtain certain services or products).

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

- B. The Registrant does not compensate, directly or indirectly, any person, other than its representatives, for client referrals.

#### **Item 15      Custody**

The Registrant shall have the ability to deduct its advisory fee from the client's custodial account. Clients are provided with written transaction confirmation notices, and a written summary account statement directly from the custodian (i.e., Schwab, etc.) at least quarterly.

To the extent that Registrant provides clients with periodic account statements or reports, the client is urged to compare any statement or report provided by Registrant with the account statements received from the account custodian.

The account custodian does not verify the accuracy of Registrant's advisory fee calculation.

In addition, certain clients have established asset transfer authorizations which permit the qualified custodian to rely upon instructions from the Registrant to transfer client funds or securities to third parties. These arrangements are also disclosed at ADV Part 1, Item 9, but in accordance with the guidance provided in the SEC's February 21, 2017 Investment Adviser Association No-Action Letter, the affected accounts are not subject to an annual surprise CPA examination.

## **Item 16          Investment Discretion**

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

Clients who engage the Registrant on a discretionary basis may, at any time, 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 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. Registrant may consult with clients as they may request in regard to corporate actions of individual issuers and investment companies, consistent with the Registrant's fiduciary duty to act in the best interests of its clients.
- 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.

The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, Matthew Welsh, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above disclosures and arrangements.