

**Form ADV Part 2A: Firm Brochure**

**Item 1 – Cover Page**

**MLG Wealth Management, Inc.  
Doing Business as Pine Grove Financial Group**

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Date of Disclosure Brochure: December 2021

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This disclosure brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of MLG Wealth Management, Inc. doing business as Pine Grove Financial Group (also referred to as we, us and PGFG throughout this disclosure brochure). If you have any questions about the contents of this disclosure brochure, please contact Matthew L. Gulbransen at 651-714-0323 or [mgulbransen@pinegrovefg.com](mailto:mgulbransen@pinegrovefg.com). The information in this disclosure brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or by any state securities authority.

Additional information about MLG Wealth Management, Inc. doing business as Pine Grove Financial Group is also available on the Internet at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov). You can view our firm's information on this website by searching for MLG Wealth Management, Inc. or our firm's CRD number 308193.

\*Registration as an investment adviser does not imply a certain level of skill or training.

## Item 2 – Material Changes

Since the last amendment was made in January 2021, the following material changes have been made to this document:

- In November 2021 the firm entered into a solicitation agreement with Zoe Financial. Please refer to **Item 14 - Client Referrals and Other Compensation** for more specific information.
- In September 2021, the firm's President, Matthew Gulbransen became the General Partner in Three Bridges Private Capital LP a firm that offers private investment opportunities to accredited investors. Please see **Item 10 – Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations** for more specific information.

We will ensure that you receive a summary of any material changes to this and subsequent disclosure brochures within 120 days after our firm's fiscal year ends. Our firm's fiscal year ends on December 31, so you will receive the summary of material changes no later than April 30 each year. At that time, we will also offer or provide a copy of the most current disclosure brochure. We may also provide other ongoing disclosure information about material changes as necessary.

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## **Item 4 – Advisory Business**

MLG Wealth Management, Inc. doing business as Pine Grove Financial Group is an investment adviser registered with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC”) and is a corporation formed under the laws of the State of Minnesota.

- Matthew L. Gulbransen is the President and 100% owner of MLG Wealth Management, Inc.
- PGFG filed its initial application to become registered as an investment adviser in May 2020.

### **Introduction**

The investment advisory services of PGFG are provided to you through an appropriately licensed individual who is an investment adviser representative of PGFG (referred to as your investment adviser representative throughout this brochure).

### **Description of Advisory Services**

The following are descriptions of the primary advisory services of PGFG. Please understand that a written agreement, which details the exact terms of the service, must be signed by you and PGFG before we can provide you the services described below.

**Asset Management Services** – PGFG offers asset management services, which involves PGFG providing you with continuous and ongoing supervision over your specified accounts.

You must appoint our firm as your investment adviser of record on specified accounts (collectively, the “Account”). The Account consists only of separate account(s) held by qualified custodian(s) under your name. The qualified custodians maintain physical custody of all funds and securities of the Account, and you retain all rights of ownership (e.g., right to withdraw securities or cash, exercise or delegate proxy voting and receive transaction confirmations) of the Account.

The Account is managed by us based on your financial situation, investment objectives and risk tolerance. We actively monitor the Account and provide advice regarding buying, selling, reinvesting or holding securities, cash or other investments of the Account.

We will need to obtain certain information from you to determine your financial situation and investment objectives. You will be responsible for notifying us of any updates regarding your financial situation, risk tolerance or investment objective and whether you wish to impose or modify existing investment restrictions; however we will contact you at least annually to discuss any changes or updates regarding your financial situation, risk tolerance or investment objectives. We are always reasonably available to consult with you relative to the status of your Account. You have the ability to impose reasonable restrictions on the management of your accounts, including the ability to instruct us not to purchase certain securities.

It is important that you understand that we manage investments for other clients and may give them advice or take actions for them or for our personal accounts that is different from the advice we provide to

you or actions taken for you. We are not obligated to buy, sell or recommend to you any security or other investment that we may buy, sell or recommend for any other clients or for our own accounts.

Conflicts may arise in the allocation of investment opportunities among accounts that we manage. We strive to allocate investment opportunities believed to be appropriate for your account(s) and other accounts advised by our firm among such accounts equitably and consistent with the best interests of all accounts involved. However, there can be no assurance that a particular investment opportunity that comes to our attention will be allocated in any particular manner. If we obtain material, non-public information about a security or its issuer that we may not lawfully use or disclose, we have absolutely no obligation to disclose the information to any client or use it for any client's benefit.

**Financial Planning Services** - PGFG offers financial planning services, which involve preparing a written financial plan covering specific or multiple topics. We provide full written financial plans, which typically address the following topics: Investment Planning, Retirement Planning, Insurance Planning, Tax Planning, Education Planning, Portfolios Review, and Asset Allocation. When providing financial planning services, the role of your investment adviser representative is to find ways to help you understand your overall financial situation and help you set financial objectives. Written financial plans prepared by us do not include specific recommendations of individual securities.

Our financial planning services do not involve implementing any transaction on your behalf or the active and ongoing monitoring or management of your investments or accounts. You have the sole responsibility for determining whether to implement our financial planning recommendations. To the extent that you would like to implement any of our investment recommendations through PGFG or retain PGFG to actively monitor and manage your investments, you must execute a separate written agreement with PGFG for our asset management services.

**Retirement Plan Rollover Recommendations** - To the extent we recommend you roll over your account from a current retirement plan to an individual retirement account ("Rollover IRA"), managed by PGFG please know that PGFG and our investment adviser representatives have a conflict of interest. We can earn increased investment advisory fees by recommending that you roll over your account at the retirement plan to a Rollover IRA managed by PGFG. We will earn fewer investment advisory fees if you do not roll over the funds in the retirement plan to a Rollover IRA managed by PGFG.

Thus, our investment adviser representatives have an economic incentive to recommend a rollover of funds from a retirement plan to a Rollover IRA which is a conflict of interest because our recommendation that you open an IRA account to be managed by our firm can be based on our economic incentive and not based exclusively on whether or not moving the IRA to our management program is in your overall best interest. We have taken steps to manage this conflict of interest. we have adopted an impartial conduct standard whereby our investment adviser representatives will (i) provide investment advice to a retirement plan participant regarding a rollover of funds from the retirement plan in accordance with the fiduciary status described below, (ii) not recommend investments which result in PGFG receiving unreasonable compensation related to the rollover of funds from the retirement plan to a Rollover IRA, and (iii) fully disclose compensation received by PGFG and our supervised persons and any material conflicts of interest related to recommending the rollover of funds from the retirement plan to a Rollover IRA and refrain from making any materially misleading statements regarding such rollover.

Our investment advisor representatives shall act with the care, skill, prudence, and diligence under the circumstances then prevailing that a prudent person acting in a like capacity and familiar with such matters would use in the conduct of an enterprise of a like character and with like aims, based on the investment objectives, risk, tolerance, financial circumstances, and a client's needs, without regard to the financial or other interests of PGFG or our affiliated personnel.

**Sub-Advisor Platforms** -PGFG has entered into an agreement with third-party platform providers (referred to as Platform Manager) through which we are able to provide Managed Account Services. Platform Manager for these services will conduct due diligence of any recommended Model Provider and monitor the performance of Model Provider with respect to the Model Provider's models and/or trade signals relative to appropriate peers and/or benchmarks.

Upon appointment as an investment adviser of the Account, the assigned Advisor of PGFG will assist you in completing a Client profile questionnaire and review the information you provide. The assigned Advisor of PGFG will provide recommendations to you to utilize Select Portfolios or Model Providers to provide models for managing the Account or a portion of the assets of Account. The Advisor of PGFG is only able to recommend Select Portfolios or Model Providers which have been approved by Platform Manager and PGFG. Therefore, we have a conflict of interest because we do not recommend Model Providers to you if not available through the platform.

Platform Manager will implement the selected Model Provider's model for the Account by acquiring the fund shares or investments that are represented in the selected model portfolios of the Model Provider. You will grant Platform Manager with the discretionary authority (in the sole discretion of Platform Manager based upon the selected Model Provider's designated portfolio models and/or trade signals without first consulting with you to make all decisions to buy, sell or hold securities, cash or other investments for such portion of the Account. You will also grant Platform Manager with the power and authority to carry out these decisions by giving instructions, on behalf of you, to brokers and dealers and the qualified custodian of the Account.

PGFG may hire/fire at its discretion the Platform Manager, Sub Advisors and other service provider(s) for services related to the Managed Account Services provided to the Account. Such services provided by Platform Provider and service provider(s) may include, but are not necessarily limited to, due diligence of the Model Providers, access to service provider's technology platform and/or assistance with data reconciliation, performance and/or position reporting, fee calculation and billing, marketing and presentation materials, database maintenance, quarterly performance evaluations, payable reports, web site administration, order entry, and other functions related to the administrative tasks of providing investment advisory services to the Account. Due to these arrangements, such service provider(s) will have access to the Account and/or your information.

**Third-Party Money Manager Program** -PGFG also offers advisory services by referring clients to a third-party money manager acting as sub-advisers offering asset management and other investment advisory services. The third-party managers are responsible for continuously monitoring client accounts and making trades in client accounts when necessary. As a result of the referral, we are paid a portion of the fee charged and collected by the third-party money managers in the form of solicitor fees. Each solicitation arrangement is performed pursuant to a written solicitation agreement and is in compliance with SEC Rule 206(4)-3 and applicable state securities rules and regulations. Since the Third Party Manager has agreed to pay us a portion of the advisory fees charged PGFG has a conflict of interest.

Under this program, we assist you with identifying your risk tolerance and investment objectives. We recommend third-party money managers in relation to your stated investment objectives and risk tolerance, and you may select a recommended third-party money manager or model portfolio based upon your needs. You must enter into an agreement directly with the third-party money manager who provides your designated account with asset management services.

We are available to answer questions that you may have regarding your account and act as the communication conduit between you and the third-party money manager. The third-party money manager may take discretionary authority to determine the securities to be purchased and sold for your account. We do not have any trading authority with respect to your designated account managed by the third-party money manager.

Clients are advised that there may be other third-party managed programs not recommended by our firm, that are suitable for the client and that may be more or less costly than arrangements recommended by our firm. No guarantees can be made that a client's financial goals or objectives will be achieved by a third-party investment adviser recommended by our firm. Further, no guarantees of performance can ever be offered by our firm (Please refer to Item 8 – Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss for more details).

## **Seminars**

PGFG may occasionally provide seminars in areas such as financial planning, retirement planning, estate planning and college planning. Seminars are always offered on an impersonal basis and do not focus on the individual needs of participants.

## **Limits Advice to Certain Types of Investments**

PGFG provides investment advice on the following types of investments:

- Mutual Funds
- Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs)
- Exchange-listed Securities
- Corporate Debt Securities
- Variable Annuities
- Variable Life Insurance

Although we generally provide advice only on the products previously listed, we reserve the right to offer advice on any investment product that may be suitable for each client's specific circumstances, needs, goals and objectives.

It is not our typical investment strategy to attempt to time the market, but we may increase cash holdings modestly as deemed appropriate based on your risk tolerance and our expectations of market behavior. We may modify our investment strategy to accommodate special situations such as low basis stock, stock options, legacy holdings, inheritances, closely held businesses, collectibles, or special tax situations.

*(Please refer to Item 8 – Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss for more information.)*

### **Participation in Wrap Fee Programs**

PGFG offer services through both wrap fee programs and non-wrap fee programs. A wrap fee program is defined as any advisory program under which a specified fee or fees not based directly upon transactions in a client's account is charged for investment advisory services (which may include portfolio management or advice concerning the selection of other investment advisers) and the execution of client transactions. Whenever a fee is charged to a client for services described in this brochure (whether wrap fee or non-wrap fee), we will receive all or a portion of the fee charged.

### **Tailor Advisory Services to Individual Needs of Clients**

PGFG's advisory services are always provided based on your individual needs. This means, for example, that when we provide asset management services, you are given the ability to impose restrictions on the accounts we manage for you, including specific investment selections and sectors. We work with you on a one-on-one basis through interviews and questionnaires to determine your investment objectives and suitability information. Our financial planning services are always provided based on your individual needs. When providing financial planning services, we work with you on a one-on-one basis through interviews and questionnaires to determine your investment objectives and suitability information.

We will not enter into an investment adviser relationship with a prospective client whose investment objectives may be considered incompatible with our investment philosophy or strategies or where the prospective client seeks to impose unduly restrictive investment guidelines.

### **Client Assets Managed by PGFG**

As of November 17, 2020, PGFG has \$507,165,135 in discretionary assets under management. PGFG has \$0 in non-discretionary assets under management.

## **Item 5 – Fees and Compensation**

In addition to the information provided in *Item 4 – Advisory Business*, this section provides additional details regarding our firm's services along with descriptions of each service's fees and compensation arrangements. It should be noted that lower fees for comparable service may be available from other sources. The exact fees and other terms will be outlined in the agreement between you and PGFG.

### **Asset Management Services**

Fees charged for our asset management services are charged based on a percentage of assets under management, billed in advance (at the start of the billing period) on a quarterly calendar basis and calculated based on the fair market value of your account as of the last business day of the previous billing period. Fees are prorated (based on the number of days service is provided during the initial billing period) for your account opened at any time other than the beginning of the billing period. If asset



management services are commenced in the middle of a billing period, the prorated fee for the initial billing period is billed in arrears at the same time as the next full billing period's fee is billed.

The asset management services continue in effect until terminated by either party (i.e., PGFG or you) by providing written notice of termination to the other party. Any prepaid, unearned fees will be promptly refunded by PGFG to you. Fee refunds will be determined on a pro rata basis using the number of days services are actually provided during the final period.

Fees charged for our asset management services are negotiable based on the type of client, the complexity of the client's situation, the composition of the client's account (i.e., equities versus mutual funds), the potential for additional account deposits, the relationship of the client with the investment adviser representative, and the total amount of assets under management for the client.

The annual fee for asset management services will range up to a maximum of 1.25%

There is a minimum account size of \$250,000.

PGFG believes that its annual fee is reasonable in relation to: (1) services provided and (2) the fees charged by other investment advisers offering similar services/programs. However, our annual investment advisory fee may be higher than that charged by other investment advisers offering similar services/programs. In addition to our compensation, you may also incur charges imposed at the mutual fund level (e.g., advisory fees and other fund expenses).

The investment advisory fees will be deducted from your account and paid directly to our firm by the qualified custodian(s) of your account. You will authorize the qualified custodian(s) of your account to deduct fees from your account and pay such fees directly to our firm.

You should review your account statements received from the qualified custodian(s) and verify that appropriate investment advisory fees are being deducted. The qualified custodian(s) will not verify the accuracy of the investment advisory fees deducted.

Brokerage expenses and/or transaction fees charged by the qualified custodian are billed directly to you by the qualified custodian. PGFG does not receive any portion of such commissions or fees from you or the qualified custodian. In addition, you will incur certain charges imposed by third parties other than PGFG in connection with investments made through your account including, but not limited to, mutual fund sales loads, 12(b)-1 fees and surrender charges, variable annuity fees and surrender charges, IRA and qualified retirement plan fees, and charges imposed by the qualified custodian(s) of your account. Management fees charged by PGFG are separate and distinct from the fees and expenses charged by investment company securities that may be recommended to you. A description of these fees and expenses are available in each investment company security's prospectus.

### **Sub-Advisor Platforms**

In addition to the investment advisory fee of up to a maximum of 1.25% charged by PGFG for Asset Management Services, the Platform Manager and Model Provider will each charge you a separate fee in advance (at the start of the billing period) on a quarterly calendar basis. The fee charged by the Platform Manager will be disclosed in the Tri-Party agreement between PGFG, the Platform Manager and you. The custody of all funds and securities are maintained by a custodian selected by the Platform Manager which may charge a separate custodial fee for the custody services it provides to your account. A

complete description of the Platform Managers' advisory services, fee schedules and account minimums will be disclosed in their Firm Brochure which will be provided to you prior to or at the time an agreement for services is executed and the account is established.

The Platform Manager will calculate and deduct all management fees and forward PGFG's portion of the advisory to us. All fee calculations and deductions will be disclosed on the accounts statement provided by the custodian chosen by the Platform manager.

Under this program, you may incur additional charges including but not limited to, mutual fund sales loads, 12b-1 fees and surrender charges, and IRA and qualified retirement plan fees.

You may terminate the any Platform Manager relationship at any time by notifying PGFG. Termination will be effective upon 30 days written notice to the other party. If services are terminated within five business days of executing the client agreement, services will be terminated without penalty. After the initial five business days, you may be responsible for payment of fees for the number of days services were provided by PGFG prior to receipt of the notice of termination.

We have a conflict of interest by offering those Platform managers that have met the conditions of our due diligence review. There may be other Sub Advisers/Platform Providers that may be suitable for you that may be more or less costly. No guarantees can be made that your financial goals or objectives will be achieved. Further, no guarantees of performance can be offered.

### **Third-Party Money Manager Program**

Third-party managers generally have account minimum requirements that will vary among third-party money managers. Account minimums are generally higher on fixed income accounts than for equity based accounts. A complete description of the third-party money manager's services, fee schedules and account minimums will be disclosed in the third-party money manager's disclosure brochure which will be provided to you prior to or at the time an agreement for services is executed and the account is established.

The actual fee charged to you will vary depending on the third-party money manager. All fees are calculated and collected by the third-party money manager who will be responsible for delivering our portion of the fee paid by you to us.

Under this program, you may incur additional charges including but not limited to, mutual fund sales loads, 12b-1 fees and surrender charges, and IRA and qualified retirement plan fees.

We have a conflict of interest by using third-party money managers that have agreed to pay a portion of their advisory fee to us and have met the conditions of our due diligence review. There may be other third-party money managers that may be suitable for you that may be more or less costly. No guarantees can be made that your financial goals or objectives will be achieved. Further, no guarantees of performance can be offered.

## **Financial Planning Services**

Fees charged for our financial planning services are negotiable based upon the type of client, the services requested, the investment adviser representative providing advice, the complexity of the client's situation, the composition of the client's account, other advisory services provided and the relationship of the client and the investment adviser representative. The following are the fee arrangements available for financial planning services offered by PGFG.

### ***Fees for Financial Planning Services***

PGFG provides financial planning services under a fixed fee arrangement. A mutually agreed upon fixed fee is charged for financial planning services under this arrangement. There is a range in the amount of the fixed fee charged by PGFG for financial planning services. The minimum fixed fee is generally \$500 and the maximum fixed fee is generally no more than \$10,000. The amount of the fixed fee for your engagement is specified in your financial planning agreement with PGFG. At our sole discretion, you may be required to pay in advance of the fixed fee at the time you execute an agreement with PGFG; however, at no time will PGFG require payment of more than \$1,200 in fees more than six months in advance. Upon completion and delivery of the financial plan, the fixed fee is considered earned by PGFG and any unpaid amount is immediately due.

The financial planning services terminate upon delivery of the written financial plan or upon either party providing the other party with written notice of termination.

If you terminate the financial planning services after entering into an agreement with us, you will be responsible for immediate payment of any financial planning services performed by PGFG prior to the receipt by PGFG of your notice of termination. For financial planning services performed by PGFG under a fixed fee arrangement, you will pay PGFG a pro-rated fixed fee equivalent to the percentage of work completed by PGFG as determined by PGFG. In the event that there is a remaining balance of any fees paid in advance after the deduction of fees from the final invoice, those remaining proceeds will be refunded by PGFG to you.

### ***Other Fee Terms for Financial Planning Services***

You may pay the investment advisory fees owed for the financial planning services by submitting payment directly (for example, by check) or having the fee deducted from an existing investment account.

If you elect to pay by automatic deduction from an existing investment account, you will provide written authorization to PGFG for such charge.

You should notify PGFG within ten (10) days of receipt of an invoice if you have questions about or dispute any billing entry.

To the extent PGFG engages an outside professional (i.e. attorney, independent investment adviser or accountant) while providing financial planning services to you, PGFG will be responsible for the payment of the fees for the services of such an outside professional, and you will not be required to reimburse PGFG for such payments. To the extent that you personally engage such an outside professional, you will be responsible for the payment of the fees for the services of such an outside professional, and PGFG will not be required to reimburse Client for such payments. Fees for the services of an outside professional (i.e. attorney, independent investment adviser or accountant) will be in addition to and

separate from the fees charged by PGFG, and you will be responsible for the payment of the fees for the services of such an outside professional. In no event will the services of an outside professional be engaged without your express approval.

All fees paid to PGFG for services are separate and distinct from the commissions, fees and expenses charged by insurance companies associated with any disability insurance, life insurance and annuities subsequently acquired by you. If you sell or liquidate certain existing securities positions to acquire any insurance or annuity, you may also pay a commission and/or deferred sales charges in addition to the financial planning and consulting fees paid to PGFG and any commissions, fees and expenses charged by the insurance company for subsequently acquired insurance and/or annuities.

If you retain PGFG to implement the recommendations provided under this service, PGFG may recommend load or no-load mutual funds that charge you 12(b)-1 fees. Your investment adviser representative may receive a portion of these 12(b)-1 fees in his or her separate capacity as a registered representative of a securities broker-dealer. The receipt of 12(b)-1 fees could represent an incentive for PGFG or your investment adviser representative to recommend mutual funds with 12(b)-1 fees or higher 12(b)-1 fees over mutual funds with no 12(b)-1 fees or lower 12(b)-1 fees and therefore creates a conflict of interest.

All fees paid to PGFG for financial planning services are separate and distinct from the commissions charged by a broker-dealer or asset management fees charged by an investment adviser to implement such recommendations.

It should be noted that lower fees for comparable services may be available from other sources.

### **Seminars**

We generally charge \$49 per household for attending one of our seminars. Fees for seminar attendance may be waived at the discretion of PGFG. If you cancel prior to attending the seminar, a complete refund of any fee paid in advance is made. In addition, if we are hired by larger groups, such as corporations, we reserve the right to charge fees to cover the expenses incurred by us for presenting the seminars. In this case, all fees and payment provisions will be fully disclosed to you prior to the seminar being presented.

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

Performance-based fees are defined as fees based on a share of capital gains on or capital appreciation of the assets held in a client's account. *Item 6* is not applicable to this Disclosure Brochure because we do not charge or accept performance-based fees.

## **Item 7 – Types of Clients**

PGFG generally provides investment advice to the following types of clients:

- Individuals
- High net worth individuals

You are required to execute a written agreement with PGFG specifying the particular advisory services in order to establish a client arrangement with PGFG.

### **Minimum Investment Amounts Required**

PGFG requires a minimum of \$250,000 in order to open an account. To reach this account minimum, clients can aggregate all household accounts. Exceptions may be granted to this minimum for the relationship of the client to the representative.

The minimum fixed fee generally charged for financial planning services on a fixed fee basis is \$2,500.

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

### **Methods of Analysis**

PGFG uses the following methods of analysis in formulating investment advice:

Fundamental – This is a method of evaluating a security by attempting to measure its intrinsic value by examining related economic, financial and other qualitative and quantitative factors. Fundamental analysts attempt to study everything that can affect the security's value, including macroeconomic factors (like the overall economy and industry conditions) and individually specific factors (like the financial condition and management of a company). The end goal of performing fundamental analysis is to produce a value that an investor can compare with the security's current price in hopes of figuring out what sort of position to take with that security (underpriced = buy, overpriced = sell or short). Fundamental analysis is considered to be the opposite of technical analysis. Fundamental analysis is about using real data to evaluate a security's value. Although most analysts use fundamental analysis to value stocks, this method of valuation can be used for just about any type of security.

The risk associated with fundamental analysis is that it is somewhat subjective. While a quantitative approach is possible, fundamental analysis usually entails a qualitative assessment of how market forces interact with one another in their impact on the investment in question. It is possible for those market forces to point in different directions, thus necessitating an interpretation of which forces will be dominant. This interpretation may be wrong and could therefore lead to an unfavorable investment decision.

Technical – This is a method of evaluating securities by analyzing statistics generated by market activity, such as past prices and volume. Technical analysts do not attempt to measure a security's intrinsic value, but instead use charts and other tools to identify patterns that can suggest future activity. Technical analysts believe that the historical performance of stocks and markets are indications of future performance.

Technical analysis is even more subjective than fundamental analysis in that it relies on proper interpretation of a given security's price and trading volume data. A decision might be made based on a historical move in a certain direction that was accompanied by heavy volume; however, that heavy volume may only be heavy relative to past volume for the security in

question, but not compared to the future trading volume. Therefore, there is the risk of a trading decision being made incorrectly since future trading volume is an unknown. Technical analysis is also done through observation of various market sentiment readings, many of which are quantitative. Market sentiment gauges the relative degree of bullishness and bearishness in a given security, and a contrarian investor utilizes such sentiment advantageously. When most traders are bullish, then there are very few traders left in a position to buy the security in question, so it becomes advantageous to sell it ahead of the crowd. When most traders are bearish, then there are very few traders left in a position to sell the security in question, so it becomes advantageous to buy it ahead of the crowd. The risk in utilization of such sentiment technical measures is that a very bullish reading can always become more bullish, resulting in lost opportunity if the money manager chooses to act upon the bullish signal by selling out of a position. The reverse is also true in that a bearish reading of sentiment can always become more bearish, which may result in a premature purchase of a security.

There are risks involved in using any analysis method.

### **Investment Strategies**

PGFG uses the following investment strategies when managing client assets and/or providing investment advice:

Long term purchases: Investments held at least a year.

Short term purchases: Investments sold within a year.

Value Investing: We primarily follow a value-investing strategy that attempts to acquire at reasonable valuations publicly traded businesses that can deliver sustainable excess returns. We focus on a long-only strategy. Long term strategies are designed to identify and select investments to be held for multiple years. We will also invest in value oriented special situations with shorter expected holding periods.

Value Investing can be described as a strategy of selecting stocks that trade for less than their intrinsic values. Value investors typically seek stocks of companies that they believe the market has undervalued. They believe the market overreacts to good and bad news, resulting in stock price movements that do not correspond with the company's long-term fundamentals. The result is an opportunity for value investors to profit by buying when the price is deflated. Often, value investors select stocks with lower-than-average price-to-book or price-to-earnings ratios and/or high dividend yields. The risks associated with value-investing include incorrectly analyzing and overestimating the intrinsic value of a business, concentration risk, under performance relative to major benchmarks, macro-economic risks, investing in value traps i.e. businesses that remain perpetually undervalued, and lost purchasing power on cash holdings in the case of inflation.

Tactical asset allocation: Allows for a range of percentages in each asset class (such as Stocks = 40-50%). The ranges establish minimum and maximum acceptable percentages that permit the investor to take advantage of market conditions within these parameters. Thus, a minor form of market timing is possible, since the investor can move to the higher end of the range when stocks are expected to do better and to the lower end when the economic outlook is bleak.

Strategic asset allocation: Calls for setting target allocations and then periodically rebalancing the portfolio back to those targets as investment returns skew the original asset allocation percentages. The concept is akin to a “buy and hold” strategy, rather than an active trading approach. Of course, the strategic asset allocation targets may change over time as the client’s goals and needs change and as the time horizon for major events such as retirement and college funding grow shorter.

### **Primarily Recommend One Type of Security**

We do not primarily recommend one type of security to clients. Instead, we recommend any product that may be suitable for each client relative to that client’s specific circumstances and needs.

### **Risk of Loss**

Past performance is not indicative of future results. Therefore, you should never assume that future performance of any specific investment or investment strategy will be profitable. Investing in securities (including stocks, mutual funds, and bonds, etc.) involves risk of loss. Further, depending on the different types of investments there may be varying degrees of risk. You should be prepared to bear investment loss including loss of original principal.

Because of the inherent risk of loss associated with investing, our firm is unable to represent, guarantee, or even imply that our services and methods of analysis can or will predict future results, successfully identify market tops or bottoms, or insulate you from losses due to market corrections or declines. There are certain additional risks associated with investing in securities through our investment management program, as described below:

- Market Risk – Either the stock market as a whole, or the value of an individual company, goes down resulting in a decrease in the value of client investments. This is also referred to as systemic risk.
- Equity (stock) market risk – Common stocks are susceptible to general stock market fluctuations and to volatile increases and decreases in value as market confidence in and perceptions of their issuers change. If you held common stock, or common stock equivalents, of any given issuer, you would generally be exposed to greater risk than if you held preferred stocks and debt obligations of the issuer.
- Company Risk. When investing in stock positions, there is always a certain level of company or industry specific risk that is inherent in each investment. This is also referred to as unsystematic risk and can be reduced through appropriate diversification. There is the risk that the company will perform poorly or have its value reduced based on factors specific to the company or its industry. For example, if a company’s employees go on strike or the company receives unfavorable media attention for its actions, the value of the company may be reduced.
- Fixed Income Risk. When investing in bonds, there is the risk that the issuer will default on the bond and be unable to make payments. Further, individuals who depend on set amounts of periodically paid income face the risk that inflation will erode their spending

power. Fixed-income investors receive set, regular payments that face the same inflation risk.

- **Options Risk.** Options on securities may be subject to greater fluctuations in value than an investment in the underlying securities. Purchasing and writing put and call options are highly specialized activities and entail greater than ordinary investment risks.
- **ETF and Mutual Fund Risk** – When investing in an ETF or mutual fund, you will bear additional expenses based on your pro rata share of the ETF's or mutual fund's operating expenses, including the potential duplication of management fees. The risk of owning an ETF or mutual fund generally reflects the risks of owning the underlying securities the ETF or mutual fund holds. You will also incur brokerage costs when purchasing ETFs.
- **Management Risk** – Your investment with our firm varies with the success and failure of our investment strategies, research, analysis and determination of portfolio securities. If our investment strategies do not produce the expected returns, the value of the investment will decrease.

### **Item 9 – Disciplinary Information**

*Item 9* is not applicable to this Disclosure Brochure because there are no legal or disciplinary events that are material to a client's or prospective client's evaluation of our business or integrity.

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

PGFG is **not** and does **not** have a related person that is a broker/dealer, municipal securities dealer, government securities dealer or broker, an investment company or other pooled investment vehicle (including a mutual fund, closed-end investment company, unit investment trust, private investment company or "hedge fund," and offshore fund), another investment adviser or financial planner, a futures commission merchant, commodity pool operator, or commodity trading advisor, a banking or thrift institution, an accountant or accounting firm, a lawyer or law firm, an insurance company or agency, a pension consultant or a real estate broker or dealer.

We are an independent investment registered adviser and only provide investment advisory services. We are not engaged in any other business activities and offer no other services except those described in this Disclosure Brochure.

#### **Insurance Agent**

You may work with your investment adviser representative in his or her separate capacity as an insurance agent. When acting in his or her separate capacity as an insurance agent, the investment adviser representative may sell, for commissions, general disability insurance, life insurance, annuities, and other insurance products to you. As such, your investment adviser representative in his or her separate capacity as an insurance agent, may suggest that you implement recommendations of PGFG by purchasing disability insurance, life insurance, annuities, or other insurance products. This receipt of commissions creates an incentive for the representative to recommend those products for which your



investment adviser representative will receive a commission in his or her separate capacity as an insurance agent. Consequently, the advice rendered to you could be biased. You are under no obligation to implement any insurance or annuity transaction through your investment adviser representative.

### **Seminar Marketing System Sales**

Matthew Gulbransen has developed a practice improvement seminar marketing system which he offers to other financial professionals. He spends less than 10% of his time on this activity.

### **General Partner of Sponsor of Private Investment Vehicles**

The Firm's President Matthew L. Gulbransen is also the General Partner of Three Bridges Private Capital LP a firm that sponsors a series of private investment opportunities. This is an activity that is separate and distinct from his duties as President of PGFG although clients of PGFG who meet the suitability standards if the program may be solicited to invest in one of these series of private investments. Clients are under no obligation to invest in any investment opportunity offered by this entity. Mr. Gulbransen will spend less than 50% of his time on this activity.

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

### **Code of Ethics Summary**

According to the *Investment Advisers Act of 1940*, an investment adviser is considered a fiduciary and has a fiduciary duty to all clients. PGFG has established a Code of Ethics to comply with the requirements of Section 204(A)-1 of the *Investment Advisers Act of 1940* that reflects its fiduciary obligations and those of its supervised persons. The Code of Ethics also requires compliance with federal securities laws. The Code of Ethics covers all individuals that are classified as "supervised persons". All employees, officers, directors and investment adviser representatives are classified as supervised persons. PGFG requires its supervised persons to consistently act in your best interest in all advisory activities. PGFG imposes certain requirements on its affiliates and supervised persons to ensure that they meet the firm's fiduciary responsibilities to you. The standard of conduct required is higher than ordinarily required and encountered in commercial business.

This section is intended to provide a summary description of the Code of Ethics of PGFG. If you wish to review the Code of Ethics in its entirety, you should send us a written request and upon receipt of your request, we will promptly provide a copy of the Code of Ethics to you.

### **Affiliate and Employee Personal Securities Transactions Disclosure**

PGFG or supervised persons of the firm buy and sell for their personal accounts, investment products identical to those recommended to clients. This creates a conflict of interest. It is the express policy of PGFG that all persons associated in any manner with our firm must place clients' interests ahead of their own when implementing personal investments. As is required by our internal procedures manual, PGFG and its supervised persons will not buy or sell securities for their personal account(s) where their decision

is derived, in whole or in part, by information obtained as a result of employment or association with our firm unless the information is also available to the investing public upon reasonable inquiry.

We are now and will continue to be in compliance with applicable state and federal rules and regulations. To mitigate conflicts of interest that can occur when access persons manage their personal accounts at the same time PGFG manages client accounts, we have developed written supervisory procedures that include personal investment and trading policies for our representatives, employees and their immediate family members (collectively, supervised persons):

- Supervised persons cannot prefer their own interests to that of the client.
- Supervised persons cannot purchase or sell any security for their personal accounts prior to implementing transactions for client accounts.
- Supervised persons cannot buy or sell securities for their personal accounts when those decisions are based on information obtained as a result of their employment unless that information is also available to the investing public upon reasonable inquiry.
- Supervised persons are prohibited from purchasing or selling securities of companies in which any client is deemed an "insider".
- Supervised persons are discouraged from conducting frequent personal trading.
- Supervised persons are generally prohibited from serving as board members of publicly traded companies unless an exception has been granted to the Chief Compliance Officer of PGFG.

Any Supervised person not observing our policies is subject to sanctions up to and including termination.

## **Item 12 – Brokerage Practices**

If PGFG assists in the implementation of any recommendations, we are responsible to ensure that the client receives the best execution possible. Best execution does not necessarily mean that clients receive the lowest possible commission costs but that the qualitative execution is best. In other words, all conditions considered, the transaction execution is in your best interest. When considering best execution, we look at a number of factors besides prices and rates including, but not limited to:

- Execution capabilities (e.g., market expertise, ease/reliability/timeliness of execution, responsiveness, integration with our existing systems, ease of monitoring investments)
- Products and services offered (e.g., investment programs, back office services, technology, regulatory compliance assistance, research and analytic services)
- Financial strength, stability and responsibility
- Reputation and integrity
- Ability to maintain confidentiality

We exercise reasonable due diligence to make certain that best execution is obtained for all clients when implementing any transaction by considering the back office services, technology and pricing of services offered.

### **Brokerage Recommendations**

PGFG may recommend/require that clients establish brokerage accounts with the Schwab Institutional division of Charles Schwab & Co., Inc ("Schwab"), a FINRA-registered broker-dealer, Member SIPC, to maintain custody of clients' assets and to effect trades for their accounts. Although PGFG may recommend/require the clients establish accounts at Schwab, it is the client's decision to custody assets with Schwab. PGFG is independently owned and operated and not affiliated with Schwab. PGFG may recommend additional unaffiliated broker-dealers to affect fixed income transactions.

Schwab provides PGFG with access to its institutional trading and custody services, which are typically not available to Schwab retail investors. These services generally are available to independent investment advisors on an unsolicited basis, at no charge to them so long as a total of at least \$10 million of the advisor's clients' assets are maintained at Schwab Institutional. These services are not contingent upon PGFG committing to Schwab any specific amount of business (assets in custody or trading commissions). Schwab's brokerage services include the execution of securities transactions, custody, research, and access to mutual funds and other investments that are otherwise generally available only to institutional investors or would require significantly higher minimum initial investment.

Schwab Institutional also makes available to PGFG other products and services that benefit PGFG but may not directly benefit clients' accounts. Many of these products and services may be used to service all or some substantial number of PGFG's accounts, including accounts not maintained at Schwab.

Schwab's products and services that assist PGFG in managing and administering clients' accounts include software and other technology that (i) provides access to client account data (such as trade confirmations and account statements); (ii) facilitate trade execution and allocate aggregated trade orders for multiple client accounts; (iii) provide research, pricing and other market data; (iv) facilitate payment of PGFG's fees from some of its accounts; and (v) assist with back-office functions, recordkeeping and client reporting.

Schwab Institutional also offers other services intended to help PGFG manage and further develop its business enterprise. These services may include: (i) compliance, legal and business consulting; (ii) publications and conferences on practice management and business succession; and (iii) access to employee benefits providers, human capital consultants and insurance providers. Schwab Institutional may discount or waive fees it would otherwise charge for some of these services or pay all or part of the fees of a third-party providing these services to PGFG. Schwab Institutional may also provide other benefits such as educational events or occasional business entertainment of PGFG personnel. While as a fiduciary, PGFG endeavors to act in its clients' best interests, PGFG's recommendation that clients maintain their assets in accounts at Schwab may take into account availability of some of the foregoing products and services and other arrangements not solely on the nature of cost or quality of custody and brokerage services provided by Schwab, which may create a conflict of interest.

### **Directed Brokerage**

Clients should understand that not all investment advisors require the use of a particular broker/dealer or custodian. Some investment advisors allow their clients to select whichever broker/dealer the client decides. By requiring clients to use a particular broker/dealer, PGFG may not achieve the most favorable execution of client transactions and the practice requiring the use of specific broker/dealers may cost clients more money than if the client used a different broker/dealer or custodian. However, for

compliance and operational efficiencies, PGFG has decided to require our clients to use broker/dealers and other qualified custodians determined by PGFG.

### **Soft Dollar Benefits**

An investment adviser receives soft dollar benefits from a broker-dealer when the investment adviser receives research or other products and services in exchange for client securities transactions or maintaining an account balance with the broker-dealer.

PGFG does not have a soft dollar agreement with a broker-dealer or a third-party.

### **Block Trading Policy**

We may elect to purchase or sell the same securities for several clients at approximately the same time. This process is referred to as aggregating orders, batch trading or block trading and is used by our firm when PGFG believes such action may prove advantageous to clients. If and when we aggregate client orders, allocating securities among client accounts is done on a fair and equitable basis. Typically, the process of aggregating client orders is done in order to achieve better execution, to negotiate more favorable commission rates or to allocate orders among clients on a more equitable basis in order to avoid differences in prices and transaction fees or other transaction costs that might be obtained when orders are placed independently.

PGFG uses the average price allocation method for transaction allocation.

Under this procedure PGFG will calculate the average price and transaction charges for each transaction included in a block order and assign the average price and transaction charge to each allocated transaction executed for the client's account.

If and when we determine to aggregate client orders for the purchase or sale of securities, including securities in which PGFG or our associated persons may invest, we will do so in accordance with the parameters set forth in the SEC No-Action Letter, *SMC Capital, Inc.* Neither we nor our associated persons receive any additional compensation as a result of block trades.

### **Agency Cross Transactions**

Our associated persons are prohibited from engaging in agency cross transactions, meaning we cannot act as brokers for both the sale and purchase of a single security between two different clients and cannot receive compensation in the form of an agency cross commission or principal mark-up for the trades.

## **Item 13 – Review of Accounts**

### **Account Reviews and Reviewers**

Managed accounts are reviewed at least quarterly. While the calendar is the main triggering factor, reviews can also be conducted at your request. Account reviews will include investment strategy and

objectives review and making a change if strategy and objectives have changed. Reviews are conducted by Mathew L. Gulbransen, with reviews performed in accordance with your investment goals and objectives.

Our financial planning services terminate upon the presentation of the written plan. Our financial planning services do not include monitoring the investments of your account(s), and therefore, there is no ongoing review of your account(s) under such services.

### **Statements and Reports**

For our asset management services, you are provided with transaction confirmation notices and regular quarterly account statements in writing directly from the qualified custodian. Additionally, PGFG may provide position or performance reports to you quarterly and upon request.

Financial planning clients do not receive any report other than the written plan originally contracted for and provided by PGFG.

You are encouraged to always compare any reports or statements provided by us, a sub-adviser or Platform Provider against the account statements delivered from the qualified custodian. When you have questions about your account statement, you should contact our firm and the qualified custodian preparing the statement.

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

PGFG will engage independent solicitors to provide client referrals. If a client is referred to us by a solicitor, this practice is disclosed to the client in writing by the solicitor and PGFG pays the solicitor out of its own funds—specifically, PGFG generally pays the solicitor a portion of the advisory fees earned for managing the capital of the client or investor that was referred. The use of solicitors is strictly regulated under applicable federal and state law. PGFG's policy is to fully comply with the requirements of Rule 206(4)-3, under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, as amended, and similar state rules, as applicable.

PGFG may receive client referrals from Zoe Financial, Inc through its participation in Zoe Advisor Network (ZAN). Zoe Financial, Inc is independent of and unaffiliated with PGFG and there is no employee relationship between them. Zoe Financial established the Zoe Advisor Network as a means of referring individuals and other investors seeking fiduciary personal investment management services or financial planning services to independent investment advisors. Zoe Financial does not supervise PGFG and has no responsibility for PGFG's management of client portfolios or PGFG's other advice or services. PGFG pays Zoe Financial an on-going fee for each successful client referral. This fee is usually a percentage of the advisory fee that the client pays to PGFG ("Solicitation Fee"). PGFG will not charge clients referred through Zoe Advisor Network any fees or costs higher than its standard fee schedule offered to its clients. For information regarding additional or other fees paid directly or indirectly to Zoe Financial Inc, please refer to the Zoe Financial Disclosure and Acknowledgement Form.

The only compensation received from advisory services is the fees charged for providing investment advisory services as described in *Item 5* of this Disclosure Brochure. PGFG receives no other forms of compensation in connection with providing investment advice.

We receive an economic benefit from Schwab in the form of the support products and services it makes available to us and other independent investment advisers whose clients maintain their accounts at Schwab. These products and services, how they benefit us, and the related conflicts of interest are described above (see *Item 12 – Brokerage Practices*). The availability of Schwab's products and services is not based on us giving particular investment advice, such as buying particular securities for our clients.

*Please see Item 5, Fees and Compensation, Item 10, Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations and Item 12, Brokerage Practices, for additional discussion concerning other compensation.*

## **Item 15 – Custody**

Custody, as it applies to investment advisers, has been defined by regulators as having access or control over client funds and/or securities. In other words, custody is not limited to physically holding client funds and securities. If an investment adviser has the ability to access or control client funds or securities, the investment adviser is deemed to have custody and must ensure proper procedures are implemented. According to this definition, PGFG does **not** have custody of client funds or securities.

## **Item 16 – Investment Discretion**

When providing asset management services, PGFG maintains trading authorization over your Account and can provide management services on a **discretionary** basis. When discretionary authority is granted, we will have the authority to determine the type of securities and the amount of securities that can be bought or sold for your portfolio without obtaining your consent for each transaction.

If you decide to grant trading authorization on a **non-discretionary** basis, we will be required to contact you prior to implementing changes in your account. Therefore, you will be contacted and required to accept or reject our investment recommendations including:

- The security being recommended
- The number of shares or units
- Whether to buy or sell

Once the above factors are agreed upon, we will be responsible for making decisions regarding the timing of buying or selling an investment and the price at which the investment is bought or sold. If your accounts are managed on a non-discretionary basis, you need to know that if we are not able to reach you or you are slow to respond to our request, it can have an adverse impact on the timing of trade implementations and we may not achieve the optimal trading price.

You will have the ability to place reasonable restrictions on the types of investments that may be purchased in your Account. You may also place reasonable limitations on the discretionary power granted to PGFG so long as the limitations are specifically set forth or included as an attachment to the client agreement.

Client will grant PGFG discretionary authority (without first consulting with Client) to establish and/or terminate a relationship with a Platform Provider, Sub-Advisor and/or Third Party Manager for purposes of managing the Account or a portion of the Account determined by PGFG. Client will also grant the Sub-

Adviser or Third Party Manager selected by PGFG with the discretionary authority (in the sole discretion of the Sub-Adviser without first consulting with Client) to make all decisions to buy, sell or hold securities, cash or other investments for such portion of the Account managed by the Sub-Adviser or Third Party Manager. Client will also grant the Sub-Adviser or Third Party Manager selected by PGFG with the power and authority to carry out these decisions by giving instructions, on behalf of Client, to brokers and dealers and the qualified custodian(s) of the Account. Client authorizes PGFG to provide a copy of this Agreement to the qualified custodian or any broker or dealer, through which transactions will be implemented on behalf of Client, as evidence of Sub-Adviser or Third Party Manager's authority under this Agreement.

## Item 17 – Voting Client Securities

### Proxy Voting

PGFG does not vote proxies on behalf of Clients. We have determined that taking on the responsibilities for voting client securities does not add enough value to the services provided to you to justify the additional compliance and regulatory costs associated with voting client securities. Therefore, it is your responsibility to vote all proxies for securities held in Account.

You will receive proxies directly from the qualified custodian or transfer agent; we will not provide you with the proxies. You are encouraged to read through the information provided with the proxy-voting documents and make a determination based on the information provided. Although we do not vote client proxies, if you have a question about a particular proxy feel free to contact us. However, you will have the ultimate responsibility for making all proxy-voting decisions.

## Item 18 – Financial Information

This *Item 18* is not applicable to this brochure. PGFG does not require or solicit prepayment of more than \$1200 in fees per client, six months or more in advance. Therefore, we are not required to include a balance sheet for the most recent fiscal year. We are not subject to a financial condition that is reasonably likely to impair our ability to meet contractual commitments to clients. Finally, PGFG has not been the subject of a bankruptcy petition at any time.

## Customer Privacy Policy Notice

Regulation S-P, Privacy of Consumer Financial Information, requires financial institutions, including **PGFG**, to provide notice to current clients and prospective clients about their policies and practices concerning the collection and use of customer, non-public information. This privacy policy notice is given to all prospective clients of **PGFG** upon entering into a contract with **PGFG** and annually thereafter.

**Privacy Disclosure Statement.** A primary goal of **PGFG** is to protect the privacy of its clients. **PGFG** does not sell the personal information of clients to anyone.

To conduct regular business, **PGFG** may collect nonpublic personal information from clients. This information is provided by clients to **PGFG** on applications and other forms provided by clients to **PGFG** as well as transactions with the firm, our affiliates, or others.

**PGFG** may enter into contracts with outside third parties so that **PGFG** can assist its clients in servicing their accounts. In order to do this, **PGFG** will disclose personal information to companies that help **PGFG** process transactions for client accounts (for example, executing client trades at through a broker/dealer). However, **PGFG** does not share or disclose any nonpublic customer information except as allowed or required by law. In addition to sharing information in order to provide financial services to clients, **PGFG** may be required to disclose personal information to cooperate with regulators or law enforcement authorities, to resolve customer disputes, or for risk control.

**Information Safeguarding.** **PGFG** has implemented strict policies and procedures aimed at protecting the sensitive nature of client information. **PGFG** restricts access to client information to only those members of **PGFG** that must provide products and services to clients in order to service client accounts. **PGFG** has implemented physical, electronic, and procedural safeguards aimed at meeting **PGFG**'s duty to protect nonpublic client information.

If you have any questions concerning **PGFG**'s customer privacy policy or concerns about your personal information please feel free to contact us at 651-714-0323.