

BRIDGE BANCORP INC
Form 10-K
March 16, 2015
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UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 10-K

x **ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE**
SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the fiscal year ended December 31, 2014

Commission File No. 001-34096

BRIDGE BANCORP, INC.

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

NEW YORK

(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation or organization)

11-2934195

(IRS Employer Identification Number)

2200 MONTAUK HIGHWAY, BRIDGEHAMPTON, NEW YORK

(Address of principal executive offices)

11932

(Zip Code)

Registrant's telephone number, including area code: (631) 537-1000

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12 (b) of the Act:

Title of each class

Name of each exchange on which registered

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Common Stock, Par Value of \$0.01 Per Share

The Nasdaq Stock Market, LLC

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12 (g) of the Act:

(Title of Class)

None

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act.

Yes ☐ No ☒

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Act.

Yes ☐ No ☒

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days. Yes ☒ No ☐

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Web site, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T (§232.405 of this chapter) during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files). Yes ☒ No ☐

Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K (§229.405) of this chapter is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendment to this Form 10-K. ☒

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of "large accelerated filer," "accelerated filer" and "smaller reporting company" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one):

Large accelerated filer ☐ Accelerated filer ☒ Non-accelerated filer ☐ Smaller reporting company ☐

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Act). Yes ☐ No ☒

The approximate aggregate market value of the voting stock held by non-affiliates of the Registrant, based upon the closing price of the Common Stock on June 30, 2014, was \$264,984,209.

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The number of shares of the Registrant's common stock outstanding on March 13, 2015 was 11,704,184.

Portions of the following documents are incorporated into the Parts of this Report on Form 10-K indicated below:

The Registrant's definitive Proxy Statement for the 2015 Annual Meeting to be filed pursuant to Regulation 14A on or before April 30, 2015 (Part III).

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PART I

Item 1. Business

Bridge Bancorp, Inc. (the Registrant or Company) is a registered bank holding company for The Bridgehampton National Bank (the Bank). The Bank was established in 1910 as a national banking association and is headquartered in Bridgehampton, New York. The Registrant was incorporated under the laws of the State of New York in 1988, at the direction of the Board of Directors of the Bank for the purpose of becoming a bank holding company pursuant to a plan of reorganization under which the former shareholders of the Bank became the shareholders of the Company. Since commencing business in March 1989, after the reorganization, the Registrant has functioned primarily as the holder of all of the Bank's common stock. In May 1999, the Bank established a real estate investment trust subsidiary, Bridgehampton Community, Inc. (BCI), as an operating subsidiary. The assets transferred to BCI are viewed by the bank regulators as part of the Bank's assets in consolidation. The operations of the Bank also include Bridge Abstract LLC (Bridge Abstract), a wholly owned subsidiary of the Bank, which is a broker of title insurance services and Bridge Financial Services LLC (Bridge Financial Services), an investment services subsidiary that was formed in March 2014; in October 2009, the Company formed Bridge Statutory Capital Trust II (the Trust) as a subsidiary, which sold \$16.0 million of 8.5% cumulative convertible Trust Preferred Securities (the Trust Preferred Securities) in a private placement to accredited investors.

Federally chartered in 1910, the Bank was founded by local farmers and merchants and now operates twenty nine branches on Long Island. For a century, the Bank has maintained its focus on building customer relationships in its market area. The mission of the Company is to grow through the provision of exceptional service to its customers, its employees, and the community. The Company strives to achieve excellence in financial performance and build long term shareholder value. The Bank engages in full service commercial and consumer banking business, including accepting time, savings and demand deposits from the consumers, businesses and local municipalities surrounding its branch offices. These deposits, together with funds generated from operations and borrowings, are invested primarily in: (1) commercial real estate loans; (2) home equity loans; (3) construction loans; (4) residential mortgage loans; (5) secured and unsecured commercial and consumer loans; (6) FHLB, FNMA, GNMA and FHLMC and non-agency mortgage-backed securities, collateralized mortgage obligations and other asset backed securities; (7) New York State and local municipal obligations; and (8) U.S government sponsored entity (U.S. GSE) securities. The Bank also offers the CDARS program, providing multi-millions of FDIC insurance on CD deposits to its customers. In addition, the Bank offers merchant credit and debit card processing, automated teller machines, cash management services, lockbox processing, online banking services, remote deposit capture, safe deposit boxes, individual retirement accounts and investment services through Bridge Financial Services, offering a full range of investment products and services through a third party broker dealer. Through its title insurance abstract subsidiary, the Bank acts as a broker for title insurance services. The Bank's customer base is comprised principally of small businesses, municipal relationships and consumer relationships.

The Bank employs 348 people on a full-time and part-time basis. The Bank provides a variety of employment benefits and considers its relationship with its employees to be positive. In addition, the Company maintains equity incentive plans under which it may issue shares of common stock of the Company.

All phases of the Bank's business are highly competitive. The Bank faces direct competition from a significant number of financial institutions operating in its market area, many with a statewide or regional presence, and in some cases, a national presence. There is also competition for banking business from competitors outside of its market areas. Most of these competitors are significantly larger than the Bank, and therefore have greater financial and marketing resources and lending limits than those of the Bank. The fixed cost of regulatory compliance remains high

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for community banks as compared to their larger competitors that are able to achieve economies of scale. The Bank considers its major competition to be local commercial banks as well as other commercial banks with branches in the Bank's market area. Other competitors include savings banks, credit unions, mortgage brokers and financial services firms other than financial institutions such as investment and insurance companies. Increased competition within the Bank's market areas may limit growth and profitability. Additionally, as the Bank's market area expands westward, competitive pressure in new markets is expected to be strong. The title insurance abstract subsidiary also faces competition from other title insurance brokers as well as directly from the companies that underwrite title insurance. In New York State, title insurance is obtained on most transfers of real estate and mortgage transactions.

The Bank's principal market area is located in Suffolk County, New York. Suffolk County is located on the eastern portion of Long Island and has a population of approximately 1.5 million. Eastern Long Island is semi-rural. Surrounded by water and including the Hamptons and North Fork, the region is a recreational destination for the New York metropolitan area, and a highly regarded resort locale world-wide. While the local economy flourishes in the summer months as a result of the influx of tourists and second homeowners, the year-round population has grown considerably in recent years, resulting in a reduction of the seasonal fluctuations in the economy. Industries represented in the marketplace include retail establishments; construction and trades; restaurants and bars; lodging and recreation; professional entities; real estate; health services; passenger transportation; and agricultural and related businesses. During the last decade, the Long Island wine industry has grown with an increasing number of new wineries and vineyards locating in the region each year. The vast majority of businesses are considered small businesses employing fewer than ten full-time

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employees. In recent years, more national chains have opened retail stores within the villages on the north and south forks of the island. Major employers in the region include the municipalities, school districts, hospitals, and financial institutions.

The Company, the Bank and its subsidiaries, with the exception of the real estate investment trust which files its own federal and state income tax returns, report their income on a consolidated basis using the accrual method of accounting and are subject to federal and state income taxation. In general, banks are subject to federal income tax in the same manner as other corporations. However, gains and losses realized by banks from the sale of available for sale securities are generally treated as ordinary income, rather than capital gains or losses. The Bank is subject to the New York State Franchise Tax on Banking Corporations based on certain criteria. The taxation of net income is similar to federal taxable income subject to certain modifications.

DeNovo Branch Expansion

Since 2010, the Bank has opened ten new branches including seven over the last three years. The Bank opened two branches in 2012: one in Ronkonkoma, New York with proximity to MacArthur Airport complementing the Patchogue branch and extending the Bank's reach into the Bohemia market and one branch and administrative offices in Hauppauge, New York. In 2013, the Bank opened two branches: one in Rocky Point, New York and one on Shelter Island, New York. In 2014, the Bank opened three branches: one in Bay Shore, New York in September, one in Port Jefferson, New York in November and one in Smithtown, New York in December. These branch openings demonstrate the Bank's commitment to traditional growth through branch expansion and move the Bank geographically westward.

Mergers and Acquisitions

Hamptons State Bank

In May 2011, the Bank acquired Hamptons State Bank (HSB) which increased the Bank's presence in an existing market with a branch located in the Village of Southampton. In July 2011, the Bank converted the former HSB customers to its core operating system. Management spent considerable time ensuring the transition progressed smoothly for HSB's former customers and shareholders and demonstrated its ability to successfully integrate the former HSB customers and achieve expected cost savings while continuing to execute its business strategy.

FNBNY

On February 14, 2014, the Company acquired FNBNY Bancorp and its wholly owned subsidiary, the First National Bank of New York (collectively FNBNY) at a purchase price of \$6.1 million and issued an aggregate of 240,598 Company shares in exchange for all the issued and outstanding stock of FNBNY. The purchase price is subject to certain post-closing adjustments equal to 60 percent of the net recoveries of principal on \$6.3 million of certain identified problem loans over a two-year period after the acquisition. As of February 14, 2015, there have been no net recoveries on these loans. At acquisition, FNBNY had total acquired assets on a fair value basis of \$211.9 million, with loans of \$89.7 million, investment securities of \$103.2 million and deposits of \$169.9 million. With three full-service branches, including the Company's first two branches in Nassau County located in Merrick and Massapequa, and one in western Suffolk County located in Melville, the transaction expanded our geographic footprint into Nassau County, complemented our existing branch network and enhanced our asset generation capabilities. The expanded branch network allows us to serve a greater portion of the Long Island and metropolitan marketplace.

Community National Bank (CNB)

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On December 14, 2014, The Company, the Bank and Community National Bank entered into an Agreement and Plan of Merger (the "merger agreement") pursuant to which Bridge Bancorp will acquire, in an all stock merger, CNB through the merger of CNB with and into The Bridgehampton National Bank. CNB currently operates 11 branches in Nassau, Suffolk, Queens and Manhattan Counties with total assets of \$951 million, including \$761 million in loans, funded by deposits of \$829 million. The combined institution will have approximately \$3.2 billion in assets, \$2.7 billion in deposits and 40 branches serving Long island and the greater New York metropolitan area. Under the terms of the merger agreement, each outstanding share of CNB common stock will be converted into the right to receive 0.79 of a share of the Company's common stock. Based on the Company's closing stock price on December 12, 2014 of \$25.35, the transaction implies a per share value of \$20.03 and an aggregate estimated value of \$141 million. The proposed merger is subject to customary closing conditions, including the receipt of regulatory approvals and approval by the stockholders of the Company and CNB. The merger is currently expected to be completed in the second quarter of 2015. Management will continue to seek opportunities to expand its reach into other contiguous markets by network expansion, or through the addition of professionals with established customer relationships.

The Bank routinely adds to its menu of products and services, continually meeting the needs of consumers and businesses. We believe positive outcomes in the future will result from the expansion of our geographic footprint, investments in infrastructure and technology and continued focus on placing our customers first.

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REGULATION AND SUPERVISION

The Bridgehampton National Bank

The Bank is a national bank organized under the laws of the United States of America. The lending, investment, and other business operations of the Bank are governed by federal law and regulations and the Bank is prohibited from engaging in any operations not specifically authorized by such laws and regulations. The Bank is subject to extensive regulation by the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) and to a lesser extent by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), as its deposit insurer as well as by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. The Bank's deposit accounts are insured up to applicable limits by the FDIC under its Deposit Insurance Fund (DIF). A summary of the primary laws and regulations that govern the operations of the Bank are set forth below.

The 2010 Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (the Dodd-Frank Act) made extensive changes in the regulation of insured depository institutions. Among other things, the Dodd-Frank Act created a new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau as an independent bureau of the Federal Reserve Board. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau assumed responsibility for the implementation of the federal financial consumer protection and fair lending laws and regulations, a function previously assigned to prudential regulators, and has authority to impose new requirements. However, institutions of less than \$10 billion in assets, such as the Bank, will continue to be examined for compliance with consumer protection and fair lending laws and regulations by, and be subject to the primary enforcement authority of their prudential regulator rather than the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

In addition, the Dodd-Frank Act directed changes in the way that institutions are assessed for deposit insurance, mandated the revision of regulatory capital requirements, required regulations requiring originators of certain securitized loans to retain a percentage of the risk for the transferred loans, stipulated regulatory rate-setting for certain debit card interchange fees, repealed restrictions on the payment of interest on commercial demand deposits and contained a number of reforms related to mortgage originations.

The Dodd-Frank Act contained the so-called Volcker Rule, which generally prohibits banking organizations from engaging in proprietary trading and from investing in, sponsoring or having certain relationships with hedge or private equity funds (covered funds). On December 13, 2013, federal agencies issued a final rule implementing the Volcker Rule which, among other things, requires banking organizations to restructure and limit certain of their investments in and relationships with covered funds. The final rule unexpectedly included within the interests subject to its restrictions collateralized debt obligations backed by trust-preferred securities (TRUPS CDOs). Many banking organizations had purchased such instruments because of their favorable tax, accounting and regulatory treatment and would have been subject to unexpected write-downs. In response to concerns expressed by community banking organizations, the federal agencies subsequently issued an interim final rule which grandfathers TRUPS CDOs issued before May 19, 2010 if (i) acquired by a banking organization on or before December 10, 2013 and (ii) the organization reasonably believed the proceeds from the TRUPS CDOs were invested primarily in any trust preferred security or subordinated debt instrument issued by a depository institution holding company with less than \$15 billion in assets or by a mutual holding company.

In addition, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has finalized the rule implementing the Ability to Pay requirements of the Dodd-Frank Act. The regulations generally require creditors to make a reasonable, good faith determination as to a borrower's ability to repay most residential mortgage loans. The final rule establishes a safe harbor for certain Qualified Mortgages, which contain certain features deemed less risky and omit certain other characteristics considered to enhance risk. The Ability to Repay final rules were effective January 10, 2014.

Many of the provisions of the Dodd-Frank Act are subject to delayed effective dates and/or require the issuance of implementing regulations. The regulatory process is ongoing and the impact on operations cannot yet be fully assessed. However, there is a significant possibility that the Dodd-Frank Act will, at a minimum, result in increased regulatory burden, compliance costs and interest expense for the Company and the Bank.

Loans and Investments

There are no restrictions on the type of loans a national bank can originate and/or purchase. However, OCC regulations govern the Bank's investment authority. Generally, a national bank is prohibited from investing in corporate equity securities for its own account. Under OCC regulations, a national bank may invest in investment securities, which is generally defined as securities in the form of a note, bond or debenture. The OCC classifies investment securities into five different types and, depending on its type, a national bank may have the authority to deal in and underwrite the security. The OCC has also permitted national banks to purchase certain noninvestment grade securities that can be reclassified and underwritten as loans.

Lending Standards

The federal banking agencies adopted uniform regulations prescribing standards for extensions of credit that are secured by liens on interests in real estate or made for the purpose of financing the construction of a building or other improvements to real estate. Under these regulations, all insured depository institutions, such as the Bank, must adopt and maintain written policies that establish

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appropriate limits and standards for extensions of credit that are secured by liens or interests in real estate or are made for the purpose of financing permanent improvements to real estate. These policies must establish loan portfolio diversification standards, prudent underwriting standards (including loan-to-value limits) that are clear and measurable, loan administration procedures, and documentation, approval and reporting requirements. The real estate lending policies must reflect consideration of the Interagency Guidelines for Real Estate Lending Policies that have been adopted by the federal bank regulators.

Federal Deposit Insurance

The Bank is a member of the DIF, which is administered by the FDIC. Deposit accounts at the Bank are insured by the FDIC. On July 21, 2010, the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act permanently raised the deposit insurance available on all deposit accounts to \$250,000.

Under the FDIC's risk-based assessment system, insured institutions are assigned to one of four risk categories based on supervisory evaluations, regulatory capital levels and certain other factors, with less risky institutions paying lower assessments. An institution's rate depends upon the category to which it is assigned, and certain adjustments specified by FDIC regulations. Institutions deemed less risky pay lower rates. The Dodd-Frank Act required the FDIC to revise its procedures to base its assessments upon each insured institution's total assets less tangible equity instead of deposits. The FDIC finalized a rule, effective April 1, 2011, that set the assessment range at 2.5 to 45 basis points of total assets less tangible equity. The FDIC may adjust the scale uniformly, except that no adjustment can deviate more than two basis points from the base scale without notice and comment. No institution may pay a dividend if in default of the federal deposit insurance assessment.

Insurance of deposits may be terminated by the FDIC upon a finding that an institution has engaged in unsafe or unsound practices, is in an unsafe or unsound condition to continue operations or has violated any applicable law, regulation, rule, order or condition imposed by the FDIC. We do not know of any practice, condition or violation that might lead to termination of deposit insurance.

In addition to the FDIC assessments, the Financing Corporation (FICO) is authorized to impose and collect, with the approval of the FDIC, assessments for anticipated payments, issuance costs and custodial fees on bonds issued by the FICO in the 1980s to recapitalize the former Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation. The bonds issued by the FICO are due to mature in 2017 through 2019. For the quarter ended December 31, 2014, the annualized FICO assessment was equal to 0.60 basis points of average consolidated total assets less average tangible equity.

Capitalization

Under OCC regulations, all national banks are required to comply with minimum capital requirements. In 2014, for an institution determined by the OCC to not be anticipating or experiencing significant growth and to be, in general, a strong banking organization, rated composite 1 under the Uniform Financial Institutions Ranking System established by the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, the minimum capital leverage requirement was a ratio of Tier I capital to total assets of 3%. For all other institutions, the minimum leverage capital ratio was not less than 4%. Tier I capital is the sum of common shareholders' equity, non-cumulative perpetual preferred stock (including any related surplus) and minority investments in certain subsidiaries, less intangible assets (except for certain servicing rights and credit card relationships) and certain

other specified items.

The OCC regulations require national banks to maintain certain levels of regulatory capital in relation to regulatory risk-weighted assets. The ratio of regulatory capital to regulatory risk-weighted assets is referred to as a bank's risk-based capital ratio. Risk-based capital ratios are determined by allocating assets and specified off-balance sheet items (including recourse obligations, direct credit substitutes and residual interests) to four risk-weighted categories ranging from 0% to 200%, with higher levels of capital being required for the categories perceived as representing greater risk. For example, under the OCC's risk-weighting system, cash and securities backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. government are given a 0% risk weight, loans secured by one-to-four family residential properties generally have a 50% risk weight, and commercial loans have a risk weighting of 100%.

In 2014, national banks such as the Bank, must maintain a minimum ratio of total capital to risk-weighted assets of at least 8%, of which at least one-half must be Tier I capital. Total capital consists of Tier I capital plus Tier 2 or supplementary capital items, which include allowances for loan losses in an amount of up to 1.25% of risk-weighted assets, cumulative preferred stock and certain other capital instruments, and a portion of the net unrealized gain on equity securities. The includable amount of Tier 2 capital could not exceed the amount of the institution's Tier I capital. Banks that engage in specified levels of trading activities are subject to adjustments in their risk based capital calculation to ensure the maintenance of sufficient capital to support market risk.

The OCC, along with the other federal banking agencies, has adopted a regulation providing that the agencies will take into account the exposure of a bank's capital and economic value to changes in interest rate risk in assessing a bank's capital adequacy. The OCC also has authority to establish individual minimum capital requirements in appropriate cases upon a determination that an institution's capital level is, or is likely to become, inadequate in light of the particular circumstances.

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In July 2013, the OCC and the other federal bank regulatory agencies issued a final rule to revise their leverage and risk-based capital requirements and the method for calculating risk-weighted assets to make them consistent with agreements that were reached by the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision and certain provisions of the Dodd-Frank Act. Among other things, the rule establishes a new common equity Tier 1 minimum capital requirement (4.5% of risk-weighted assets), sets the leverage ratio at a uniform 4% of total assets, increases the minimum Tier 1 capital to risk-based assets requirement (from 4% to 6% of risk-weighted assets) and assigns a higher risk weight (150%) to exposures that are more than 90 days past due or are on nonaccrual status and to certain commercial real estate facilities that finance the acquisition, development or construction of real property. The final rule also requires unrealized gains and losses on certain available-for-sale securities holdings to be included for purposes of calculating regulatory capital requirements unless a one-time opt-out is exercised. The rule limits a banking organization's capital distributions and certain discretionary bonus payments to executive officers if the banking organization does not hold a capital conservation buffer consisting of 2.5% of common equity Tier 1 capital to risk-weighted assets in addition to the amount necessary to meet its minimum risk-based capital requirements. The final rule was effective January 1, 2015. The capital conservation buffer will be phased in from January 1, 2016 to January 1, 2019, when the full capital conservation buffer will be effective. Management believes that, as of December 31, 2014, the Company and the Bank would meet all capital adequacy requirements under the Basel III capital rules on a fully phased-in basis if such requirements were currently effective.

Safety and Soundness Standards

Each federal banking agency, including the OCC, has adopted guidelines establishing general standards relating to internal controls, information and internal audit systems, loan documentation, credit underwriting, interest rate exposure, asset growth, asset quality, earnings and compensation, fees and benefits. In general, the guidelines require, among other things, appropriate systems and practices to identify and manage the risks and exposures specified in the guidelines. The guidelines prohibit excessive compensation as an unsafe and unsound practice and describe compensation as excessive when the amounts paid are unreasonable or disproportionate to the services performed by an executive officer, employee, director, or principal shareholder.

On February 7, 2011, the FDIC approved a rulemaking to implement Section 956 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act that prohibits incentive-based compensation that encourages inappropriate risk taking.

Prompt Corrective Regulatory Action

Federal law requires, among other things, that federal bank regulatory authorities take prompt corrective action with respect to institutions that do not meet minimum capital requirements. For these purposes, the statute establishes five capital tiers: well capitalized, adequately capitalized, undercapitalized, significantly undercapitalized, and critically undercapitalized.

The OCC may order national banks which have insufficient capital to take corrective actions. For example, a bank which is categorized as undercapitalized would be subject to growth limitations and would be required to submit a capital restoration plan, and a holding company that controls such a bank would be required to guarantee that the bank complies with the restoration plan. A significantly undercapitalized bank would be subject to additional restrictions. National banks deemed by the OCC to be critically undercapitalized would be subject to the appointment of a receiver or conservator.

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The recent final rule increased regulatory capital standards and adjusted the prompt corrective action tiers as of January 1, 2015. The various categories have been revised to incorporate the new common equity Tier 1 capital requirement, the increase in the Tier 1 to risk-based assets requirement and other changes. Under the revised prompt corrective action requirements, insured depository institutions are required to meet the following in order to qualify as well capitalized: (1) a common equity Tier 1 risk-based capital ratio of 6.5% (new standard); (2) a Tier 1 risk-based capital ratio of 8% (increased from 6%); (3) a total risk-based capital ratio of 10% (unchanged) and (4) a Tier 1 leverage ratio of 5% (unchanged).

Dividends

Under federal law and applicable regulations, a national bank may generally declare a dividend, without approval from the OCC, in an amount equal to its year-to-date net income plus the prior two years' net income that is still available for dividend. Dividends exceeding those amounts require application to and approval by the OCC.

Transactions with Affiliates and Insiders

Sections 23A and 23B of the Federal Reserve Act govern transactions between a national bank and its affiliates, which includes the Company. The Federal Reserve Board has adopted Regulation W, which comprehensively implements and interprets Sections 23A and 23B, in part by codifying prior Federal Reserve Board interpretations under Sections 23A and 23B.

An affiliate of a bank is any company or entity that controls, is controlled by or is under common control with the bank. A subsidiary of a bank that is not also a depository institution or a financial subsidiary under federal law is not treated as an affiliate of the bank for the purposes of Sections 23A and 23B; however, the OCC has the discretion to treat subsidiaries of a bank as affiliates on a case-

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by-case basis. Sections 23A and 23B limit the extent to which a bank or its subsidiaries may engage in covered transactions with any one affiliate to an amount equal to 10% of such bank's capital stock and surplus, and limit all such transactions with all affiliates to an amount equal to 20% of such capital stock and surplus. The statutory sections also require that all such transactions be on terms that are consistent with safe and sound banking practices. The term covered transaction includes the making of loans, purchase of assets, issuance of guarantees and other similar types of transactions. Further, most loans by a bank to any of its affiliates must be secured by collateral in amounts ranging from 100 to 130 percent of the loan amounts. In addition, any covered transaction by an association with an affiliate and any purchase of assets or services by an association from an affiliate must be on terms that are substantially the same, or at least as favorable, to the bank as those that would be provided to a non-affiliate.

A bank's loans to its executive officers, directors, any owner of more than 10% of its stock (each, an insider) and any of certain entities affiliated with any such person (an insider's related interest) are subject to the conditions and limitations imposed by Section 22(h) of the Federal Reserve Act and the FRB's Regulation O thereunder. Under these restrictions, the aggregate amount of the loans to any insider and the insider's related interests may not exceed the loans-to-one-borrower limit applicable to national banks. All loans by a bank to all insiders and insiders' related interests in the aggregate may not exceed the bank's unimpaired capital and unimpaired surplus. With certain exceptions, loans to an executive officer, other than loans for the education of the officer's children and certain loans secured by the officer's residence, may not exceed the greater of \$25,000 or 2.5% of the bank's unimpaired capital and unimpaired surplus, but in no event more than \$100,000. Regulation O also requires that any proposed loan to an insider or a related interest of that insider be approved in advance by a majority of the board of directors of the bank, with any interested director not participating in the voting, if such loan, when aggregated with any existing loans to that insider and the insider's related interests, would exceed either \$500,000 or the greater of \$25,000 or 5% of the bank's unimpaired capital and surplus. Generally, such loans must be made on substantially the same terms as, and follow credit underwriting procedures that are no less stringent than, those that are prevailing at the time for comparable transactions with other persons and must not present more than a normal risk of collectibility. An exception is made for extensions of credit made pursuant to a benefit or compensation plan of a bank that is widely available to employees of the bank and that does not give any preference to insiders of the bank over other employees of the bank.

Examinations and Assessments

The Bank is required to file periodic reports with and is subject to periodic examination by the OCC. Federal regulations generally require annual on-site examinations for all depository institutions and annual audits by independent public accountants for all insured institutions. The Bank is required to pay an annual assessment to the OCC to fund its supervision.

Community Reinvestment Act

Under the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), the Bank has a continuing and affirmative obligation consistent with its safe and sound operation to help meet the credit needs of its entire community, including low and moderate income neighborhoods. The CRA does not establish specific lending requirements or programs for financial institutions nor does it limit an institution's discretion to develop the types of products and services that it believes are best suited to its particular community, consistent with the CRA. The CRA requires the OCC in connection with its examination of the Bank, to assess its record of meeting the credit needs of its community and to take that record into account in its evaluation of certain applications by the Bank. For example, the regulations specify that a bank's CRA performance will be considered in its expansion (e.g., branching) proposals and may be the basis for approving, denying or conditioning the approval of an application. As of the date of its most recent regulatory examination, the Bank was rated satisfactory with respect to its CRA compliance.

USA PATRIOT Act

The USA PATRIOT Act of 2001 gave the federal government new powers to address terrorist threats through enhanced domestic security measures, expanded surveillance powers, increased information sharing and broadened anti-money laundering requirements. The USA PATRIOT Act also required the federal banking agencies to take into consideration the effectiveness of controls designed to combat money laundering activities in determining whether to approve a merger or other acquisition application of a member institution. Accordingly, if the Bank engages in a merger or other acquisition, our controls designed to combat money laundering would be considered as part of the application process. The Bank has established policies, procedures and systems designed to comply with these regulations.

Bridge Bancorp, Inc.

The Company, as a bank holding company controlling the Bank, is subject to the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956, as amended (BHCA), and the rules and regulations of the Federal Reserve Board under the BHCA applicable to bank holding companies. The Company is required to file reports with, and otherwise comply with the rules and regulations of the Federal Reserve Board.

The Federal Reserve Board previously adopted consolidated capital adequacy guidelines for bank holding structured similarly, but not identically, to those of the OCC for the Bank. As of December 31, 2014, the Company's total capital and Tier 1 capital ratios exceeded these minimum capital requirements. The Dodd-Frank Act directed the Federal Reserve Board to issue consolidated capital

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requirements for depository institution holding companies that are less stringent, both quantitatively and in terms of components of capital, than those applicable to institutions themselves. The previously discussed final rule regarding regulatory capital requirements implements the Dodd-Frank Act as to bank holding company capital standards. Consolidated regulatory capital requirements identical to those applicable to the subsidiary banks apply to bank holding companies (with greater than \$500 million of assets) as of January 1, 2015. As is the case with institutions themselves, the capital conservation buffer will be phased in between 2016 and 2019. The new capital rule will eliminate from Tier 1 capital the inclusion of certain instruments, such as trust preferred securities, that are currently includable by bank holding companies. However, the final rule grandfathers trust preferred issuances prior to May 19, 2010 in accordance with the Dodd-Frank Act. The Company has issued trust preferred securities that should qualify for the grandfather. Management believes that, as of December 31, 2014, the Company would meet all capital adequacy requirements under the new capital rules on a fully phased-in basis if such requirements were currently effective.

The policy of the Federal Reserve Board is that a bank holding company must serve as a source of strength to its subsidiary banks by providing capital and other support in times of distress. The Dodd-Frank Act codified the source of strength policy.

Under the prompt corrective action provisions of federal law, a bank holding company parent of an undercapitalized subsidiary bank is required to guarantee, within specified limits, the capital restoration plan that is required of an undercapitalized bank. If an undercapitalized bank fails to file an acceptable capital restoration plan or fails to implement an accepted plan, the Federal Reserve Board may prohibit the bank holding company parent of the undercapitalized bank from paying dividends or making any other capital distribution.

As a bank holding company, the Company is required to obtain the prior approval of the Federal Reserve Board to acquire more than 5% of a class of voting securities of any additional bank or bank holding company or to acquire all, or substantially all, the assets of any additional bank or bank holding company. In addition, the bank holding companies may generally only engage in activities that are closely related to banking as determined by the Federal Reserve Board. Bank holding companies that meet certain criteria may opt to become a financial holding company and thereby engage in a broader array of financial activities.

Federal Reserve Board policy is that a bank holding company should pay cash dividends only to the extent that the company's net income for the past two years is sufficient to fund the dividends and the prospective rate of earnings retention is consistent with the company's capital needs, asset quality and overall financial condition.

A bank holding company is required to receive prior Federal Reserve Board approval of the redemption of its outstanding equity securities if the gross consideration for the purchase or redemption, when combined with the net consideration paid for all such purchases or redemptions during the preceding 12 months, will be equal to 10% or more of the company's consolidated net worth. Such approval is not required for a bank holding company that meets certain qualitative criteria.

These regulatory authorities have extensive enforcement authority over the institutions that they regulate to prohibit or correct activities that violate law, regulation or a regulatory agreement or which are deemed to be unsafe or unsound banking practices. Enforcement actions may include the appointment of a conservator or receiver, the issuance of a cease and desist order, the termination of deposit insurance, the imposition of civil money penalties on the institution, its directors, officers, employees and institution-affiliated parties, the issuance of directives to increase capital, the issuance of formal and informal agreements, the removal of or restrictions on directors, officers, employees and institution-affiliated parties, and the enforcement of any such mechanisms through restraining orders or other court actions. Any cha