



During the past year, the pandemic and global recession had a defining impact on all of us, transforming the way we live, work, collaborate and deliver our Company's brand, products, and services to our stakeholders. Considering all that has occurred over the past year, we want to take this opportunity to recognize and thank all frontline and essential workers for their heroic and steadfast efforts during this pandemic. These brave people risk their own health and safety as well as that of their loved ones each day to benefit all of us.

As a financial institution, our Company is an essential business, conducting financial services for our customers to support their businesses, their customers, and their employees. The foundation for our success continues to be our unique and collaborative culture—helping our clients **“succeed boldly”** by making their business and its success our top priority. Our white glove relationship banking services, supported by exceptional employees, has been core to our growth and customer service in the past. This high-touch, client centric business model has been significantly enhanced in 2020 with our investment in digitally forward, cutting-edge technology. Our investment in these digital assets will not only enhance our growth but will deliver superior client services and products to our current and future client base.

During the pandemic, our primary focus was the health and safety of our employees and their families as well as ensuring that we provided the ongoing support and services to our valued client base. In March 2020, we instituted a remote work protocol for employees following the latest guidance issued by the CDC. We offered our employees flexible vacation and sick leave, enabled their work-from-home capabilities with new laptops and ensured that employees utilized secure technology solutions to connect to our network safely. As we slowly returned to the office, we ensured protocols were in place, following CDC and other governmental guidelines, including making PPE available to protect our employees. We not only kept our workforce intact, but we also grew our employee base by approximately 15%. We have always been a client-centric Company with Relationship Managers assigned to all commercial customers, serving as a single point of contact for their needs. The SBA PPP loans were one of those unique client needs that we met over the past year. Our Company became an approved SBA PPP lender, including installing and customizing new loan software in less than two weeks, meeting 100% of all eligible PPP customers' requests. Under the CARES Act, we worked with those affected clients to offer payment deferral options due to the government mandated shutdowns and other economic factors related to the pandemic. At year-end, these deferrals totaled \$29.2 million or 4.3% of

our loan portfolio, primarily concentrated in real estate loans and only comprised of nine borrowers.

As part of our forward-looking culture, we strategically invested in resources and technology that has and will continue to enhance our business model. In October 2020, we launched a new suite of best-in-class digital assets including our customer centric CRM coupled with our digital marketing resources, newly designed and highly functional website, and new brand image to support future growth (collectively the “Esquire Brand”). These innovative digital technologies support seamless communication to the communities we serve, significantly enhance our multimedia digital marketing capabilities, streamline our online functionality and associated application processes, and will support our industry leading performance metrics through the next decade and beyond. Our platforms, including our customer centric CRM, nCino loan origination system, and cloud based digital marketing resources are all developed on the Salesforce Platform. Currently, our efforts are focused on the Litigation vertical as we enrich potential prospects on our CRM platform. However, these digital assets were built for any financial vertical including our Merchant or payment processing vertical. Currently, we have over 100,000 potential law firm contacts in our CRM system, with approximately 50% enriched to our standards. We have positioned ourselves as “thought leaders” in the litigation industry, sponsoring numerous webinars with our business partners including state and national trial associations. Since launching the Esquire Brand in 2020, we have digitally communicated to over 10,000 potential law firm contacts through our webinars, blogs, white papers, and digital marketing initiatives. Our goal is simple—to digitally market to thousands of law firms nationally, be known in the litigation industry as “thought leaders,” increase the Esquire Brand awareness for our unique products and services and engage potential clients utilizing our digital assets, all with the goal of converting them to commercial clients. The timing of our investment in the Esquire Brand, the launch in October 2020, and the adversity caused by the pandemic has been a catalyst for ingenuity, with our management team creating a scalable new platform for digital marketing and real time follow-up.

In 2020, our industry leading performance metrics once again placed us among the top performing financial services companies in the country. We were proud and honored to be recognized as one of only twenty-two institutions in Piper Sandler & Co's "2021 FSG Top Ideas" report. These industry leading returns were driven by the following achievements during 2020:

- Net income of \$12.6 million or \$1.65 per diluted share compared to \$14.1 million or \$1.82 per diluted share in 2019. The decrease in net income is primarily the result of an increase in the provision for loan losses of \$4.4 million, predominately due to the effects of the pandemic on the U.S. economy. This was partially offset by an increase in pre-tax, pre-provisioning earnings of \$2.4 million or 11.6% for the year when compared to 2019, clearly demonstrating strong core performance and growth.
- Supported by a strong net interest margin of 4.47%, net interest income increased 10% to \$37.4 million, primarily driven by growth in higher yielding attorney commercial loans, despite the historically low interest rate environment and its negative effects on asset yields. Loans grew 19% to \$672.4 million while maintaining strong asset quality metrics.
- Deposits increased \$123.4 million, or 18%, to \$804.1 million, primarily driven by commercial deposits from the Litigation and Merchant (payment processing) verticals, with a cost of funds of 0.16% (including demand deposits). Demand deposits represent 44% of total deposits while off-balance sheet sweep funds increased 47% to \$380 million, demonstrating the continued strength of our branchless business model.
- Payment processing fee income increased 29% to \$14.1 million with noninterest income representing 28% of total revenue. Despite the negative effects the pandemic and related government mandated shutdowns had on the merchant industry, our processing volume increased 25% to \$14.8 billion across 54,000 merchants (a 35% increase from 2019).
- Solid efficiency ratio of 55%, highlighting our "branchless" national platforms while prudently investing in the Esquire Brand and employees for the future growth of our Company.

While short-term growth and performance metrics are valuable, it is our long-term strategic goals that position our Company for success in the future. This comes from a clearly articulated strategic plan, strong Board governance and oversight, forward thinking senior management, outstanding client service teams, an inclusive corporate culture, and our new Esquire Brand. Our client centric approach ensures that we listen to our client needs and meet those needs, making our clients' success our top priority. These are the traits that differentiate us from most other financial institutions. Leveraging our recently deployed digital assets, we will reach more potential clients over a single month than we previously reached over any given year. Coupling this with our new brand image will revolutionize our Company.

Throughout our Company's history, we have been committed to a socially conscience corporate culture. This culture provides an all-inclusive, collaborative, and equal opportunity workplace for our employees, acting as a pillar of support for our local community while providing exceptional service to our customers. This corporate culture has produced a workforce where 70% of our employees are either minorities or women who are represented at every level. All employees have an equal opportunity for internal mobility provided through on the job skills training, firm sponsored training, informal peer guidance, and on-going senior management mentoring. Our priority is to promote from within before hiring from the outside for any position, especially management positions. Our commitment to our employees and their families was only strengthened by the health care crisis. As part of our commitment to the community we serve, Esquire supports a multitude of diverse, worthy, community-based organizations through comprehensive grants and lending programs. Additionally, Esquire donated \$200,000 to local charities in 2020 to support those most impacted by the pandemic.

The past year has been trying for all—our thoughts and prayers go out to all of those who lost loved ones. We were amazed and proud of all our employees—their ability to overcome adversity while not only meeting but exceeding our clients' needs was extraordinary. Our customers were able to adapt and overcome multiple obstacles over the past year, successfully leading their business and customers through this pandemic with the assistance of our Company. We thank our valued customers for trusting in Esquire as a true business partner. We thank our Board of Directors for their guidance and support during these unprecedented times, providing key insight and direction. Finally, we thank our shareholders for valuing all that we do, trusting in our leadership and our Company.

We wish all our stakeholders a healthy and safe future as well as success in all they do and we thank you for the opportunity to lead our exceptional Company.

Sincerely,



Anthony Coelho
Chairman of the Board



Andrew C. Sagliocca
President, Chief Executive Officer & Board Member



FORM 10-K

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UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 10-K

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

For the Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2020

OR

☐ TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the transition period from

to

Commission File Number: **001-38131**

Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc.

(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in its Charter)

Maryland

(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation or organization)

27-5107901

(I.R.S. Employer Identification Number)

100 Jericho Quadrangle, Suite 100, Jericho, New York

(Address of principal executive offices)

11753

(Zip code)

(516) 535-2002

(Registrant's telephone number including area code)

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

Title of each class

**Trading
Symbol(s)**

Name of each exchange on which registered

Common Stock, \$0.01 par value

ESQ

The Nasdaq Stock Market LLC

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act: **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 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 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 every Interactive Data File required to be submitted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T (§232.405 of this chapter) during the preceding 12 months (or such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit such files). Yes ☒ No ☐

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

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

If an emerging growth company, indicate by check mark if the registrant has elected not to use the extended transition period for complying with any new or revised financial accounting standards provided pursuant to Section 13(a) of the Exchange Act. ☒

Indicate by check mark whether the Registrant has filed a report on and attestation to its management's assessment of the effectiveness of its internal control over financial reporting under Section 404(b) of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act (15 U.S.C. 7262(b)) by the registered public accounting firm that prepared or issued its audit report. ☐

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

The aggregate value of the voting and non-voting common stock held by non-affiliates of the registrant, computed by reference to the closing price of the common stock of \$16.90 as of June 30, 2020, was \$112.5 million.

As of March 1, 2021, there were 7,810,312 shares outstanding of the registrant's common stock.

DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

1. Portions of the Proxy Statement for the 2021 Annual Meeting of Stockholders. (Part III)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
<u>PART I</u>	1
ITEM 1. Business	1
ITEM 1A. Risk Factors	22
ITEM 1B. Unresolved Staff Comments	36
ITEM 2. Properties	36
ITEM 3. Legal Proceedings	36
ITEM 4. Mine Safety Disclosures	36
<u>PART II</u>	37
ITEM 5. Market for Registrant’s Common Equity, Related Stockholder Matters and Issuer Purchases of Equity Securities	37
ITEM 6. Selected Financial Data	39
ITEM 7. Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations	41
ITEM 7A. Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures About Market Risk	58
ITEM 8. Financial Statements and Supplementary Data	59
ITEM 9. Changes In and Disagreements With Accountants on Accounting and Financial Disclosure	95
ITEM 9A. Controls and Procedures	95
ITEM 9B. Other Information.	95
<u>PART III</u>	96
ITEM 10. Directors, Executive Officers and Corporate Governance	96
ITEM 11. Executive Compensation	96
ITEM 12. Security Ownership of Certain Beneficial Owners and Management and Related Stockholder Matters	96
ITEM 13. Certain Relationships and Related Transactions, and Director Independence.	96
ITEM 14. Principal Accountant Fees and Services.	96
<u>PART IV</u>	97
ITEM 15. Exhibits and Financial Statement Schedules	97
ITEM 16. Form 10-K Summary	98
<u>SIGNATURES</u>	99

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PART I

ITEM 1. Business

Forward Looking Statements

This annual report contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the federal securities laws. These forward-looking statements reflect our current views with respect to, among other things, future events and our financial performance. These statements are often, but not always, made through the use of words or phrases such as “may,” “might,” “should,” “could,” “predict,” “potential,” “believe,” “expect,” “attribute,” “continue,” “will,” “anticipate,” “seek,” “estimate,” “intend,” “plan,” “projection,” “goal,” “target,” “outlook,” “aim,” “would,” “annualized” and “outlook,” or the negative version of those words or other comparable words or phrases of a future or forward-looking nature. These forward-looking statements are not historical facts, and are based on current expectations, estimates and projections about our industry, management’s beliefs and certain assumptions made by management, many of which, by their nature, are inherently uncertain and beyond our control. Accordingly, we caution you that any such forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance and are subject to risks, assumptions, estimates and uncertainties that are difficult to predict. Although we believe that the expectations reflected in these forward-looking statements are reasonable as of the date made, actual results may prove to be materially different from the results expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements.

The following factors, among others, could cause actual results to differ materially from the anticipated results or other expectations expressed in the forward-looking statements:

- our ability to manage our operations under the current economic conditions nationally and in our market area;
- adverse changes in the financial industry, securities, credit and national local real estate markets (including real estate values);
- risks related to a high concentration of loans secured by real estate located in our market area;
- risks related to a high concentration of loans and deposits dependent upon the legal and “litigation” market;
- the impact of any potential strategic transactions;
- our ability to enter new markets successfully and capitalize on growth opportunities;
- significant increases in our loan losses, including as a result of our inability to resolve classified and nonperforming assets or reduce risks associated with our loans, and management’s assumptions in determining the adequacy of the allowance for loan losses;
- interest rate fluctuations, which could have an adverse effect on our profitability;
- external economic and/or market factors, such as changes in monetary and fiscal policies and laws, including the interest rate policies of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (“FRB”), inflation or deflation, changes in the demand for loans, and fluctuations in consumer spending, borrowing and savings habits, which may have an adverse impact on our financial condition;
- continued or increasing competition from other financial institutions, credit unions, and non-bank financial services companies, many of which are subject to different regulations than we are;
- credit risks of lending activities, including changes in the level and trend of loan delinquencies and write-offs and in our allowance for loan losses and provision for loan losses;

- our success in increasing our legal and “litigation” market lending;
- our ability to attract and maintain deposits and our success in introducing new financial products;
- losses suffered by merchants or Independent Sales Organizations (ISOs) with whom we do business;
- our ability to effectively manage risks related to our merchant services business;
- our ability to leverage the professional and personal relationships of our board members and advisory board members;
- changes in interest rates generally, including changes in the relative differences between short-term and long-term interest rates and in deposit interest rates, that may affect our net interest margin and funding sources;
- fluctuations in the demand for loans;
- technological changes that may be more difficult or expensive than expected;
- changes in consumer spending, borrowing and savings habits;
- declines in the yield on our assets resulting from the current low interest rate environment;
- declines in our merchant processing income as a result of reduced demand, competition and changes in laws or government regulations or policies affecting financial institutions, including the Dodd-Frank Act and the JOBS Act, which could result in, among other things, increased deposit insurance premiums and assessments, capital requirements, regulatory fees and compliance costs, particularly the new capital regulations, and the resources we have available to address such changes;
- changes in accounting policies and practices, as may be adopted by the bank regulatory agencies, the Financial Accounting Standards Board, the Securities and Exchange Commission or the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board;
- loan delinquencies and changes in the underlying cash flows of our borrowers;
- the impairment of our investment securities;
- our ability to control costs and expenses, particularly those associated with operating as a publicly traded company;
- the failure or security breaches of computer systems on which we depend;
- political instability;
- acts of war, terrorism, natural disasters or global market disruptions, including global pandemics;
- competition and innovation with respect to financial products and services by banks, financial institutions and non-traditional providers, including retail businesses and technology companies;
- changes in our organization and management and our ability to retain or expand our management team and our board of directors, as necessary;

- the costs and effects of legal, compliance and regulatory actions, changes and developments, including the initiation and resolution of legal proceedings, regulatory or other governmental inquiries or investigations, and/or the results of regulatory examinations and reviews;
- the ability of key third-party service providers to perform their obligations to us; and
- other economic, competitive, governmental, regulatory and operational factors affecting our operations, pricing, products and services described elsewhere in this annual report.

The foregoing factors should not be construed as exhaustive and should be read in conjunction with other cautionary statements that are included in this annual report. If one or more events related to these or other risks or uncertainties materialize, or if our underlying assumptions prove to be incorrect, actual results may differ materially from what we anticipate. Accordingly, you should not place undue reliance on any such forward-looking statements. Any forward-looking statement speaks only as of the date on which it is made, and we do not undertake any obligation to publicly update or review any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future developments or otherwise. New risks and uncertainties arise from time to time, and it is not possible for us to predict those events or how they may affect us. In addition, we cannot assess the impact of each factor on our business or the extent to which any factor, or combination of factors, may cause actual results to differ materially from those contained in any forward-looking statements.

Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc.'s electronic filings with the SEC, including the Annual Report on Form 10-K, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, Current Reports on Form 8-K and amendments to these reports filed or furnished pursuant to Sections 13(a) or 15(d) of the Exchange Act, as amended, are made available at no cost in the Investor Relations section of the Company's website, www.esquirebank.com, as soon as reasonably practicable after the Company files such material with, or furnishes it to, the SEC. The Company's SEC filings are also available through the SEC's website at www.sec.gov.

Our Company

Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. ("Esquire Financial" or the "Company") is a financial holding company headquartered in Jericho, New York and registered under the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956, as amended (the "BHC Act"). Through our wholly owned bank subsidiary, Esquire Bank, National Association ("Esquire Bank" or the "Bank"), we are a full service commercial bank dedicated to serving the financial needs of the legal and small business communities on a national basis, as well as commercial and retail customers in the New York metropolitan market. We offer tailored products and solutions to the legal community and their clients as well as dynamic and flexible merchant services solutions to small business owners, both on a national basis. We also offer traditional banking products for businesses and consumers in our local market area (a subset of the New York metropolitan market). We believe these activities, primarily anchored by our legal community focus, generate a stable source of low cost core deposits and a diverse asset base to support our overall operations. Our commercial and consumer loans tailored to the litigation market ("Attorney-Related Loans") enhance our overall yield on our loan portfolio, enabling us to earn attractive risk-adjusted net interest margins. Additionally, our merchant processing activities generate a relatively stable source of fee income. We believe our unique and dynamic business model distinguishes us from other banks and non-bank financial services companies in the markets in which we operate as demonstrated by comparing our performance metrics for the years ended 2020 and 2019.

For the year ended December 31, 2020:

- Our net income was \$12.6 million or \$1.65 per diluted common share.
- We had a net interest margin of 4.47%, primarily driven by a low cost of funds of 0.16% on our deposits.
- Our loans increased 19.0%, or \$107.1 million, to \$672.4 million, with solid asset quality metrics.

- Our noninterest income increased 23.7%, or \$2.8 million, to \$14.6 million, which represented 28.1% of our total revenue (net interest income plus noninterest income) at December 31, 2020, primarily driven by our merchant services platform.
- As of December 31, 2020, our total assets, loans, deposits and stockholders' equity totaled \$936.7 million, \$672.4 million, \$804.1 million and \$126.1 million, respectively.

We remain true to our commitment to serve the litigation community and our commercial customers through our tailored and innovative products and solutions including our digital assets. In October 2020, we launched a new suite of best-in-class digital assets including our customer centric Customer Relationship Management ("CRM") application coupled with our digital marketing resources, newly designed and highly functional website, and new brand image to support future growth. These digital technologies will support seamless communication to the communities we serve, significantly enhance our multimedia digital marketing capabilities, streamline our online functionality and associated application processes, and support our industry leading performance metrics through the next decade and beyond.

Our relationships within the litigation community are a key contributor to our loan growth, strong loan yields, and low cost core deposits. The litigation community represented more than 60% of our deposit base at December 31, 2020. In addition to our lending activities, we have also remained steadfast in growing our merchant services platform. We provide dynamic and flexible merchant services solutions to small business owners. Our merchant services platform has grown to approximately 54,000 small businesses at December 31, 2020, which generated 27.1% of our revenue for the year ended December 31, 2020. We believe that both our litigation and merchant services platforms represent a significant opportunity for future growth in lending, fee income, core deposits and enhanced lending opportunities.

Our low cost core deposits (total deposits, excluding time deposits), representing our primary funding source for loan growth, totaled \$792.9 million at December 31, 2020, which is the key driver of our total cost of deposits of 0.16%. These stable low cost funds are driven by our attorney operating and escrow commercial deposits. We intend to continue to prudently manage growth in deposits, utilizing customer sweep programs for our mass tort and class action business banking programs. We do not have traditional "brick and mortar" branches to support our deposit growth. Instead, we rely on our robust attorney network to gather deposits and our customers utilize online cash management technology to manage their operating and escrow accounts as well as their business banking needs across the country.

Market Area

We define the market area for our legal community products as law firms practicing within the United States, United States territories and United States commonwealths, and we serve the litigation industry on a nationwide basis. For traditional community banking products and services, our primary market area is the New York metropolitan area, specifically Nassau and New York (Manhattan) Counties in New York and secondarily throughout the state of New York. As a Visa and MasterCard member, we provide merchant services for small businesses located throughout the United States primarily through relationships with third party ISOs.

We have established our niche in the litigation market through the strategic development of a business model that understands our market's unique needs and provides access to our target customers. We have designed unique, value added products and services for our current and potential customers and created a distribution network with direct access to the market through the experience and networks of our management team, Board, attorney stockholders and attorney customers and our investment in our CRM and related digital assets. Our attorney customers and attorney stockholders are well-known, influential market figures and active members of some of the leading litigation law firms in the nation and national and state bar associations as well as other industry leading companies. In addition, we have established informal affiliations or relationships with key industry organizations such as National Trial Lawyer Association, American Association of Justice, New York State Trial Lawyers Association, Consumer Attorneys of California, and a number of other state and national trial attorney associations. Through our current law firm clients and other relationships, we believe we have access to tens of thousands of plaintiff law firms as we leverage our CRM, and digital marketing and other proprietary technologies.

Our traditional community banking market area has a diversified economy typical of most urban population centers, with the majority of employment provided by services, wholesale/retail trade, finance/insurance/real estate (“FIRE”) and construction. As of December 31, 2020, New York County’s \$2.5 trillion deposit market was much larger than the \$90 billion deposit market in Nassau County.

We have established an extensive market for our merchant services business as an acquiring bank throughout the United States and its territories. We have a senior product management team with combined experience of over seventy years which has developed in excess of thirty active ISO relationships servicing approximately 54,000 merchants. The ISO model insulates the bank’s capital from merchant losses through merchant reserves, ISO reserves, ISO monthly residuals and ISO portfolio values. In addition to mitigating risk, the ISO business model allows the Bank to solicit merchants nationwide using numerous independent sales agents employed by our ISOs.

Competition

The bank and non-bank financial services industries in our markets and surrounding areas is highly competitive. We compete with a wide range of regional and national banks located in our market areas as well as non-bank commercial finance companies on a nationwide basis. We experience competition in both lending and attracting deposit funds as well as merchant processing services from commercial banks, savings associations, credit unions, consumer finance companies, pension trusts, mutual funds, insurance companies, mortgage bankers and brokers, brokerage and investment banking firms, non-bank lenders, government agencies and certain other non-financial institutions. Many of these competitors have more assets, capital and lending limits, and resources than we do and may be able to conduct more intensive and broader-based promotional efforts to reach both commercial and individual customers. Competition for deposit products can depend heavily on pricing because of the ease with which customers can transfer deposits from one institution to another.

Competition for Attorney-Related Loans is derived primarily from a small number of nationally-oriented financial companies that specialize in this market. Some of these companies are focused exclusively on loans to law firms, while others offer loans to plaintiffs as well. While some overlap exists between the litigation market loan products offered by Esquire Bank and these companies (primarily lines of credit, case-cost and post-settlement commercial loans), there are a number of critical differences that management believes give Esquire Bank a competitive advantage:

- Esquire Bank can offer more competitive rates on loans compared to specialty finance companies because its cost of funds is much lower than the funding costs for these non-bank competitors;
- the non-bank companies are not able to offer deposit products or business services such as remote deposit capture or letters of credit, or debit cards; and
- non-banks cannot offer products uniformly across the country because they are not national banks.

The Bank provides merchant services as an acquiring bank primarily through the third-party or ISO business model in which we process credit, debit card, and ACH transactions on behalf of merchants. We are one of less than one hundred US acquiring banks and face competition from many larger institutions, including large commercial banks and third party processors, that operate in the merchant services business. We believe we have a competitive advantage to continue to attract and retain ISOs and merchants when considering our history of successful operations, flexibility to settle through multiple merchant processing platforms, superior customer relationship management, and an ability to tailor our contractual arrangements to our customers’ needs.

Lending Activities

Our strategy is to maintain a loan portfolio that is broadly diversified by type and location. Within this general strategy, we intend to focus our growth in Attorney-Related Loans, which include commercial and consumer lending to attorneys, law firms and plaintiffs/claimants where we have expertise and market insights. As of December 31, 2020, these product lines in aggregate totaled \$329.2 million (or 48.9% of our loan portfolio). As of December 31, 2020, our commercial Attorney-Related Loans, which consist of working capital lines of credit, case cost lines of credit, term loans and post-settlement commercial and other commercial attorney-related loans (“Commercial Attorney-Related Loans”), totaled

\$299.7 million, or 91.0% of our total attorney-related loan portfolio and 44.5% of our loan portfolio. As of December 31, 2020, our consumer Attorney-Related Loans, which consist of post-settlement consumer loans and structured settlement loans (“Consumer Attorney-Related Loans”), totaled \$29.6 million, or 9.0% of our total Attorney-Related Loan portfolio and 4.4% of our loan portfolio. With respect to our Attorney-Related Loan portfolio, we seek out customers on a nationwide basis.

At December 31, 2020, approximately 33.3% and 15.3% of the Commercial Attorney-Related Loans outstanding had been extended to customers in New York and California, respectively. There were two other states with loan balance concentrations exceeding 5.0% each of total Commercial Attorney-Related Loans. Our current Loan Policy limits the percentage of out-of-state loans to 25% per loan type in any one state other than New York.

As of December 31, 2020, our total real estate loans, which consist of 1 – 4 family loans, commercial real estate loans and multifamily loans, totaled \$273.0 million (or 40.6% of our loan portfolio). The majority of our real estate secured loans are in the areas surrounding the New York metropolitan area. We anticipate continuing to focus on the commercial and personal credit needs of businesses and individuals in these markets.

The following is a discussion of our major types of lending activity:

Commercial Loans and Lines of Credit (“Commercial”). Commercial loans are originated to local small to mid-size businesses to provide short-term financing for inventory, receivables, the purchase of supplies, or other operating needs arising during the normal course of business and loans made to our qualified merchant customers. In addition, specialized and tailored commercial loans are offered to attorneys and law firms nationally. At December 31, 2020, commercial loans (excluding Commercial Attorney-Related Loans of \$299.7 million) totaled \$58.8 million (or 8.7% of total loans). All commercial loans totaled \$358.4 million (or 53.3% of our total loans) at December 31, 2020.

Commercial Attorney-Related Loans. The following is a summary of the specialized commercial loan products we offer to meet the needs of the litigation community. Commercial Attorney-Related Loans are made to attorneys and law firms and the outstanding loan balances are included in the loan balance for commercial loans as noted above. A unique aspect of our underwriting involves advances of loan proceeds against a “borrowing base,” which typically consists of the inventory of litigation cases for the firm. We complement this with traditional commercial underwriting (See “— Credit Risk Management” below). Generally, the maximum amount a customer may borrow at any time is fixed as a percentage of the borrowing base outstanding at any time and takes into account the firm’s operating performance and related debt service coverage.

- ***Working Capital Lines of Credit (“WC LOC”).*** WC LOCs are unsecured business lines of credit offered to law firms for general corporate purposes, including meeting cash flow needs, advertising, financing the purchase of fixed assets, or other reasons. The balance of such loans was \$202.0 million at December 31, 2020 (or 61.4% of total Attorney-Related Loans).
- ***Case Cost Lines of Credit.*** Case Cost Lines of Credit (“Case Cost LOC”) are unsecured business lines of credit that are tied to the costs of contingency cases and totaled \$87.1 million at December 31, 2020 (or 26.5% of total Attorney-Related Loans). Contingency case costs include court filing fees, investigative costs, expert witness fees, deposition costs, medical record costs, and other costs. Recovery of case costs is derived from gross settlement proceeds from the settled case. In our experience, an average case can take two to four years to litigate and law firms are prevented from charging their clients any interest for the out-of-pocket litigation costs, which amounts to an interest-free loan provided to the client from the law firm. Thus, instead of using the law firm’s cash flow, law firms use Case Cost LOCs to finance litigation cash flows because the finance charges can generally be charged against the settlement proceeds. Case Cost LOCs are not contingent loans, meaning that their repayment is not dependent on a favorable case settlement. In the event of an unfavorable outcome for the borrower, the loans are repaid from the cash flows of the law firm.
- ***Term Loans.*** Term loans are short-term unsecured business loans originated to law firms for general corporate purposes. These loans are offered to law firms at the same terms as those offered to other types of businesses. Term loans to law firms totaled \$10.5 million at December 31, 2020 (or 3.2% of total Attorney-Related Loans).

- *Post-Settlement Commercial and Other Commercial Attorney-Related Loans.* Post-settlement commercial loans are bridge loans secured by proceeds from non-appealable, settled cases. Other commercial attorney-related loans consist of both secured and unsecured loans to law firms and attorneys. At December 31, 2020 there were no post-settlement commercial loans outstanding.
- *Paycheck Protection Program Loans.* In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we elected to participate in the Paycheck Protection Program (“PPP”) administered by the U.S. Small Business Administration with the intention to provide our customer base access to this critical program. The PPP provides borrower guarantees for lenders, as well as loan forgiveness incentives for borrowers that utilize the loan proceeds to cover employee compensation-related costs and other qualifying business costs. As of December 31, 2020, we had PPP loans totaling \$21.9 million (or 6.1% of total commercial loans) of which \$18.4 million were with our commercial attorney customers that were not included in the Commercial Attorney-Related Loans product line.

Consumer Loans. Consumer loans are primarily post-settlement consumer and, to a lesser extent, structured settlement loans made to plaintiffs and claimants as described below. Consumer loans are also originated to individuals for debt consolidation, medical expenses, living expenses, payment of outstanding bills, or other consumer needs on both a secured and unsecured basis. At December 31, 2020, total consumer loans (excluding Consumer Attorney-Related Loans of \$29.6 million) totaled \$11.8 million (or 1.8% of total loans).

Post-settlement consumer loans are generally bridge loans to individuals secured by proceeds from settled cases. These loans generally meet the “life needs” of claimants in various litigation matters due to the delay between the time of settlement and actual payment of the settlement. These delays are primarily due to various administrative matters in the case. The balance of post-settlement consumer loans to individuals was \$29.3 million at December 31, 2020. Loans related to the National Football League Concussion Case (“NFL”) represented \$25.9 million or 88.2% of our total post-settlement loans as of December 31, 2020 (see “Item 1A—Risk Factors—Potential fraud by our post-settlement consumer loan customers who are claimants or others related to the NFL Concussion Settlement Program, revisions to qualifying physician requirements, and other administrative changes could increase our actual loan losses which would decrease earnings” on Page 24).

Real Estate Loans. The majority of our real estate secured loans are in the areas surrounding the New York metropolitan area.

Multifamily. Multifamily loans are the largest component of the real estate loan portfolio and totaled \$169.8 million (or 25.2% of total loans) as of December 31, 2020. The multifamily loan portfolio consists of loans secured by apartment buildings and mixed-use buildings (predominantly residential income producing) in our primary market area. We originate and purchase multifamily loans. Whether originated or purchased, all loans are independently underwritten by us utilizing the same underwriting criteria per our Board established credit policy.

1 – 4 Family. Mortgage loans are primarily secured by 1 – 4 family cash flowing investment properties (\$48.4 million, or 7.2% of total loans, as of December 31, 2020) in our market area. The residential mortgage loan portfolio includes 1 – 4 family income producing investment properties, primary and secondary owner occupied residences, investor coops and condos. The majority of residential mortgages are originated internally, although we do purchase residential mortgages from time to time. Purchased loans are subject to all the asset quality and documentary precautions normally used when originating a loan.

Commercial Real Estate (“CRE”). CRE loans totaled \$54.7 million (or 8.1% of total loans) as of December 31, 2020 and consisted primarily of loans secured by hospitality properties (43.1% of the CRE portfolio), warehouses (31.2% of the CRE portfolio) and mixed use properties (15.2% of the CRE portfolio), with the remainder comprised of condo associations and office/retail properties. Owner-occupied loans represented 31.2% of the CRE portfolio at December 31, 2020. We both originate and purchase CRE loans. All loans are independently underwritten by us utilizing the same underwriting criteria per our Board established credit policy.

Construction Loans. Construction loans are originated on an opportunistic basis. At December 31, 2020, there were no construction loans.

Merchant Services Activities

We provide merchant services as an acquiring bank primarily through the third-party or ISO business model in which we process credit and debit card transactions on behalf of merchants. This model is designed to mitigate the risks associated with merchant losses resulting from chargebacks, fraud, non-compliance issues or even ISO or merchant insolvency. In an ISO model, the bank and the ISO jointly enter into the merchant agreement with each merchant. We believe this model provides an added layer of protection against losses from merchants since losses that are not absorbed by a merchant would be the liability of the ISO payable from reserves posted by the ISO or other funds the bank owes to the ISO. Even with this recourse, Esquire Bank is ultimately liable for losses from actions of merchants and those of ISOs. To date, Esquire Bank has not incurred any losses from its merchant services activities.

We entered into the merchant processing business as an acquiring bank in 2012 in an effort to increase our noninterest income revenue and to provide cross selling opportunities for other business banking products and services. For the year ended December 31, 2020, merchant processing revenues were approximately \$14.1 million, which was 27.1% of our total revenue and represented an increase of 28.5% as compared to 2019. At December 31, 2020, we had 33 active ISOs, servicing approximately 54,000 merchants, and for the year ended December 31, 2020, we processed \$14.8 billion in card volume. We intend to continue to expand our merchant processing business.

Under the ISO model, Esquire Bank and the ISO determine the appropriate amount of merchant reserves, which is generally based on the nature of the merchant's business, its chargeback and refund history, processing volumes and the merchant's financial health. The ISO performs an underwriting and risk management review, although Esquire Bank itself also reviews and underwrites applications and performs separate risk monitoring and management to ensure compliance with Esquire Bank's internal underwriting policies. As of December 31, 2020, we had contractual arrangements with four payment processors or clearing agents, TSYS, NCR, Repay and Fiserv, which are utilized by Esquire Bank and our ISOs to authorize, clear and settle card transactions.

We have implemented a comprehensive risk mitigation program for our merchant services business which includes detailed policies and procedures applicable to both ISOs and merchants pertaining to due diligence, risk and underwriting and Bank Secrecy Act and card brand network (i.e. Visa and Mastercard) compliance, among other objectives. Our Merchant Acquiring and Risk Policy establishes authorities and guidelines for the Bank to acquire merchant servicing arrangements with ISOs, agent banks, payment facilitators, direct merchants and through merchant portfolio acquisitions. Such guidelines include initial and ongoing due diligence requirements and approval authorities. All merchants, regardless of how the merchant is acquired, must meet our Merchant Credit/Underwriting Policy requirements. In addition, credit approval requirements and authorities for approving merchants and ISOs are clearly defined in our Merchant Acquiring and Risk Policy.

Our Merchant Acquiring and Risk Policy establishes stringent requirements related to the due diligence conducted initially and on an ongoing basis, requirements for the ISO contract, our responsibilities and the ISO's responsibilities in connection with the sponsorship and other matters. In the event of a potential loss and in accordance with the terms of the ISO Merchant Agreement, we can take the following actions to collect: charge the merchant account; charge the merchant reserve account; charge the ISO reserve account; deduct from the ISO monthly residual on an ongoing basis until fully recovered; and liquidate all or a portion of the ISO merchant portfolio.

In exchange for the liabilities and costs assumed by ISOs, we receive reduced revenue on our merchant servicing portfolio as compared to direct merchant service providers that do not obtain such indemnification and administrative support. For the year ended December 31, 2020, we received a blended rate of approximately ten basis points for merchant processing, compared to direct merchant service providers that may receive two to three times that rate for a portfolio with similar risk characteristics. However, we believe that our acquiring bank ISO business model represents less risk for Esquire Bank and we are compensated for the risk assumed.

Deposit Funding

Deposits are our primary source of funds to support our earning assets and growth. We offer depository products, including checking, savings, money market and certificates of deposit with a variety of rates. Deposits are insured by the

FDIC up to statutory limits. Our unique low cost core deposit model is primarily driven by escrow and operating accounts from law firms and other litigation settlements on a national basis, representing more than 60% of the \$804.1 million in total deposits at December 31, 2020. Our core deposits (excluding time deposits) represent 98.6% of our total deposits at December 31, 2020. Our total cost of deposits is 0.16% for the year ended December 31, 2020, anchored by our noninterest bearing demand deposits and attorney escrow funds representing 43.7% and 40.3%, respectively, of total deposits. We require deposit balances associated with our commercial loan arrangements and cash management relationships maintained by our commercial lending. We do not use a traditional “brick and mortar” branch network to support our deposit growth and have only one branch, located in Jericho, New York. The vast majority of our customers utilize our online cash management technology to manage their operating and escrow accounts across the country.

Deposits have traditionally been our primary source of funds for use in lending and investment activities and we do not utilize borrowings as a significant funding source. Besides generating deposits from law firms and litigation settlements, we also generate deposits from our merchant services platform and other local businesses, individuals through client referrals and other relationships and through our single retail branch. We believe we have a very stable core deposit base due primarily to the litigation market strategy as we strongly encourage and are successful in having law firm borrowers maintain their operating and escrow banking relationship with us. Our low cost of funds is due to our deposit composition consisting of approximately 98.6% in core deposit accounts at December 31, 2020. Our deposit strategy primarily focuses on developing borrowing and other service orientated relationships with customers rather than competing with other institutions on rate. We have established deposit concentration thresholds to avoid the possibility of dependence on any single depositor base for funds.

The Bank participates in sweep programs to provide our customers FDIC insured deposit products and access to treasury secured money market funds. In order to participate in these programs, the Bank places, or sweeps, deposits to these programs which can be subsequently utilized as a source of liquidity. The litigation market provides unique opportunities for the Bank to access funds due to the significant deposit sources such as mass tort and class action settlements and escrow deposits. As of December 31, 2020, off-balance sheet sweep funds totaled approximately \$380 million.

Credit Risk Management

We control credit risk both through a Board approved Credit Policy, disciplined underwriting of each loan, as well as active credit management processes and procedures to manage risk and minimize loss throughout the life of a transaction. We seek to maintain a broadly diversified loan portfolio in terms of type of customer, type of loan product, geographic area and industries in which our business customers are engaged. We have developed tailored underwriting criteria and credit management processes for each of the various loan product types we offer our customers.

Underwriting. In evaluating each potential loan relationship, we adhere to a disciplined underwriting evaluation process including but not limited to the following:

- understanding the customer’s financial condition and ability to repay the loan;
- verifying that the primary and secondary sources of repayment are adequate in relation to the amount and structure of the loan;
- observing appropriate loan to value guidelines for collateral secured loans;
- maintaining our targeted levels of diversification for the loan portfolio, both as to type of borrower and geographic location of collateral; and
- ensuring that each loan is properly documented with perfected liens on collateral.

Commercial Loans. These loans are typically made on the basis of the borrower’s ability to make repayments from the cash flow of the borrower’s business and the collateral securing these loans which may fluctuate in value. Our

commercial loans are originated based on the identified cash flow of the borrower and on the underlying collateral provided by the borrower. Most often, for our Attorney Related Loans, this collateral consists of the case inventory of the law firm (borrowing base) and, to a lesser extent, accounts receivable or equipment.

- *Commercial Attorney-Related Loans (working capital lines of credit, case cost lines of credit, and term loans).* We perform the underwriting criteria typical for commercial business loans (generally, but not limited to, three years of tax returns, three years of financial data, cash flows, partner guarantees, partner personal financials, credit history, background checks, etc.). We also review the firm's case inventory to ascertain the value of their future receivables. Typically, at least three years of successful experience in plaintiff practice are required. Working capital lines of credit and case cost lines of credit are floating rate, prime-based loans. The proceeds of a Case Cost loan can only be used against case expenses. These loans are subject to a general security agreement evidenced by UCC-1 filing on all assets of the borrower, including but not limited to case inventory, accounts receivable, fixtures and deposits where applicable. A key component of the underwriting process is an evaluation of the pending cases of an applicant law firm to determine the probability and amount of future settlements. These loans are based on a borrowing base that was developed by us whereby a law firm's case inventory is segmented into various stages and evaluated taking into account the firm's operating performance and related debt service coverage. In connection with these loans, the Bank generally requires personal guarantees of key partners as well as assignment of life insurance of partners in most cases, in accordance with our Board approved Lending Policy.

Consumer Loans. Consumer loans primarily consist of our Consumer Attorney-Related Loans, which include post-settlement consumer loans and, to a lesser extent, structured settlement loans. Post-settlement consumer loans are generally for two year terms with extensions granted based on acceptable supporting documentation regarding case status and viability, at Esquire Bank's discretion. To ensure the value of the settlement amount and likelihood and timeframe of payout, we require an executed settlement agreement or an affidavit of attorney attesting to the existence of an accepted offer. As the settlements are court ordered, the risks of settlements being renegotiated after we have made the loans are minimal. NFL post-settlement loans totaling \$25.9 million require the submission of qualified medical examinations supporting the award claim and are generally for five years. The loan-to-value ("LTV") ratio is generally limited to 50% of the net settlement amount due to the borrower. Other consumer loans originated to individuals for debt consolidation, medical expenses, living expenses, payment of outstanding bills, or other consumer needs, are generally dependent on the credit quality of the individual borrower and may be secured or unsecured.

1 – 4 Family Loans. Residential mortgage loans are originated or purchased for both primary and secondary residences, generally with fixed rates and 30-year or 15-year terms. Adjustable-rate mortgages ("ARMs") are purchased or originated as 1 year ARMs, 5/1 ARMs, or 7/1 ARMs. We perform an extensive credit history review for each borrower. Second homes or investment properties are subject to additional requirements. Debt-to-income ("DTI") and debt service coverage, if applicable, ratios generally conform to industry standards for conforming loans. Flood insurance, title insurance and fire/hazard insurance are mandatory for all applications, as appropriate.

Commercial Real Estate and Multifamily Loans. Loans secured by commercial and multifamily real estate generally have larger balances and involve a greater degree of risk than 1 – 4 family mortgage loans. Of primary concern in commercial and multifamily real estate lending is the borrower's creditworthiness and the feasibility and cash flow potential of the project. Payments on loans secured by income properties often depend on successful operation and management of the properties. As a result, repayment of such loans may be subject to a greater extent than 1 – 4 family real estate loans, to adverse conditions in the real estate market or the economy.

In approving a commercial or multifamily real estate loan, we consider and review a global cash flow analysis of the borrower and consider the net operating income of the property, the borrower's expertise, credit history and profitability and the value of the underlying property. Maximum LTV ratios are 80% of appraised value and we generally require that the properties securing these real estate loans have minimum debt service ratios (the ratio of earnings before debt service to debt service) of 115%. Loan terms are fifteen years or less with the option to extend another five years and amortization is based on a 25 – 30 year schedule or less. An environmental phase one report is obtained when the possibility exists that hazardous materials may have existed on the site, or the site may have been impacted by adjoining properties that handled hazardous materials. To monitor cash flows on income properties, we require borrowers and loan guarantors, if any, to provide annual financial statements on commercial and multifamily real estate loans.

Construction Loans. Construction lending involves additional risks when compared with permanent 1 – 4 family lending because funds are advanced upon the security of the project, which is of uncertain value prior to its completion. This type of lending also typically involves higher loan principal amounts and is often concentrated with a small number of builders. In addition, generally during the term of a construction loan, interest may be funded by the borrower or disbursed from an interest reserve set aside from the construction loan budget. These loans often involve the disbursement of substantial funds with repayment substantially dependent on the success of the ultimate project and the ability of the borrower to sell or lease the property or obtain permanent take-out financing, rather than the ability of the borrower or guarantor to repay principal and interest. Our construction loans are based upon estimates of costs and values associated with the completed project. Underwriting is focused on the borrowers' financial strength, credit history and demonstrated ability to produce a quality product and effectively market and manage their operations.

Loan Approval Authority. Our lending activities follow written, non-discriminatory, underwriting standards and loan origination procedures established by our Board of Directors and management. We have established several levels of lending authority that have been delegated by the Board of Directors to the Directors Loan Committee, the Chief Lending Officer and other personnel in accordance with the Lending Authority in the Loan Policy. Authority limits are based on the total exposure of the borrower and are conditioned on the loan conforming to the policies contained in the Loan Policy. Any Loan Policy exceptions are fully disclosed to the approving authority.

Loans to One Borrower. In accordance with loans-to-one-borrower regulations, the Bank is generally limited to lending no more than 15% of its unimpaired capital and unimpaired surplus to any one borrower or borrowing entity. This limit may be increased by an additional 10% for loans secured by readily marketable collateral having a market value, as determined by reliable and continuously available price quotations, at least equal to the amount of funds outstanding. To qualify for this additional 10% the bank must perfect a security interest in the collateral and the collateral must have a market value at all times of at least 100% of the loan amount that exceeds the 15% general limit. At December 31, 2020, our regulatory limit on loans-to-one borrower was \$18.2 million.

Management understands the importance of concentration risk and continuously monitors to ensure that portfolio risk is balanced between such factors as loan type, industry, geography, collateral, structure, maturity and risk rating, among other things. Our Loan Policy establishes detailed concentration limits and sub limits by loan type and geography.

Ongoing Credit Risk Management. In addition to the tailored underwriting process described above, we perform ongoing risk monitoring and review processes for all credit exposures. Although we grade and classify our loans internally, we have an independent third party professional firm perform regular loan reviews to confirm loan classifications. We strive to identify potential problem loans early in an effort to aggressively seek resolution of these situations before the loans create a loss, record any necessary charge-offs promptly and maintain adequate allowance levels for probable loan losses incurred in the loan portfolio.

In general, whenever a particular loan or overall borrower relationship is downgraded to pass-watch, special mention or substandard based on one or more standard loan grading factors, our credit officers engage in active evaluation of the asset to determine the appropriate resolution strategy. Management regularly reviews the status of the watch list and classified assets portfolio as well as the larger credits in the portfolio.

In addition to our general credit risk management processes, we employ additional risk management processes and procedures for our commercial loans to law firms and our post-settlement loan portfolio. We require borrowing base updates at least annually and also engage in active review and monitoring of the borrowing base collateral itself, including field audits.

Investments

We manage our investments primarily for liquidity purposes, with a secondary focus on returns. All of our debt securities are classified as available-for-sale and can be used to collateralize Federal Home Loan Bank of New York (FHLB) borrowings, FRB borrowings, public funds deposits or other borrowings. At December 31, 2020, our securities had a fair value of \$117.7 million, and consisted of U.S. Government Agency collateralized mortgage obligations and mortgage-backed securities.

Our investment objectives are primarily to provide and maintain liquidity, establish an acceptable level of interest rate risk, to provide a use of funds when demand for loans is weak and to generate a favorable return. Our board of directors has the overall responsibility for the investment portfolio, including approval of our investment policy. The Asset Liability Committee (ALCO) and management are responsible for implementation of the investment policy and monitoring our investment performance. The Board of Directors reviews the status of our investment portfolio monthly.

We are required to maintain an investment in FHLB stock, which investment is based primarily on the level of our FHLB borrowings. Additionally, we are required to maintain an investment in Federal Reserve Bank of New York stock equal to six percent of our capital and surplus. While we have the authority under applicable law to invest in derivative instruments, we had no investments in derivative instruments at December 31, 2020.

The Company enters into purchases of securities under agreements to resell identical securities which consist of mortgage loans that meet the Ginnie Mae (“GNMA”) pooling qualifications. The cash advanced to the counterparty are reflected as assets on the Statement of Financial Condition and are accounted for at cost. The Company obtains possession of securities collateral with a market value equal to or in excess of the principal amount loaned under the resell agreement and has the right to request additional collateral, based on its daily monitoring of the fair value of the securities. As of December 31, 2020, there is one open contract with one counterparty that is scheduled to mature within thirty days with a carrying amount of \$51.7 million.

Borrowings

We maintain diverse funding sources including borrowing lines at the FHLB, three financial institutions and the Federal Reserve Bank discount window. Although we do not utilize borrowings as a significant funding source, we have from time to time utilized advances from the FHLB to supplement our supply of investable funds. The FHLB functions as a central reserve bank providing credit for its member financial institutions. As a member, we are required to own capital stock in the FHLB and are authorized to apply for advances on the security of such stock and certain of our whole first mortgage loans and other assets (principally securities which are obligations of, or guaranteed by, the United States), provided certain standards related to creditworthiness have been met. Advances are made under several different programs, each having its own interest rate and range of maturities. Depending on the program, limitations on the amount of advances are based either on a fixed percentage of an institution’s net worth or on the Federal Home Loan Bank’s assessment of the institution’s creditworthiness. As of December 31, 2020, we had \$122.4 million of available borrowing capacity with the FHLB. We also had an available line of credit with the Federal Reserve Bank of New York discount window of \$18.7 million. The other borrowing lines are maintained primarily for contingency funding sources. No amounts were outstanding on any of the aforementioned lines as of December 31, 2020.

Human Capital Resources

At December 31, 2020, we employed 99 individuals, nearly all of whom are full-time and of which approximately 70% are either minorities or women. None of our employees are represented by a collective bargaining agreement. The Company’s national platform employs a business model that combines high-touch service, technology and a relationship-based focus of a community bank with an extensive suite of banking and innovative financial services to businesses and individuals embracing the new digital banking era. We seek to hire well-qualified employees who also fit our corporate culture.

Training, Development, and Retention. We encourage and support the growth and development of our employees and, wherever possible, seek to fill positions by promotion and transfer from within the organization. The Company provides a collaborative environment where opportunities are provided through on the job skills training, firm sponsored training, informal peer mentoring, and interaction with senior leaders. This collaborative environment offers internal mobility as well as competitive compensation and benefits packages allowing for significant employee retention.

Safety, Health and Welfare. The safety, health and wellness of our employees is a top priority. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we continued to responsibly serve the needs of our customers while prioritizing the health and safety of our employees and their families. The Company activated its pandemic response in March 2020, allowing for a remote workforce and subsequent measured return to work protocols. Management’s response allowed for the Bank to

react in a disciplined manner to a rapidly changing situation. The Bank requires certain health protocols to be followed by all employees including, but not limited to, suspending corporate travel, office cleaning measures, social distancing practices and the use of face coverings in all common areas. While COVID-19 has resulted in widespread disruption to the lives and businesses of the Bank's customers and employees, the Bank's response has enabled the Bank to remain focused on assisting customers and ensuring that the Bank remains fully operational.

Benefits. On an ongoing basis, we further promote the health and wellness of our employees by strongly encouraging work-life balance. Our benefits package includes health care coverage, retirement benefits, life and disability insurance, paid time off and leave policies.

Community Involvement. As part of our Community Reinvestment Act obligations as a community bank, Esquire Bank supports a multitude of diverse, worthy, community-based organizations through a comprehensive grant and lending program. Additionally, Esquire donated \$0.3 million to local charities in 2020 to support those most impacted by COVID-19.

Subsidiaries

Esquire Bank, National Association is the sole subsidiary of Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. and there are no subsidiaries of Esquire Bank, National Association.

Supervision and Regulation

General

Esquire Bank is a national bank organized under the laws of the United States of America and its deposits are insured to applicable limits by the Deposit Insurance Fund (the "DIF"). The lending, investment, deposit-taking, and other business authority of Esquire Bank is governed primarily by federal law and regulations and Esquire Bank is prohibited from engaging in any operations not authorized by such laws and regulations. Esquire Bank is subject to extensive regulation, supervision and examination by, and the enforcement authority of, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (the "OCC"), and to a lesser extent by the FDIC, as its deposit insurer, as well as by the FRB. Esquire Bank is also subject to federal financial consumer protection and fair lending laws and regulations of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, though the OCC is responsible for examining and supervising the bank's compliance with these laws. The regulatory structure establishes a comprehensive framework of activities in which a national bank may engage and is primarily intended for the protection of depositors, customers and the DIF. The regulatory structure gives the regulatory agencies extensive discretion in connection with their supervisory and enforcement activities and examination policies, including policies with respect to the classification of assets and the establishment of adequate loan loss reserves for regulatory purposes.

Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. is a bank holding company, due to its control of Esquire Bank, and is therefore subject to the requirements of the BHC Act and regulation and supervision by the FRB. The Company files reports with and is subject to periodic examination by the FRB.

Any change in the applicable laws and regulations, whether by the OCC, the FDIC, the FRB or through legislation, could have a material adverse impact on Esquire Bank and the Company and their operations and the Company's stockholders.

The Dodd-Frank Act made extensive changes in the regulation of insured depository institutions. Among other things, the Dodd-Frank Act (i) created the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau as an independent bureau to assume responsibility for the implementation of the federal financial consumer protection and fair lending laws and regulations, a function previously assigned to prudential regulators; (although institutions of less than \$10 billion in assets, such as Esquire Bank, 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 primary federal bank regulator rather than the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau); (ii) directed changes in the way that institutions are assessed for deposit insurance; (iii) mandated the revision of regulatory capital requirements; (iv) codified the FRB's long-standing policy that a bank

holding company must serve as a source of financial and managerial strength for its subsidiary banks; (v) required regulations requiring originators of certain securitized loans to retain a percentage of the risk for the transferred loans; (vi) stipulated regulatory rate-setting for certain debit card interchange fees; (vii) repealed restrictions on the payment of interest on commercial demand deposits; (viii) enacted the so-called Volcker Rule, which general prohibits banking organizations from engaging in proprietary trading and from investing in, sponsoring or having certain relationships with hedge funds and (ix) contained a number of reforms related to mortgage originations.

Many of the provisions of the Dodd-Frank Act had delayed effective dates and/or required the issuance of implementing regulations. However, the Dodd-Frank Act has, and will likely continue to cause increased regulatory burden, compliance costs and interest expense for the Company and Esquire Bank.

What follows is a summary of some of the laws and regulations applicable to Esquire Bank and Esquire Financial Holdings. The summary is not intended to be exhaustive and is qualified in its entirety by reference to the actual laws and regulations.

Esquire Bank, National Association

Loans and Investments

National banks have authority to originate and purchase any type of loan, including commercial, commercial real estate, 1 – 4 family mortgages or consumer loans. Aggregate loans by a national bank to any single borrower or group of related borrowers are generally limited to 15% of Esquire Bank’s capital and surplus, plus an additional 10% if secured by specified readily marketable collateral.

Federal law and OCC regulations limit Esquire Bank’s investment authority. Generally, a national bank is prohibited from investing in corporate equity securities for its own account other than companies through which the bank conducts its business. Under OCC regulations, a national bank may invest in investment securities up to specified limits depending upon the type of security. “Investment securities” are generally defined as marketable obligations that are investment grade and not predominantly speculative in nature. 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 or interests in real estate or made for the purpose of financing permanent improvements to real estate. Under these regulations, all insured depository institutions, such as Esquire Bank, must adopt and maintain written policies establishing 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 federal bank regulators’ Interagency Guidelines for Real Estate Lending Policies that have been adopted.

Federal Deposit Insurance

Deposit accounts at Esquire Bank are insured by the FDIC’s Deposit Insurance Fund (“DIF”).

Under the FDIC’s risk-based assessment system, insured institutions were assigned a risk category based on supervisory evaluations, regulatory capital levels and certain other factors. An institution’s rate depended upon the category to which it is assigned, and certain adjustments specified by FDIC regulations. Institutions deemed less risky pay FDIC assessments. 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. Effective July 1, 2016, the FDIC adopted changes that eliminated the risk categories and base assessments for most banks on financial measures and supervisory ratings derived from statistical modeling estimating the probability of failure over three years. In conjunction with the DIF reserve ratio achieving 1.15%, the assessment range (inclusive of possible adjustments) was also reduced for most banks to 1.5 basis points to 30 basis points of total assets less tangible equity.

The FDIC may adjust its assessment scale uniformly, except that no adjustment can deviate more than two basis points from the base scale without notice and comment. No insured institution may pay a dividend if in default of the federal deposit insurance assessment.

The FDIC may terminate deposit insurance 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 Esquire Bank's deposit insurance.

Capitalization

Federal regulations require FDIC insured depository institutions, including national banks, to meet several minimum capital standards: a common equity Tier 1 capital to risk-based assets ratio, a Tier 1 capital to risk-based assets ratio, a total capital to risk-based assets and a Tier 1 capital to total assets leverage ratio. The existing capital requirements were effective January 1, 2015 and are the result of a final rule implementing regulatory amendments based on recommendations of the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision and certain requirements of the Dodd-Frank Act.

The capital standards require the maintenance of common equity Tier 1 capital, Tier 1 capital and total capital to risk-weighted assets of at least 4.5%, 6% and 8%, respectively, and a leverage ratio of at least 4% Tier 1 capital. Common equity Tier 1 capital is generally defined as common stockholders' equity and retained earnings. Tier 1 capital is generally defined as common equity Tier 1 and Additional Tier 1 capital. Additional Tier 1 capital generally includes certain noncumulative perpetual preferred stock and related surplus and minority interests in equity accounts of consolidated subsidiaries. Total capital includes Tier 1 capital (common equity Tier 1 capital plus Additional Tier 1 capital) and Tier 2 capital. Tier 2 capital is comprised of capital instruments and related surplus meeting specified requirements, and may include cumulative preferred stock and long-term perpetual preferred stock, mandatory convertible securities, intermediate preferred stock and subordinated debt. Also included in Tier 2 capital is the allowance for loan and lease losses limited to a maximum of 1.25% of risk-weighted assets and, for institutions that have exercised an opt-out election regarding the treatment of Accumulated Other Comprehensive Income ("AOCI"), up to 45% of net unrealized gains on available-for-sale equity securities with readily determinable fair market values. Institutions that have not exercised the AOCI opt-out have AOCI incorporated into common equity Tier 1 capital (including unrealized gains and losses on available-for-sale securities). We exercised the opt-out election regarding the treatment of AOCI. Calculation of all types of regulatory capital is subject to deductions and adjustments specified in the regulations.

In determining the amount of risk-weighted assets for purposes of calculating risk-based capital ratios, a bank's assets, including certain off-balance sheet assets (e.g., recourse obligations, direct credit substitutes, residual interests), are multiplied by a risk weight factor assigned by the regulations based on perceived risks inherent in the type of asset. Higher levels of capital are required for asset categories believed to present greater risk. For example, a risk weight of 0% is assigned to cash and U.S. government securities, a risk weight of 50% is generally assigned to prudently underwritten first lien 1 – 4 family mortgages, a risk weight of 100% is assigned to commercial and consumer loans, a risk weight of 150% is assigned to certain past due loans and a risk weight of between 0% to 600% is assigned to permissible equity interests, depending on certain specified factors.

In addition to establishing the minimum regulatory capital requirements, the regulations limit capital distributions and certain discretionary bonus payments to management if the institution does not hold a "capital conservation buffer" consisting of 2.5% of common equity Tier 1 capital to risk-weighted assets above the amount necessary to meet its minimum risk-based capital requirements.

Legislation enacted in 2018 required the federal banking agencies, including the Federal Reserve, to establish a “community bank leverage ratio” of between 8-10% of average total consolidated assets for qualifying institutions with less than \$10 billion of assets. Banks meeting the specified requirement and electing to follow the alternative framework would be deemed to comply with the regulatory capital requirements, including the risk-based requirements. The federal agencies final rule issued in November 2019 set the community bank leverage ratio at 9%. The Bank has not elected to utilize this alternative framework as of December 31, 2020.

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, compensation, fees and benefits and information security standards. In general, the guidelines require 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 stockholder. The FDIC also has issued guidance on risks banks may face from third party relationships (e.g. relationships under which the third party provides services to the bank). The guidance generally requires the bank to perform adequate due diligence on the third party, appropriately document the relationship, and perform adequate oversight and auditing, in order to the limit the risks to the bank.

Prompt Corrective Regulatory Action

Federal law requires 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.

National banks that have insufficient capital are subject to certain mandatory and discretionary supervisory measures. For example, a bank that is “undercapitalized” (i.e. fails to comply with any regulatory capital requirement) is subject to growth limitations and is required to submit a capital restoration plan; a holding company that controls such a bank is required to guarantee that the bank complies with the restoration plan. A “significantly undercapitalized” bank is subject to additional restrictions. National banks deemed by the OCC to be “critically undercapitalized” are subject to the appointment of a receiver or conservator.

The final rule that increased regulatory capital standards also adjusted the prompt corrective action tiers as of January 1, 2015 to conform to the new capital standards. The various categories now incorporate the newly adopted common equity Tier 1 capital requirement, an 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). Pursuant to the proposed rule referenced earlier, an institution that meets the “community bank leverage ratio” and elects that regulatory capital framework would be considered “well capitalized.”

Dividends

Under federal law and applicable regulations, a national bank may generally declare a cash 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 cash dividend. Cash dividends exceeding those amounts require application to and approval by the OCC. To pay a cash dividend, a national bank must also maintain an adequate capital conservation buffer under the capital rules discussed above.

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 FRB has adopted Regulation W, which implements and interprets Sections 23A and 23B, in part by codifying prior FRB interpretations.

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-by-case basis. Section 23A limits the extent to which a bank or its subsidiaries may engage in “covered transactions” with any one affiliate to 10% of the bank’s capital stock and surplus. There is an aggregate limit of 20% of the bank’s capital stock and surplus for such transactions with all affiliates. The term “covered transaction” includes, among other things, the making of a loan to an affiliate, a purchase of assets from an affiliate, the issuance of a guarantee on behalf of an affiliate and the acceptance of securities of an affiliate as collateral for a loan. All such transactions are required to be on terms and conditions that are consistent with safe and sound banking practices and no transaction may involve the acquisition of any “low quality asset” from an affiliate. Certain covered transactions, such as loans to or guarantees on behalf of an affiliate, must be secured by collateral in amounts ranging from 100 to 130 percent of the loan amount, depending upon the type of collateral. In addition, Section 23B requires that any covered transaction (and specified other transactions) between a bank and an affiliate must be on terms and conditions 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 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. The aggregate amount of a bank’s loans to any insider and the insider’s related interests may not exceed the loans-to-one-borrower limit applicable to national banks. Aggregate loans by a bank to its insiders and insiders’ related interests may not exceed the bank’s unimpaired capital and unimpaired surplus. With certain exceptions, such as education loans and certain 1 – 4 family mortgages a bank’s loans to its executive officers, 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 loan to an insider or a related interest of an 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 the loan, when aggregated with any existing loans to that insider or the insider’s related interests, would exceed the lesser of \$500,000 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 collectability. 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.

Enforcement

The OCC has extensive enforcement authority over national banks to correct unsafe or unsound practices and violations of law or regulation. Such authority includes the issuance of cease and desist orders, assessment of civil money penalties and removal of officers and directors. The OCC may also appoint conservator or receiver for a national bank under specified circumstances, such as where (i) the bank’s assets are less than its obligations to creditors, (ii) the bank is likely to be unable to pay its obligations or meet depositors’ demands in the normal course of business or (iii) a substantial dissipation of bank assets or earnings has occurred due to a violation of law of regulation or unsafe or unsound practices.

Federal Reserve System

Under FRB regulations, Esquire Bank is required to maintain reserves at the Federal Reserve Bank against its transaction accounts, including checking and NOW accounts. Effective March 26, 2020, the FRB reduced reserve requirement ratios to zero percent for all depository institutions.

Examinations and Assessments

Esquire Bank is required to file periodic reports with and is subject to periodic examination by the OCC. Federal regulations generally require periodic on-site examinations for all depository institutions. Esquire Bank is required to pay an annual assessment to the OCC to fund the agency's operations.

Community Reinvestment Act and Fair Lending Laws

Under the CRA, Esquire 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. The CRA requires the OCC 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 Esquire Bank. For example, the regulations specify that a bank's CRA performance will be considered in its expansion (e.g., branching or merger) proposals and may be the basis for approving, denying or conditioning the approval of an application. As of the date of its most recent OCC evaluation, Esquire Bank was rated "satisfactory" with respect to its CRA compliance.

USA PATRIOT Act and Money Laundering

Esquire Bank is subject to the federal Bank Secrecy Act (the "BSA"), which incorporates several laws, including the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001, or the USA PATRIOT Act and related regulations. The USA PATRIOT Act gives the federal government powers to address money laundering and terrorist threats through enhanced domestic security measures, expanded surveillance powers, increased information sharing, and broadened anti-money laundering requirements. By way of amendments to the Bank Secrecy Act, Title III of the USA PATRIOT Act implemented measures intended to encourage information sharing among bank regulatory agencies and law enforcement bodies. Further, certain provisions of Title III impose affirmative obligations on a broad range of financial institutions, including banks, thrifts, brokers, dealers, credit unions, money transfer agents and parties registered under the Commodity Exchange Act.

Among other things, Title III of the USA PATRIOT Act and the related regulations require:

- Establishment of anti-money laundering compliance programs that includes policies, procedures, and internal controls; the appointment of an anti-money laundering compliance officer; a training program; and independent testing;
- Filing of certain reports to FinCEN and law enforcement that are designated to assist in the detection and prevention of money laundering and terrorist financing activities;
- Establishment of a program specifying procedures for obtaining and maintaining certain records from customers seeking to open new accounts, including verifying the identity of customers;
- In certain circumstances, compliance with enhanced due diligence policies, procedures and controls designed to detect and report money-laundering, terrorist financing and other suspicious activity;
- Monitoring account activity for suspicious transactions; and
- A heightened level of review for certain high risk customers or accounts.

The USA PATRIOT Act also includes prohibitions on correspondent accounts for foreign shell banks and requires compliance with record keeping obligations with respect to correspondent accounts of foreign banks.

The bank regulatory agencies have increased the regulatory scrutiny of the Bank Secrecy Act and anti-money laundering programs maintained by financial institutions. Significant penalties and fines, as well as other supervisory orders may be imposed on a financial institution for non-compliance with these requirements. In addition, the federal bank regulatory agencies must consider the effectiveness of financial institutions engaging in a merger transaction in combating money laundering activities.

Esquire Bank has adopted policies and procedures to comply with these requirements.

Privacy Laws

Esquire Bank is subject to a variety of federal and state privacy laws, which govern the collection, safeguarding, sharing and use of customer information. For example, the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act requires all financial institutions offering financial products or services to retail customers to provide such customers with the financial institution's privacy policy and provide such customers the opportunity to "opt out" of the sharing of certain personal financial information with unaffiliated third parties. It also requires banks to safeguard personal information of consumer customers. Some state laws also protect the privacy of information of state residents and require adequate security for such data.

Merchant Services

Esquire Bank is also subject to the rules of Visa, MasterCard and other payment networks in which it participates. If Esquire Bank fails to comply with such rules, the networks could impose fines or require us to stop providing merchant services for cards under such network's brand or routed through such network.

Other Regulations

Esquire Bank's operations are also subject to federal laws applicable to credit transactions, such as:

- The Truth-In-Lending Act, governing disclosures of credit terms to consumer borrowers;
- The Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act, requiring that borrowers for mortgage loans for 1 – 4 family real estate receive various disclosures, including good faith estimates of settlement costs, lender servicing and escrow account practices, and prohibiting certain practices that increase the cost of settlement services;
- The Home Mortgage Disclosure Act, requiring financial institutions to provide information to enable the public and public officials to determine whether a financial institution is fulfilling its obligation to help meet the housing needs of the community it serves;
- The Equal Credit Opportunity Act and other fair lending laws, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex and other prohibited factors in extending credit;
- The Fair Credit Reporting Act, governing the use of credit reports on consumers and the provision of information to credit reporting agencies;
- Unfair or Deceptive Acts or Practices laws and regulations;
- The Fair Debt Collection Act, governing the manner in which consumer debts may be collected by collection agencies; and
- The rules and regulations of the various federal agencies charged with the responsibility of implementing such federal laws.

The operations of Esquire Bank are further subject to the:

- The Truth in Savings Act, which specifies disclosure requirements with respect to deposit accounts;
- The Right to Financial Privacy Act, which imposes a duty to maintain confidentiality of consumer financial records and prescribes procedures for complying with administrative subpoenas of financial records;
- The Electronic Funds Transfer Act and Regulation E promulgated thereunder, which govern automatic deposits to and withdrawals from deposit accounts and customers' rights and liabilities arising from the use of automated teller machines and other electronic banking services; and
- The Check Clearing for the 21st Century Act (also known as "Check 21"), which gives "substitute checks," such as digital check images and copies made from that image, the same legal standing as the original paper check.

Holding Company Regulation

The Company, as a bank holding company, controlling Esquire Bank, is subject to regulation and supervision by the FRB under the BHCA. The Company is periodically examined by, required to submit reports to the FRB and is required to comply with the FRB's rules and regulations. Among other things, the FRB has authority to restrict activities by a bank holding company that are deemed to pose a serious risk to the subsidiary bank. The FRB has historically imposed consolidated capital adequacy guidelines for bank holding structured similar, but not identical, to those of the OCC for national banks. The Dodd-Frank Act directed the FRB to issue consolidated capital requirements for depository institution holding companies that are no 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 implemented the Dodd-Frank Act as to bank holding company capital standards. Consolidated regulatory capital requirements identical to those applicable to the subsidiary banks applied to bank holding companies as of January 1, 2015. However, the FRB exempts from the consolidated capital requirements bank holding companies that are below a specified asset size, unless otherwise directed in specific cases. Legislation in 2018 raised the asset threshold for the exemption from \$1 billion to \$3 billion. Consequently, the Company is not currently subject to the consolidated holding company capital requirements.

The Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act of 1999 authorizes a bank holding company that meets specified conditions, including depository institutions subsidiaries that are "well capitalized" and "well managed," to opt to become a "financial holding company." A "financial holding company" may engage in a broader array of financial activities than permitted a typical bank holding company. Such activities can include insurance underwriting and investment banking. The Company has elected to be a "financial holding company."

The policy of the FRB is that a bank holding company must serve as a source of financial and managerial 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 FRB 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 FRB 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 evaluating acquisition application, the FRB evaluates factors such as the financial condition, management resources and future prospects of the parties, the convenience and needs of the communities involved and competitive factors. In addition, bank holding companies may generally only engage in activities that are closely related to banking as determined by the FRB. 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, which the Company has elected to do.

FRB 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. In addition, FRB guidance sets forth the supervisory expectation that bank holding companies will inform and consult with Federal Reserve Bank staff in advance of issuing a cash dividend that exceeds earnings for the quarter and should inform the Federal Reserve Bank and should eliminate, defer or significantly reduce dividends if (i) net income available to stockholders for the past four quarters, net of dividends previously paid during that period, is not sufficient to fully fund the dividends, (ii) prospective rate of earnings retention is not consistent with the bank holding company's capital needs and overall current and prospective financial condition, or (iii) the bank holding company will not meet, or is in danger of not meeting, its minimum regulatory capital adequacy ratios.

A bank holding company is required to give the FRB prior written notice of any repurchase or redemption of its outstanding equity securities if the gross consideration for repurchase or redemption, when combined with the net consideration paid for all such repurchases or redemptions during the preceding 12 months, will be equal to 10% or more of the company's consolidated net worth. The FRB may disapprove such a repurchase or redemption if it determines that the proposal would constitute an unsafe and unsound practice or violate a law or regulation. Such notice and approval is not required for a bank holding company that meets certain qualitative criteria. However, FRB guidance generally provides for bank holding company consultation with Federal Reserve Bank staff prior to engaging in a repurchase or redemption of a bank holding company's stock, regardless of whether a formal written notice is required. Moreover, the Federal Reserve staff is interpreting the capital regulations as requiring a bank holding company to secure Federal Reserve approval prior to redeeming or repurchasing any capital stock that is included in regulatory capital.

The above FRB requirements may restrict a bank holding company's ability to pay dividends to stockholders or engage in repurchases or redemptions of its shares.

Acquisition of Control of the Company. Under the Change in Bank Control Act, no person may acquire control of a bank holding company such as the Company unless the FRB has been prior written notice and has not issued a notice disapproving the proposed acquisition. In evaluating such notices, the FRB takes into consideration such factors as the financial resources, competence, experience and integrity of the acquirer, the future prospects the bank holding company involved and its subsidiary bank and the competitive effects of the acquisition. Control, as defined under federal law, means ownership, control of or holding irrevocable proxies representing more than 25% of any class of voting stock, control in any manner of the election of a majority of the company's directors, or a determination by the regulator that the acquirer has the power to direct, or directly or indirectly to exercise a controlling influence over, the management or policies of the institution. Acquisition of more than 10% of any class of a bank holding company's voting stock constitutes a rebuttable presumption of control under the regulations under certain circumstances including where, is the case with the Company, the issuer has registered securities under Section 12 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

Federal Securities Laws

Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc.'s common stock is registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Consequently, Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. is subject to the information, proxy solicitation, insider trading and other restrictions and requirements of the SEC under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

Emerging Growth Company Status

The Jumpstart Our Business Startups Act (the "JOBS Act"), which was enacted in April 2012, has made numerous changes to the federal securities laws to facilitate access to capital markets. Under the JOBS Act, a company with total annual gross revenues of less than \$1.07 billion during its most recently completed fiscal year qualifies as an "emerging growth company." Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. qualifies as an emerging growth company under the JOBS Act.

An “emerging growth company” may choose not to hold stockholder votes to approve annual executive compensation (more frequently referred to as “say-on-pay” votes) or executive compensation payable in connection with a merger (more frequently referred to as “say-on-golden parachute” votes). An emerging growth company also is not subject to the requirement that its auditors attest to the effectiveness of the company’s internal control over financial reporting, and can provide scaled disclosure regarding executive compensation. Finally, an emerging growth company may elect to comply with new or amended accounting pronouncements in the same manner as a private company, but must make such election when the company is first required to file a registration statement. Such an election is irrevocable during the period a company is an emerging growth company. Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. has elected to comply with new or amended accounting pronouncements in the same manner as a public company.

A company loses emerging growth company status on the earlier of: (i) the last day of the fiscal year of the company during which it had total annual gross revenues of \$1.07 billion or more; (ii) the last day of the fiscal year of the issuer following the fifth anniversary of the date of the first sale of common equity securities of the company pursuant to an effective registration statement under the Securities Act of 1933; (iii) the date on which such company has, during the previous three-year period, issued more than \$1.0 billion in non-convertible debt; or (iv) the date on which such company is deemed to be a “large accelerated filer” under Securities and Exchange Commission regulations (generally, at least \$700 million of voting and non-voting equity held by non-affiliates).

Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002

The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 is intended to improve corporate responsibility, to provide for enhanced penalties for accounting and auditing improprieties at publicly traded companies and to protect investors by improving the accuracy and reliability of corporate disclosures pursuant to the securities laws. We have policies, procedures and systems designed to comply with these regulations, and we review and document such policies, procedures and systems to ensure continued compliance with these regulations.

ITEM 1A. Risk Factors

The material risks that management believes affect the Company are described below. You should carefully consider the risks as described below, together with all of the information included herein. The risks described below are not the only risks the Company faces. Additional risks not presently known also may have a material adverse effect on the Company’s results of operations and financial condition.

Risks Related to Covid-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected our business, financial condition and results of operations, and the ultimate impacts of the pandemic on our business, financial condition and results of operations will depend on future developments and other factors that are highly uncertain and will be impacted by the scope and duration of the pandemic and actions taken by governmental authorities in response to the pandemic.

The ongoing COVID-19 global and national health emergency has caused significant disruption in the international and United States economies and financial markets and has had an adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations. The spread of COVID-19 has caused illness, quarantines, cancellation of events and travel, business and school shutdowns, reduction in business activity and financial transactions, supply chain interruptions and overall economic and financial market instability. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the governments of the states in which we do business, and of most other states, have taken preventative or protective actions, such as imposing restrictions on travel and business operations, advising or requiring individuals to limit or forego their time outside of their homes, and ordering temporary closures of businesses that have been deemed to be non-essential. These restrictions and other consequences of the pandemic have resulted in significant adverse effects for many different types of businesses, including, among others, those in the travel, hospitality and food and beverage industries, and have resulted in a significant number of layoffs and furloughs of employees nationwide and in the regions in which we operate. It has also negatively affected individuals ability to work, which impacts the housing and multi-family rental markets.

The ultimate effects of COVID-19 on the broader economy and the markets that we serve are not known nor is the ultimate length of the restrictions described above. Additionally, it is not known when COVID-19 can be controlled and abated. Moreover, the Federal Reserve has taken action to lower the Federal Funds rate, which may negatively affect our interest income and, therefore, earnings, financial condition and results of operation. Additional impacts of COVID-19 on our business could be widespread and material, and may include, or exacerbate, among other consequences, the following:

- the demand for our products and services may decline, making it difficult to grow assets and income;
- if the economy is unable to substantially reopen or remain reopened, and high levels of unemployment continue for an extended period of time, loan delinquencies, problem assets, and foreclosures may increase, resulting in increased charges and reduced income;
- collateral for loans, especially real estate, may decline in value, which could cause loan losses to increase;
- our allowance for loan losses may increase if borrowers experience financial difficulties, which will adversely affect our net income;
- the net worth and liquidity of loan guarantors may decline, impairing their ability to honor commitments to us;
- as the result of the decline in the Federal Reserve Board's target federal funds rate to near 0%, the yield on our assets may decline to a greater extent than the decline in our cost of interest-bearing liabilities, reducing our net interest margin and spread and reducing net income; and
- our cyber security risks are increased as the result of an increase in the number of employees working remotely.

These factors, together or in combination with other events or occurrences that may not yet be known or anticipated, may materially and adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations.

Risks Related to Our Lending Activities

Because we intend to continue to increase our commercial loans, our credit risk may increase.

At December 31, 2020, our commercial loans totaled \$358.4 million, or 53.3% of our total loans, including \$299.7 million of Commercial Attorney-Related Loans, which represented 83.6% of our commercial loans. We intend to increase our originations of commercial loans, including our Commercial Attorney-Related Loans, which consist of working capital lines of credit, case cost lines of credit, term loans to law firms, and post-settlement commercial and other commercial attorney-related loans. These loans generally have more risk than 1 – 4 family mortgage loans and commercial loans secured by real estate. Since repayment of commercial loans, including our Commercial Attorney-Related Loans, depends on the successful receipt of settlement proceeds or the successful management and operation of the borrower's businesses, repayment of such loans can be affected by adverse court decisions and adverse conditions in the local and national economy. Commercial Attorney-Related Loans present unique credit risks in that attorney or law firm revenues can be volatile depending on the number of cases, the timing of court decisions, the timing of the overall judicial process, and the timing of those settlements as well as related payments on those settlements. In our experience, an average case can take two to four years to litigate and settle. Determining the value of an attorney's or law firm's case inventory (borrowing base) is also inherently an imprecise exercise. Though repayment of case lines is not dependent on a favorable case settlement, unfavorable outcomes can ultimately impact the cash flows of the borrower. An adverse development with respect to one loan or one Commercial Attorney-Related Loan credit relationship can expose us to significantly greater risk of loss compared to an adverse development with respect to a 1 – 4 family mortgage loan or a commercial real estate loan.

Because we plan to continue to increase our originations of these loans, commercial loans generally have a larger average size as compared with other loans such as commercial real estate loans, and the collateral for commercial loans is

generally less readily-marketable, losses incurred on a small number of commercial loans could have a disproportionate and material adverse impact on our financial condition and results of operations.

A substantial portion of our loan portfolio consists of multifamily real estate loans and commercial real estate loans, which have a higher degree of risk than other types of loans.

At December 31, 2020, we had \$169.8 million of multifamily loans and \$54.7 million of commercial real estate loans. Multifamily and commercial real estate loans represented 33.4% of our total loan portfolio at December 31, 2020. Multifamily and commercial real estate loans are often larger and involve greater risks than other types of lending. Because payments on such loans are often dependent on the successful operation or development of the property or business involved, repayment of such loans is often more sensitive than other types of loans to adverse conditions in the real estate market or the general business climate and economy. Accordingly, a downturn in the real estate market and a challenging business and economic environment may increase our risk related to multifamily and commercial real estate loans. Unlike 1 – 4 family mortgage loans, which generally are made on the basis of the borrower’s ability to make repayment from their employment and other income and which are secured by real property whose value tends to be more easily ascertainable, multifamily and commercial real estate loans typically are made on the basis of the borrower’s ability to make repayment from the cash flow of the commercial venture. If the cash flow from business operations is reduced, the borrower’s ability to repay the loan may be impaired. Due to the larger average size of each multifamily and commercial real estate loan as compared with other loans such as 1 – 4 family loans, as well as collateral that is generally less readily-marketable, losses incurred on a small number of multifamily and commercial real estate loans could have a material adverse impact on our financial condition and results of operations.

We expect to increase our originations of consumer loans, including post-settlement consumer and structured settlement loans, and such loans generally carry greater risk than loans secured by owner-occupied, 1 – 4 family real estate, and these risks will increase as we continue to increase originations of these types of loans.

At December 31, 2020, our consumer loans totaled \$41.4 million, or 6.1% of our total loan portfolio, of which \$29.3 million, or 70.9%, were post-settlement consumer loans and \$0.2 million, or 0.6%, were structured settlement loans. Consumer loans typically have shorter terms, lower balances, higher yields and higher risks of default than 1 – 4 family loans. Consumer loan collections are dependent on the borrower’s continuing financial stability and are therefore more likely to be affected by adverse personal circumstances, such as a loss of employment or unexpected medical costs. While our Consumer Attorney-Related Loans, which consist of post-settlement consumer and structured settlement loans, are typically well secured by the settlement amount, we can still be exposed to the financial stability of the borrower as a result of unforeseen rulings or administrative legal anomalies with a particular borrower’s settlement that eliminate or greatly reduce their settlement amount. Additionally, we have a concentration in NFL loans which totaled \$25.9 million or 88.2% of our total post-settlement loans. Furthermore, the application of various federal and state laws, including bankruptcy and insolvency laws, may limit our ability to recover on such loans. As we increase our originations of consumer loans, it may become necessary to increase our provision for loan losses in the event our losses on these loans increase, which would reduce our profits.

Potential fraud by our post-settlement consumer loan customers who are claimants or others related to the NFL Concussion Settlement Program, revisions to qualifying physician requirements, ongoing effects of the pandemic and other administrative changes could increase our actual loan losses which would decrease earnings.

On December 10, 2018, the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania (the “Court”) appointed a special investigator in the NFL Concussion Injury Litigation (Case No. 12-md-2323) to ensure the integrity of the NFL Concussion Settlement Program, the efficient processing of valid claims, and impose appropriate sanctions if wrongdoing is found in response to allegations of fraudulent claims. Additionally, on May 8, 2019, the Court modified the rules regarding qualifying physicians by limiting NFL claimants to utilizing doctors in their immediate area (a range of 150 miles from the claimant’s home address). We believe that these Court rulings, including other administrative processes enacted by the claims administrator, have extended the duration of our assets which may increase our credit risk. Although we have not encountered any such fraud at this time within our portfolio, if it is determined that any of our NFL loan borrowers or others committed fraud when filing their application to the NFL Concussion Settlement Program or to Esquire Bank for the related loan, we may experience credit losses, which could have an adverse effect on our operating results.

Additionally, the current COVID-19 health crisis, may also extend the duration of our portfolio. Specifically, the uncertainty related to our borrowers' ("claimants") access to qualified testing, doctors, their attorneys and other administrative support, has introduced incremental duration risk which may further extend the settlement of claims and payoff of our NFL loans beyond the contractual maturity.

As of December 31, 2020, we have received payoffs on approximately 29% of our NFL claimant loans as compared to the overall payoffs for claim registrations with the NFL claims administrator of approximately 7%. To date we have charged-off 6% of our NFL loans and ceased the origination program in December 2017. Our NFL consumer loan exposure as of December 31, 2020 is approximately \$23.6 million with a weighted average remaining maturity of approximately 1.0 year where loan exposures of \$4.2 million and \$2.3 million have been classified as special mention and substandard, respectively, representing approximately 28% of the remaining exposure. All substandard loan exposures related to this program have been placed on nonaccrual and are deemed nonperforming assets. If the processing of claims for our portfolio extends beyond our maturity for these loans due to the aforementioned fraud, revisions to qualifying physician requirements, effects of the pandemic or the additional administrative processes, portfolio delinquencies, credit downgrades and further losses as the result of possible write-downs of these loans could occur or increase in the future, which would negatively impact our earnings.

A substantial majority of our loans and operations are in New York, and therefore our business is particularly vulnerable to a downturn in the New York City economy.

Unlike larger financial institutions that are more geographically diversified, a large portion of our business is concentrated primarily in the state of New York, and in New York City in particular. As of December 31, 2020, 59.0% of our loan portfolio was in New York and our loan portfolio had concentrations of 46.5% in New York City. If the local economy, and particularly the real estate market, declines, the rates of delinquencies, defaults, foreclosures, bankruptcies and losses in our loan portfolio would likely increase. As a result of this lack of diversification in our loan portfolio, a downturn in the local economy generally and real estate market specifically could significantly reduce our profitability and growth and adversely affect our financial condition.

If the allowance for loan losses is not sufficient to cover actual loan losses, earnings could decrease.

Loan customers may not repay their loans according to the terms of their loans, and the collateral securing the payment of their loans may be insufficient to assure repayment. We may experience significant credit losses, which could have a material adverse effect on our operating results. Various assumptions and judgments about the collectability of the loan portfolio are made, including the creditworthiness of borrowers and the value of the real estate and other assets serving as collateral for the repayment of many loans. In determining the amount of the allowance for loan losses, management reviews the loans and the loss and delinquency experience and evaluates economic conditions.

At December 31, 2020, our allowance for loan losses as a percentage of total loans, net of unearned income, was 1.70%. The determination of the appropriate level of allowance is subject to judgment and requires us to make significant estimates of current credit risks and trends, all of which are subject to material changes. If assumptions prove to be incorrect, the allowance for loan losses may not cover probable incurred losses in the loan portfolio at the date of the financial statements. Significant additions to the allowance would materially decrease net income. We had \$2.3 million in nonperforming loans at December 31, 2020. Nonperforming loans may increase and nonperforming or delinquent loans may adversely affect future performance. In addition, federal and state regulators periodically review the allowance for loan losses and may require an increase in the allowance for loan losses or recognize further loan charge-offs. Any significant increase in our allowance for loan losses or loan charge-offs as required by these regulatory agencies could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations and financial condition.

The FASB has adopted a new accounting standard that will be effective for our first fiscal year after December 15, 2022. This standard, referred to as Current Expected Credit Loss, or CECL, will require financial institutions to determine periodic estimates of lifetime expected credit losses on loans, and recognize the expected credit losses as allowances for loan losses. This will change the current method of providing allowances for loan losses that are probable, which may require us to increase our allowance for loan losses and increase the data we would need to collect and review to determine the appropriate level of the allowance for loan losses.

Bank regulators periodically review our allowance for loan losses and may require an increase to the provision for loan losses or further loan charge-offs. Any increase in our allowance for loan losses or loan charge-offs as required by these regulatory authorities may have a material adverse effect on our results of operations or financial condition.

Our loan portfolio is unseasoned.

With a growing and generally unseasoned loan portfolio, our credit risk may continue to increase and our future performance could be adversely affected. While we believe we have underwriting standards designed to manage normal lending risks, it is difficult to assess the future performance of our loan portfolio due to the recent origination of many of these loans. As a result, it is difficult to predict whether any of our loans will become nonperforming or delinquent loans, or whether we will have any nonperforming or delinquent loans that will adversely affect our future performance. At December 31, 2020, the weighted average age of our loans was 3.88 years, 2.54 years, 2.15 years, 2.49 years and 2.80 years for our 1 – 4 family loans, multifamily loans, commercial real estate loans, commercial loans and consumer loans, respectively. At December 31, 2020, the weighted average age of our loan portfolio was 2.60 years, however, the average customer relationship is of a longer term.

We may not be able to adequately measure and limit the credit risk associated with our loan portfolio, which could adversely affect our profitability.

As a part of the products and services that we offer, we make commercial, consumer and commercial real estate loans. The principal economic risk associated with each class of loans is the creditworthiness of the borrower, which is affected by the strength of the relevant business market segment, local market conditions, and general economic conditions. Additional factors related to the credit quality of commercial loans include the quality of the management of the business and the borrower's ability both to properly evaluate changes in the supply and demand characteristics affecting their market for products and services, and to effectively respond to those changes. Additional factors related to the credit quality of consumer loans, particularly consumer post-settlement loans, include the quality of the post-settlement claim and unforeseen court rulings or administrative legal anomalies which could impact the final settlement amount. Additional factors related to the credit quality of commercial real estate loans include tenant vacancy rates and the quality of management of the property. A failure to effectively measure and limit the credit risk associated with our loan portfolio could have an adverse effect on our business, financial condition, and results of operations.

Changes in economic conditions could cause an increase in delinquencies and nonperforming assets, including loan charge-offs, which could depress our net income and growth.

Our loan portfolio includes many real estate secured loans, demand for which may decrease during economic downturns as a result of, among other things, an increase in unemployment, a decrease in real estate values and, a slowdown in housing. If we see negative economic conditions develop in the United States as a whole or our New York market, we could experience higher delinquencies and loan charge-offs, which would reduce our net income and adversely affect our financial condition. Furthermore, to the extent that real estate collateral is obtained through foreclosure, the costs of holding and marketing the real estate collateral, as well as the ultimate values obtained from disposition, could reduce our earnings and adversely affect our financial condition.

Risks Related to our Business

We have a limited operating history and have experienced significant growth, which makes it difficult to forecast our revenue and evaluate our business and future prospects.

We have only been in existence since 2006, and from 2016 through 2020, we experienced significant growth following our initial public offering, a capital raise and the conversion from a savings and loan holding company with a savings bank subsidiary to a bank holding company with a national bank subsidiary. As a result of our limited operating history and recent accelerated growth, in particular in our merchant services business, our ability to forecast our future results of operations and plan for and model future growth is limited and subject to a number of uncertainties. We have encountered and will continue to encounter risks and uncertainties frequently experienced by growing companies in the financial services industry, such as the risks and uncertainties described herein. Accordingly, we may be unable to prepare accurate

internal financial forecasts and our results of operations in future reporting periods may be below the expectations of investors. If we do not address these risks successfully, our results of operations could differ materially from our estimates and forecasts or the expectations of our stockholders, causing our business to suffer and our stock price to decline.

A substantial portion of our business is dependent on the prospects of the legal industry and changes in the legal industry may adversely affect our growth and profitability.

We depend on our relationships within the legal community and our products and services tailored to the legal industry account for a significant source of our revenue. As we intend to focus our growth on our Attorney-Related Loan products, changes in the legal industry, including a significant decrease in the number of litigation cases in the United States, reform of the tort industry that reduces the ability of plaintiffs to bring cases or reduces the damages plaintiffs can receive, or a significant increase in the unemployment rate for attorneys, could, individually or in the aggregate, have a material adverse effect on our profitability, financial condition and growth of our business.

As a business operating in the financial services industry, our business and operations may be adversely affected in numerous and complex ways by weak economic conditions.

Our business and operations, which primarily consist of lending money to customers in the form of loans, borrowing money from customers in the form of deposits and investing in securities, are sensitive to general business and economic conditions in the United States. If the U.S. economy weakens, our growth and profitability from our lending, deposit and investment operations could be constrained. Uncertainty about the federal fiscal policymaking process, the medium and long-term fiscal outlook of the federal government, and future tax rates is a concern for businesses, consumers and investors in the United States. In addition, economic conditions in foreign countries could affect the stability of global financial markets, which could hinder U.S. economic growth. Weak economic conditions are characterized by deflation, fluctuations in debt and equity capital markets, a lack of liquidity and/or depressed prices in the secondary market for mortgage loans, increased delinquencies on mortgage, consumer and commercial loans, 1 – 4 family and commercial real estate price declines and lower home sales and commercial activity. The current economic environment is also characterized by interest rates at historically low levels, which impacts our ability to attract deposits and to generate attractive earnings through our investment portfolio. All of these factors are detrimental to our business, and the interplay between these factors can be complex and unpredictable. Our business is also significantly affected by monetary and related policies of the U.S. federal government and its agencies. Changes in any of these policies are influenced by macroeconomic conditions and other factors that are beyond our control. Adverse economic conditions and government policy responses to such conditions could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects.

We may not be able to grow, and if we do we may have difficulty managing that growth.

Our business strategy is to continue to grow our assets and expand our operations, including through potential strategic acquisitions. Our ability to grow depends, in part, upon our ability to expand our market share, successfully attract core deposits, and to identify loan and investment opportunities as well as opportunities to generate fee-based income. We can provide no assurance that we will be successful in increasing the volume of our loans and deposits at acceptable levels and upon terms acceptable to us. We also can provide no assurance that we will be successful in expanding our operations organically or through strategic acquisition while managing the costs and implementation risks associated with this growth strategy.

We expect to continue to experience growth in the number of our employees and customers and the scope of our operations. Our success will depend upon the ability of our officers and key employees to continue to implement and improve our operational and other systems, to manage multiple, concurrent customer relationships, and to hire, train and manage our employees. In the event that we are unable to perform all these tasks and meet these challenges effectively, including continuing to attract core deposits, our operations, and consequently our earnings, could be adversely impacted.

Our ten largest deposit clients account for 22.6% of our total deposits.

As of December 31, 2020, our ten largest bank depositors accounted for, in the aggregate, 22.6% of our total deposits. As a result, a material decrease in the volume of those deposits by a relatively small number of our depositors could reduce our liquidity, in which event it could become necessary for us to replace those deposits with higher-cost deposits or FHLB borrowings, which would adversely affect our net interest income and, therefore, our results of operations.

Risks Related to Market Interest Rates

Interest rate shifts may reduce net interest income and otherwise negatively impact our financial condition and results of operations.

The majority of our banking assets are monetary in nature and subject to risk from changes in interest rates. Like most financial institutions, our earnings and cash flows depend to a great extent upon the level of our net interest income, or the difference between the interest income we earn on loans, investments and other interest earning assets, and the interest we pay on interest bearing liabilities, such as deposits and borrowings. Changes in interest rates can increase or decrease our net interest income, because different types of assets and liabilities may react differently, and at different times, to market interest rate changes.

When interest bearing liabilities mature or reprice more quickly, or to a greater degree than interest earning assets in a period, an increase in interest rates could reduce net interest income. Similarly, when interest earning assets mature or reprice more quickly, or to a greater degree than interest bearing liabilities, falling interest rates could reduce net interest income. Additionally, an increase in interest rates may, among other things, reduce the demand for loans and our ability to originate loans and decrease loan repayment rates. A decrease in the general level of interest rates may affect us through, among other things, increased prepayments on our loan portfolio and increased competition for deposits. Accordingly, changes in the level of market interest rates affect our net yield on interest earning assets, loan origination volume and our overall results. Although our asset-liability management strategy is designed to control and mitigate exposure to the risks related to changes in market interest rates, those rates are affected by many factors outside of our control, including governmental monetary policies, inflation, deflation, recession, changes in unemployment, the money supply, international disorder and instability in domestic and foreign financial markets.

Risks Related to Operations

We are exposed to the risks of natural disasters and global market disruptions.

We handle a substantial volume of customer and other financial transactions every day. Our financial, accounting, data processing, check processing, electronic funds transfer, loan processing, online and mobile banking, automated teller machines, backup or other operating or security systems and infrastructure may fail to operate properly or become disabled or damaged as a result of a number of factors including events that are wholly or partially beyond our control. This could adversely affect our ability to process these transactions or provide these services. There could be a sudden change in customer transaction volume, electrical, telecommunications or other major physical infrastructure outages, natural disasters, events arising from local or larger scale political or social matters, including terrorist acts, pandemics, and cyber attacks. We continuously update these systems to support our operations and growth. This updating entails significant costs and creates risks associated with implementing new systems and integrating them with existing ones. Operational risk exposures could adversely impact our results of operations, liquidity and financial condition, and cause reputational harm.

Additionally, global markets may be adversely affected by natural disasters, the emergence of widespread health emergencies or pandemics, cyber attacks or campaigns, military conflict, terrorism or other geopolitical events. Global market disruptions may affect our business liquidity. Also, any sudden or prolonged market downturn in the United States or abroad, as a result of the above factors or otherwise could result in a decline in revenue and adversely affect our results of operations and financial condition, including capital and liquidity levels.

We rely heavily on our management team and board of directors and our business could be adversely affected by the unexpected loss of one or more of our officers or directors.

We are led by a management team with substantial experience in the markets that we serve and the financial products that we offer. Our operating strategy focuses on providing products and services through long-term relationship managers. Additionally, we rely on our directors for their stewardship and professional advice for our business verticals on a national basis. Accordingly, our success depends in large part on the performance of our key officers and directors, as well as on our ability to attract, motivate and retain highly qualified senior and middle management. Competition for employees is intense, and the process of identifying key personnel with the combination of skills and attributes required to execute our business plan may be lengthy. We may not be successful in retaining our key employees or directors and the unexpected loss of services of one or more of our officers or directors could have a material adverse effect on our business because of their skills, knowledge of our market and financial products, years of industry experience, long-term business and customer relationships and the difficulty of finding qualified replacement personnel. If the services of any of our key personnel should become unavailable for any reason, we may not be able to identify and hire qualified persons on terms acceptable to us, which could have an adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

We are subject to certain operational risks, including, but not limited to, customer or employee fraud and data processing system failures and errors.

Employee errors and employee and customer misconduct could subject us to financial losses or regulatory sanctions and seriously harm our reputation. Misconduct by our employees could include hiding unauthorized activities from us, improper or unauthorized activities on behalf of our customers or improper use of confidential information. It is not always possible to prevent employee errors and misconduct, and the precautions we take to prevent and detect this activity may not be effective in all cases. Employee errors could also subject us to financial claims for negligence.

We maintain a system of internal controls and insurance coverage to mitigate against operational risks, including data processing system failures and errors and customer or employee fraud. If our internal controls fail to prevent or detect an occurrence, or if any resulting loss is not insured or exceeds applicable insurance limits, it could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

We face risks related to our operational, technological and organizational infrastructure.

Our ability to grow and compete is dependent on our ability to build or acquire the necessary operational and technological infrastructure and to manage the cost of that infrastructure as we expand. Similar to other large corporations, operational risk can manifest itself in many ways, such as errors related to failed or inadequate processes, faulty or disabled computer systems, fraud by employees or outside persons and exposure to external events. As discussed below, we are dependent on our operational infrastructure to help manage these risks. In addition, we are heavily dependent on the strength and capability of our technology systems which we use both to interface with our customers and to manage our internal financial and other systems. Our ability to develop and deliver new products that meet the needs of our existing customers and attract new ones depends on the functionality of our technology systems. Additionally, our ability to run our business in compliance with applicable laws and regulations is dependent on these infrastructures.

We continuously monitor our operational and technological capabilities and make modifications and improvements when we believe it will be cost effective to do so. In some instances, we may build and maintain these capabilities ourselves. We also outsource some of these functions to third parties. Specifically, we depend on third parties to provide our core systems processing, essential web hosting and other internet systems, deposit processing and other processing services. In connection with our merchant services business, we (and our ISOs) rely on various third parties to provide processing and clearing and settlement services to us in connection with card transactions. If these third-party service providers experience difficulties, fail to comply with banking regulations or terminate their services and we are unable to replace them with other service providers, our operations could be interrupted. If an interruption were to continue for a significant period of time, our business, financial condition and results of operations could be adversely affected, perhaps materially. Even if we are able to replace them, it may be at a higher cost to us, which could adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations. We also face risk from the integration of new infrastructure platforms and/or new third party providers of such platforms into its existing businesses.

A failure in our operational systems or infrastructure, or those of third parties, could impair our liquidity, disrupt our businesses, result in the unauthorized disclosure of confidential information, damage our reputation and cause financial losses.

Our business, and in particular, our merchant services business, is partially dependent on our ability to process and monitor, on a daily basis, a large number of transactions, many of which are highly complex, across numerous and diverse markets. These transactions, as well as the information technology services we provide to clients, often must adhere to client-specific guidelines, as well as legal and regulatory standards. Due to the breadth of our client base and our geographical reach, developing and maintaining our operational systems and infrastructure is challenging, particularly as a result of rapidly evolving legal and regulatory requirements and technological shifts. Our financial, accounting, data processing or other operating systems and facilities, and, as discussed above, those the third-party service providers upon which we depend, may fail to operate properly or become disabled as a result of events that are wholly or partially beyond our control, such as a spike in transaction volume, cyber-attack or other unforeseen catastrophic events, which may adversely affect our ability to process these transactions or provide services.

The occurrence of fraudulent activity, breaches or failures of our information security controls or cybersecurity-related incidents could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

Our operations rely on the secure processing, storage and transmission of confidential and other sensitive business and consumer information on our computer systems and networks, as well as those of our ISOs and processors. Under the card network rules and various federal and state laws, we are responsible for safeguarding such information. Although we take protective measures to maintain the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information across all geographic and product lines, and endeavor to modify these protective measures as circumstances warrant, the nature of the threats continues to evolve. As a result, our computer systems, software and networks are vulnerable to unauthorized access, loss or destruction of data (including confidential client information), account takeovers, unavailability of service, computer viruses or other malicious code, cyber-attacks and other events that could have an adverse security impact. Despite the defensive measures we take to manage our internal technological and operational infrastructure, these threats have in the past and may in the future originate externally from third parties such as foreign governments, organized crime and other hackers, and outsource or infrastructure-support providers and application developers, or may originate internally from within our organization. Given the increasingly high volume of our transactions, certain errors may be repeated or compounded before they can be discovered and rectified. In addition, security breaches or failures could result in the bank incurring liability to ISOs, members of the card network and card issuers in relation to our merchant banking business.

In particular, information pertaining to us and our customers is maintained, and transactions are executed, on the networks and systems of us, our customers and certain of our third-party partners, such as our online banking or reporting systems, ISO's customers and merchants who are part of our merchant banking business. The secure maintenance and transmission of confidential information, as well as execution of transactions over these systems, are essential to protect us and our customers against fraud and security breaches and to maintain our clients' confidence. Breaches of information security also may occur, and in infrequent cases have occurred, through intentional or unintentional acts by those having access or gaining access to our systems or our customers' or counterparties' confidential information, including employees. In addition, increases in criminal activity levels and sophistication, advances in computer capabilities, new discoveries, vulnerabilities in third-party technologies (including browsers and operating systems) or other developments could result in a compromise or breach of the technology, processes and controls that we use to prevent fraudulent transactions and to protect data about us, our customers and underlying transactions, as well as the technology used by our customers to access our systems. We cannot be certain that the security measures we or our ISOs or processors have in place to protect this sensitive data will be successful or sufficient to protect against all current and emerging threats designed to breach our systems or those of our ISOs or processors. Although we have developed, and continue to invest in, systems and processes that are designed to detect and prevent security breaches and cyber-attacks and periodically test our security, a breach of our systems, or those of our ISOs or processors, could result in losses to us or our customers; loss of business and/or customers; damage to our reputation; the incurrence of additional expenses (including the cost of notification to consumers, credit monitoring and forensics, and fees and fines imposed by the card networks); disruption to our business; our inability to grow our online services or other businesses; additional regulatory scrutiny or penalties; or our exposure to civil litigation and possible financial liability — any of which could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

If our enterprise risk management framework is not effective at mitigating risk and loss to us, we could suffer unexpected losses and our results of operations could be materially adversely affected.

Our enterprise risk management framework seeks to achieve an appropriate balance between risk and return, which is critical to optimizing stockholder value. We have established processes and procedures intended to identify, measure, monitor, report and analyze the types of risk to which we are subject, including credit, liquidity, operational, regulatory compliance and reputational. However, as with any risk management framework, there are inherent limitations to our risk management strategies as there may exist, or develop in the future, risks that we have not appropriately anticipated or identified. If our risk management framework proves ineffective, we could suffer unexpected losses and our business and results of operations could be materially adversely affected.

Risks Related to Competitive Matters

Our small size makes it more difficult for us to compete.

Our small size makes it more difficult to compete with other financial institutions which are generally larger and can more easily afford to invest in the marketing and technologies needed to attract and retain customers. Because our principal source of income is the net interest income we earn on our loans and investments after deducting interest paid on deposits and other sources of funds, our ability to generate the revenues needed to cover our expenses and finance such investments is limited by the size of our loan and investment portfolios. In addition, we compete with many larger financial institutions and other financial companies who operate in the merchant services business. Accordingly, we are not always able to offer new products and services as quickly as our competitors. As a smaller institution, we are also disproportionately affected by the continually increasing costs of compliance with new banking and other regulations.

We operate in a highly competitive industry and face significant competition from other financial institutions and financial services providers, which may decrease our growth or profits.

Consumer and commercial banking as well as merchant services are highly competitive industries. Our market area contains not only a large number of community and regional banks, but also a significant presence of the country's largest commercial banks. We compete with other state and national financial institutions, as well as savings and loan associations, savings banks, and credit unions, for deposits and loans. In addition, we compete with financial intermediaries, such as consumer finance companies, specialty finance companies, commercial finance companies, mortgage banking companies, insurance companies, securities firms, mutual funds, and several government agencies, as well as major retailers, all actively engaged in providing various types of loans and other financial services, including merchant services. Competition for Attorney-Related Loans is derived primarily from a small number of nationally-oriented financial companies that specialize in this market as well as local community banks. Some of these companies are focused exclusively on loans to law firms, while others offer loans to plaintiffs as well. We also face significant competition from many larger institutions, including large commercial banks and third party processors that operate in the merchant services business, and our ability to grow that portion of our business depends on us being able to continue to attract and retain ISOs and merchants. Some of these competitors may have a long history of successful operations nationally as well as in our market area and greater ties to businesses or the legal community and more expansive banking relationships, as well as more established depositor bases, fewer regulatory constraints, and lower cost structures than we do. Competitors with greater resources may possess an advantage through their ability to maintain numerous banking locations in more convenient sites, to conduct more extensive promotional and advertising campaigns, or to operate a more developed technology platform. Due to their size, many competitors may offer a broader range of products and services, as well as better pricing for certain products and services than we can offer. For example, in the current low interest rate environment, competitors with lower costs of capital may solicit our customers to refinance their loans with a lower interest rate. Further, increased competition among financial services companies due to the recent consolidation of certain competing financial institutions may adversely affect our ability to market our products and services. Technology has lowered barriers to entry and made it possible for banks and specifically finance companies to compete in our market area and for non-banks to offer products and services traditionally provided by banks.

The financial services industry could become even more competitive as a result of legislative, regulatory, and technological changes and continued consolidation. Banks, securities firms, and insurance companies can merge under the

umbrella of a financial holding company, which can offer virtually any type of financial service, including banking, securities underwriting, insurance (both agency and underwriting), and merchant banking.

Our ability to compete successfully depends on a number of factors, including:

- our ability to develop, maintain, and build upon long-term customer relationships based on quality service and high ethical standards;
- our ability to attract and retain qualified employees to operate our business effectively;
- our ability to expand our market position;
- the scope, relevance, and pricing of products and services that we offer to meet customer needs and demands;
- the rate at which we introduce new products and services relative to our competitors;
- customer satisfaction with our level of service; and
- industry and general economic trends.

Failure to perform in any of these areas could significantly weaken our competitive position, which could adversely affect our growth and profitability, which, in turn, could harm our business, financial condition, and results of operations.

Risks Related to our Merchant Services Business

Our merchants or ISOs may be unable to satisfy obligations for which we may ultimately be liable.

We are subject to the risk of our merchants or ISOs being unable to satisfy obligations for which we may ultimately be liable. If we are unable to collect amounts due from a merchant or ISO because of insolvency or other reasons, we may bear the loss for those full amounts. We manage our credit risk and attempt to mitigate our risk by obtaining cash reserves, both from merchants and ISOs, and through other contractual remedies. It is possible, however, that a default on such obligations by one or more of our ISOs or merchants, could, individually or in the aggregate, have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

Fraud by merchants or others could have a material adverse effect on our business and financial condition.

We may be subject to liability for fraudulent transactions initiated by merchants or others. Examples of such fraud include when a merchant or other party knowingly uses a stolen or counterfeit card to make a transaction, or if a merchant intentionally fails to deliver the merchandise or services sold in an otherwise valid transaction. Criminals are using increasingly sophisticated methods to engage in illegal activities such as counterfeiting and fraud. It is possible that incidents of fraud could increase in the future. Failure to effectively manage risk and prevent fraud would increase our chargeback liability or other liability. Increases in chargebacks or other liability could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, and results of operations.

Changes in card network rules or standards could adversely affect our business.

In order to provide our merchant services, we are members of the Visa and MasterCard networks. As such, we are subject to card network rules that could subject us or our ISOs and merchants to a variety of fines or penalties that may be assessed on us, our ISOs, and our merchants. The termination of our membership, or the revocation of registration of any of our ISOs, or any changes in card network rules or standards could increase the cost of operating our merchant services business or limit our ability to provide merchant services to or through our customers, and could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

Changes in card network fees could impact our operations.

From time to time, the card networks increase the fees (known as interchange fees) that they charge to acquirers and we charge to our merchants. It is possible that competitive pressures will result in us absorbing a portion of such increases in the future, which would increase our costs, reduce our profit margin and adversely affect our business and financial condition. In addition, the card networks require certain capital requirements. An increase in the required capital level would further limit our use of capital for other purposes.

Risks Related to Laws and Regulation and Their Enforcement

As a bank holding company, the sources of funds available to us are limited.

Any future constraints on liquidity at the holding company level could impair our ability to declare and pay dividends or repurchase our common stock. In some instances, notice to, or approval from, the FRB may be required prior to our declaration or payment of dividends or repurchase of common stock. Further, our operations are primarily conducted by our subsidiary, Esquire Bank, which is subject to significant regulation. Federal banking laws restrict the payment of dividends by banks to their holding companies, and Esquire Bank will be subject to these restrictions in paying dividends to us. Because our ability to receive dividends or loans from Esquire Bank is restricted, our ability to pay dividends to our stockholders and repurchase our common stock is also restricted.

Additionally, the right of a bank holding company to participate in the assets of its subsidiary bank in the event of a bank-level liquidation or reorganization is subject to the claims of the bank's creditors, including depositors, which take priority, except to the extent that the holding company may be a creditor with a recognized claim.

Our business, financial condition, results of operations and future prospects could be adversely affected by the highly regulated environment and the laws and regulations that govern our operations, corporate governance, executive compensation and accounting principles, or changes in any of them.

As a bank holding company, we are subject to extensive examination, supervision and comprehensive regulation by various federal and state agencies that govern almost all aspects of our operations. These laws and regulations are not intended to protect our stockholders. Rather, these laws and regulations are intended to protect customers, depositors, the DIF and the overall financial stability of the U.S. These laws and regulations, among other matters, prescribe minimum capital requirements, impose limitations on the business activities in which we can engage, limit the dividend or distributions that Esquire Bank can pay to us, restrict the ability of institutions to guarantee our debt, and impose certain specific accounting requirements on us that may be more restrictive and may result in greater or earlier charges to earnings or reductions in our capital than generally accepted accounting principles would require. Compliance with these laws and regulations is difficult and costly, and changes to these laws and regulations often impose additional compliance costs. Our failure to comply with these laws and regulations, even if the failure follows good faith effort or reflects a difference in interpretation, could subject us to restrictions on our business activities, fines and other penalties, any of which could adversely affect our results of operations, capital base and the price of our securities. Further, any new laws, rules and regulations could make compliance more difficult or expensive.

Likewise, the Company operates in an environment that imposes income taxes on its operations at both the federal and state levels to varying degrees. Strategies and operating routines have been implemented to minimize the impact of these taxes. Consequently, any change in tax legislation could significantly alter the effectiveness of these strategies.

The net deferred tax asset reported on the Company's balance sheet generally represents the tax benefit of future deductions from taxable income for items that have already been recognized for financial reporting purposes. The bulk of these deferred tax assets consists of deferred loan loss deductions and deferred compensation deductions. The net deferred tax asset is measured by applying currently-enacted income tax rates to the accounting period during which the tax benefit is expected to be realized.

Federal regulators periodically examine our business, and we may be required to remediate adverse examination findings.

The FRB, the OCC and the FDIC, periodically examine our business, including our compliance with laws and regulations. If, as a result of an examination, a federal banking agency were to determine that our financial condition, capital resources, asset quality, earnings prospects, management, liquidity or other aspects of any of our operations had become unsatisfactory, or that we were in violation of any law or regulation, it may take a number of different remedial actions as it deems appropriate. These actions include the power to enjoin “unsafe or unsound” practices, to require affirmative action to correct any conditions resulting from any violation or practice, to issue an administrative order that can be judicially enforced, to direct an increase in our capital, to restrict our growth, to assess civil monetary penalties against our officers or directors, to remove officers and directors and, if it is concluded that such conditions cannot be corrected or there is an imminent risk of loss to depositors, to terminate our deposit insurance and place us into receivership or conservatorship. If we become subject to any regulatory actions, it could have a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations, financial condition and growth prospects.

We are subject to the Community Reinvestment Act and fair lending laws, and failure to comply with these laws could lead to material penalties.

The Community Reinvestment Act (“CRA”), the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, the Fair Housing Act and other fair lending laws and regulations impose nondiscriminatory lending requirements on financial institutions. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the United States Department of Justice and other federal agencies are responsible for enforcing these laws and regulations. A successful challenge to an institution’s performance under the CRA or fair lending laws and regulations could result in a wide variety of sanctions, including the required payment of damages and civil money penalties, injunctive relief, imposition of restrictions on mergers and acquisitions activity and restrictions on expansion activity. Private parties may also have the ability to challenge an institution’s performance under fair lending laws in private class action litigation.

Monetary policies and regulations of the Federal Reserve could adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations.

In addition to being affected by general economic conditions, our earnings and growth are affected by the policies of the FRB. An important function of the FRB is to regulate the money supply and credit conditions. Among the instruments used by the FRB to implement these objectives are open market purchases and sales of U.S. government securities, adjustments of the discount rate and changes in banks’ reserve requirements against bank deposits. These instruments are used in varying combinations to influence overall economic growth and the distribution of credit, bank loans, investments and deposits. Their use also affects interest rates charged on loans or paid on deposits.

The monetary policies and regulations of the FRB have had a significant effect on the operating results of commercial banks in the past and are expected to continue to do so in the future. The effects of such policies upon our business, financial condition and results of operations cannot be predicted.

We face a risk of noncompliance and enforcement action with the Bank Secrecy Act and other anti-money laundering statutes and regulations.

The Bank Secrecy Act, the USA Patriot Act and other laws and regulations require financial institutions, among other duties, to institute and maintain an effective anti-money laundering program and to file reports such as suspicious activity reports and currency transaction reports. We are required to comply with these and other anti-money laundering requirements. The federal banking agencies and Financial Crimes Enforcement Network are authorized to impose significant civil money penalties for violations of those requirements and have recently engaged in coordinated enforcement efforts against banks and other financial services providers with the U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration and Internal Revenue Service. We are also subject to increased scrutiny of compliance with the rules enforced by the Office of Foreign Assets Control. If our policies, procedures and systems are deemed deficient, we would be subject to liability, including fines and regulatory actions, which may include restrictions on our ability to

pay dividends and the necessity to obtain regulatory approvals to proceed with certain aspects of our business plan, including our acquisition plans.

Failure to maintain and implement adequate programs to combat money laundering and terrorist financing could also have serious reputational consequences for us. Any of these results could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations and growth prospects.

We could be adversely affected by the soundness of other financial institutions and other third parties we rely on.

Financial services institutions are interrelated as a result of trading, clearing, counterparty or other relationships. We have exposure to many different industries and counterparties, and routinely execute transactions with counterparties in the financial services industry, including commercial banks, brokers and dealers, investment banks and other institutional customers. Many of these transactions expose us to credit risk in the event of a default by a counterparty or client. In addition, our credit risk may be exacerbated when our collateral cannot be foreclosed upon or is liquidated at prices not sufficient to recover the full amount of the credit or derivative exposure due. Furthermore, successful operation of our merchant services business depends on the soundness of ISOs, third party processors, payment facilitators, clearing agents and others that we rely on to conduct our merchant business. Any losses resulting from such third parties could adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations.

Risks Related to Accounting Matters

Changes in accounting standards could materially impact our financial statements.

From time to time, the Financial Accounting Standards Board or the SEC may change the financial accounting and reporting standards that govern the preparation of our financial statements. Such changes may result in us being subject to new or changing accounting and reporting standards. In addition, the bodies that interpret the accounting standards (such as banking regulators, outside auditors or management) may change their interpretations or positions on how these standards should be applied. These changes may be beyond our control, can be hard to predict, and can materially impact how we record and report our financial condition and results of operations. In some cases, we could be required to apply a new or revised standard retrospectively, or apply an existing standard differently, also retrospectively, in each case resulting in our needing to revise or restate prior period financial statements.

Our accounting estimates and risk management processes and controls rely on analytical techniques and models and assumptions, which may not accurately predict events.

Our accounting policies and methods are fundamental to how we record and report our financial condition and results of operations. Our management must exercise judgment in selecting and applying many of these accounting policies and methods so they comply with GAAP and reflect management's judgment of the most appropriate manner to report our financial condition and results. In some cases, management must select the accounting policy or method to apply from two or more alternatives, any of which may be reasonable under the circumstances, yet which may result in our reporting materially different results than would have been reported under a different alternative.

Certain accounting policies are critical to presenting our financial condition and results of operations. They require management to make difficult, subjective or complex judgments about matters that are uncertain. Materially different amounts could be reported under different conditions or using different assumptions or estimates. Management considers the accounting policy relating to the allowance for loan losses to be a critical accounting policy. Because of the uncertainty of estimates involved in these matters, we may be required to do one or more of the following: significantly increase the allowance for loan losses or sustain loan losses that are significantly higher than the reserve provided. These could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition or results of operations. See "Item 7 — Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations".

Our internal controls, disclosure controls, processes and procedures, and corporate governance policies and procedures are based in part on certain assumptions and can provide only reasonable (not absolute) assurances that the objectives of the system are met. Any failure or circumvention of our controls, processes and procedures or failure to comply with regulations related to controls, processes and procedures could necessitate changes in those controls, processes and procedures, which may increase our compliance costs, divert management attention from our business or subject us to regulatory actions and increased regulatory scrutiny. Any of these could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition or results of operations.

ITEM 1B. Unresolved Staff Comments

None.

ITEM 2. Properties

At December 31, 2020, we conducted business through our corporate headquarters and full service branch in Jericho, New York (Nassau County) and one administrative office in Boca Raton, Florida. All the current locations are leased properties. At December 31, 2020, the total net book value of our leasehold improvements, furniture, fixtures and equipment was approximately \$3.0 million.

ITEM 3. Legal Proceedings

Periodically, we are involved in claims and lawsuits, such as claims to enforce liens, condemnation proceedings on properties in which we hold security interests, claims involving the making and servicing of real property loans and other issues incident to our business. At December 31, 2020, we are not a party to any pending legal proceedings that we believe would have a material adverse effect on our financial condition, results of operations or cash flows.

ITEM 4. Mine Safety Disclosures

Not applicable.

PART II

ITEM 5. Market for Registrant’s Common Equity, Related Stockholder Matters and Issuer Purchases of Equity Securities

Our shares of common stock are traded on the NASDAQ Capital Market under the symbol “ESQ”. The approximate number of holders of record of Esquire Financial Holding, Inc.’s common stock as of March 1, 2021 was 1,377. The Company’s common stock began trading on the NASDAQ Capital Market on June 27, 2017.

We have not historically declared or paid cash dividends on our common stock and we do not expect to pay cash dividends on our common stock for the foreseeable future. Instead, we anticipate that all of our future earnings will be retained to support our operations and to finance the growth and development of our business. Any future determination to pay cash dividends on our common stock will be made by our board of directors and will depend on a number of factors, including:

- our historical and projected financial condition, liquidity and results of operations;
- our capital levels and requirements;
- statutory and regulatory prohibitions and other limitations;
- any contractual restriction on our ability to pay cash dividends, including pursuant to the terms of any of our credit agreements or other borrowing arrangements;
- our business strategy;
- tax considerations;
- any acquisitions or potential acquisitions that we may examine;
- general economic conditions; and
- other factors deemed relevant by our board of directors.

The following table summarizes information as of December 31, 2020 relating to equity compensation plans of the Company pursuant to which grants of options, restricted stock awards or other rights to acquire shares may be granted from time to time.

Plan Category	Number of securities to be issued upon exercise of outstanding options, warrants and rights (a)	Weighted-average exercise price of outstanding options, warrants and rights (b)	Number of securities remaining available for future issuance under equity compensation plans (excluding securities reflected in column (a)) (c)
Equity Compensation Plans Approved by Security Holders	907,099	\$ 14.11	46,296
Equity Compensation Plans Not Approved by Security Holders	—	—	—
Total Equity Compensation Plans	907,099	\$ 14.11	46,296

In October 2018, we filed a shelf registration statement on Form S-3 with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (the “SEC”). While the Company has no current plans to issue securities under the new registration statement, the Company believes it will provide more timely and efficient access to the capital markets if the Company decides to

issue securities in the future. The Company also believes the registration statement will provide increased financial flexibility and streamline the offering process for general corporate purposes and possible strategic and other opportunities that may require additional capital. Under the registration statement, the Company may from time to time issue various types of securities, including common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, depositary shares, warrants, purchase contracts, units and subscription rights, or any combination of such securities, up to an aggregate amount of \$75.0 million, through one or more methods of distribution. The terms of any offering under the registration statement will be established at the time of such offering and will be made solely by means of a prospectus and an accompanying prospectus supplement relating to that offering.

On January 9, 2019, the board of directors approved a stock repurchase program which authorized the repurchase of up to 300,000 shares of its common stock, or approximately 4.0% of its outstanding shares. There is no expiration for the stock repurchase plan. As of December 31, 2020, 34,306 shares have been repurchased under the plan.

The following table presents information regarding purchase of our common stock during the quarter ended December 31, 2020 and the stock repurchase program approved by our Board of Directors.

Period	Total number of shares purchased	Average price paid per share	Total number of shares purchased as part of publicly announced plans or programs	Maximum number of shares that may yet be purchased under the plans or programs
October 1, 2020 through October 31, 2020	—	\$ —	—	265,694
November 1, 2020 through November 30, 2020 . .	—	—	—	265,694
December 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 . .	—	—	—	265,694
Total	—	\$ —	—	265,694

ITEM 6. Selected Financial Data

The following information is derived in part from the consolidated financial statements of Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. For additional information, reference is made to “Item 7 — Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations” and the Consolidated Financial Statements of Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. and related notes included elsewhere in this Annual Report.

	At or For the Years Ended December 31,				
	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
	(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)				
Balance Sheet Data:					
Total assets.	\$ 936,714	\$ 798,008	\$ 663,899	\$ 533,557	\$ 424,833
Cash and cash equivalents	65,185	61,806	30,562	43,077	42,993
Securities available-for-sale, at fair value	117,655	146,419	145,698	128,758	92,645
Loans	672,421	565,369	468,101	348,978	278,578
Total deposits.	804,054	680,620	568,421	448,494	370,788
Total stockholders' equity	126,076	111,062	92,774	83,383	52,186
Income Statement Data:					
Interest income	\$ 38,630	\$ 36,659	\$ 28,951	\$ 20,394	\$ 16,168
Interest expense	1,190	2,548	1,212	538	511
Net interest income.	37,440	34,111	27,739	19,856	15,657
Provision for loan losses.	6,250	1,850	1,375	905	595
Net interest income after provision for loan losses	31,190	32,261	26,364	18,951	15,062
Merchant processing income	14,099	10,976	4,961	3,322	3,080
Other noninterest income	548	835	2,894	2,194	1,045
Total noninterest income	14,647	11,811	7,855	5,516	4,125
Employee compensation and benefits	16,873	14,677	13,039	10,072	8,244
Other expenses.	11,797	10,257	9,256	7,361	6,355
Total noninterest expense.	28,670	24,934	22,295	17,433	14,599
Net income before income taxes	17,167	19,138	11,924	7,034	4,588
Income tax expense.	4,549	4,995	3,190	3,390	1,766
Net income.	12,618	14,143	8,734	3,644	2,822
Per Share Data:					
Earnings per common share:					
Basic	\$ 1.70	\$ 1.91	\$ 1.18	\$ 0.59	\$ 0.56
Diluted.	\$ 1.65	\$ 1.82	\$ 1.13	\$ 0.58	\$ 0.55
Book value per common share ⁽¹⁾	\$ 16.18	\$ 14.51	\$ 12.32	\$ 11.38	\$ 10.29
Tangible book value per common share ⁽²⁾	\$ 16.18	\$ 14.51	\$ 12.32	\$ 11.38	\$ 10.29
Selected Performance Ratios:					
Return on average assets.	1.45 %	1.93 %	1.45 %	0.80 %	0.74 %
Return on average common equity	10.69 %	13.95 %	10.12 %	5.38 %	5.48 %
Interest rate spread	4.34 %	4.56 %	4.56 %	4.33 %	4.15 %
Net interest margin	4.47 %	4.86 %	4.73 %	4.43 %	4.25 %
Efficiency ratio ⁽³⁾	55.04 %	54.30 %	59.34 %	68.71 %	73.82 %
Loan to deposit ratio	83.63 %	83.07 %	82.35 %	77.81 %	75.13 %
Average interest earning assets to average interest bearing liabilities	191.12 %	181.71 %	182.23 %	181.75 %	167.13 %
Average equity to average assets	13.61 %	13.83 %	14.37 %	14.93 %	13.87 %

	At or For the Years Ended December 31,				
	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Asset Quality Ratios:					
Allowance for loan losses to total loans	1.70 %	1.24 %	1.20 %	1.22 %	1.23 %
Allowance for loan losses to nonperforming loans ⁽⁴⁾	495.08 %	473.51 %	N/A	N/A	N/A
Net charge-offs (recoveries) to average outstanding loans .	0.30 %	0.10 %	0.00 %	0.02 %	(0.01)%
Nonperforming loans to total loans ⁽⁴⁾	0.34 %	0.26 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %
Nonperforming loans to total assets ⁽⁴⁾	0.25 %	0.18 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %
Nonperforming assets to total assets ⁽⁵⁾	0.25 %	0.18 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %
Capital Ratios (Esquire Bank):					
Total capital to risk weighted assets.	16.69 %	17.83 %	18.70 %	18.47 %	17.25 %
Tier 1 capital to risk weighted assets	15.44 %	16.68 %	17.54 %	17.32 %	16.09 %
Tier 1 common equity to risk weighted assets	15.44 %	16.68 %	17.54 %	17.32 %	16.09 %
Tier 1 leverage capital ratio	12.51 %	13.50 %	13.26 %	12.82 %	11.63 %
Other:					
Number of offices	3	3	3	3	3
Number of full-time equivalent employees	99	86	74	61	52

- (1) For purposes of computing book value per common share, book value equals total common stockholders' equity divided by total number of shares of common stock outstanding. Total common stockholders' equity equals total stockholders' equity, less preferred equity. Preferred equity was \$0, \$0, \$0, \$0 and \$720 at December 31, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017 and 2016, respectively.
- (2) The Company had no intangible assets as of the dates indicated. Thus, tangible book value per common share is the same as book value per common share for each of the periods indicated.
- (3) See "Non-GAAP Financial Measure Reconciliation" below for the computation of the efficiency ratio.
- (4) Nonperforming loans include nonaccrual loans, loans past due 90 days and still accruing interest and loans modified under troubled debt restructurings.
- (5) Nonperforming assets include nonperforming loans, other real estate owned and other foreclosed assets.

Non-GAAP Financial Measure Reconciliation

The efficiency ratio is a non-GAAP measure of expense control relative to recurring revenue. We calculate the efficiency ratio by dividing total noninterest expenses excluding non-recurring items by the sum of total net interest income and total noninterest income as determined under GAAP, but excluding net gains on securities from this calculation and other non-recurring income sources, if applicable, which we refer to below as recurring revenue. We believe that this provides one reasonable measure of recurring expenses relative to recurring revenue.

We believe that this non-GAAP financial measure provides information that is important to investors and that is useful in understanding our financial position, results and ratios. However, this non-GAAP financial measure is supplemental

and is not a substitute for an analysis based on GAAP measures. As other companies may use different calculations for this measure, this presentation may not be comparable to other similarly titled measures by other companies.

	At December 31,				
	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
	(Dollars in thousands)				
Efficiency Ratio					
Net interest income	\$ 37,440	\$ 34,111	\$ 27,739	\$ 19,856	\$ 15,657
Noninterest income	14,647	11,811	7,855	5,516	4,125
Less net gains on sales of securities	—	—	—	—	6
Recurring revenue	\$ 52,087	\$ 45,922	\$ 35,594	\$ 25,372	\$ 19,776
Total noninterest expense	\$ 28,670	\$ 24,934	\$ 22,295	\$ 17,433	\$ 14,599
Less: compensation charge ⁽¹⁾	—	—	1,173	—	—
Recurring noninterest expense	\$ 28,670	\$ 24,934	\$ 21,122	\$ 17,433	\$ 14,599
Efficiency ratio	55.04 %	54.30 %	59.34 %	68.71 %	73.82 %

(1) Balance represents a \$1.2 million one-time charge (pretax) related to the passing of the Company's former Executive Chairman, Dennis Shields in August 2018.

ITEM 7. Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations

This discussion and analysis reflects our financial statements and other relevant statistical data, and is intended to enhance your understanding of our financial condition and results of operations. The information in this section has been derived from the financial statements, which appear elsewhere in this Annual Report. You should read the information in this section in conjunction with the other business and financial information provided in this annual report.

Overview

We are a financial holding company headquartered in Jericho, New York and registered under the BHC Act. Through our wholly owned bank subsidiary, Esquire Bank, National Association, we are a full service commercial bank dedicated to serving the financial needs of the legal and small business communities on a national basis, as well as commercial and retail customers in the New York metropolitan market. We offer tailored products and solutions to the legal community and their clients as well as dynamic and flexible merchant services solutions to small business owners, both on a national basis. We also offer traditional banking products for businesses and consumers in our local market area.

Our results of operations depend primarily on our net interest income which is the difference between the interest income we earn on our interest-earning assets and the interest we pay on our interest-bearing liabilities. Our results of operations also are affected by our provisions for loan losses, noninterest income and noninterest expense. Noninterest income currently consists primarily of merchant processing income and customer related fees and charges. Noninterest expense currently consists primarily of employee compensation and benefits and professional and consulting services. Our results of operations also may be affected significantly by general and local economic and competitive conditions, changes in market interest rates, governmental policies, the litigation market and actions of regulatory authorities.

Critical Accounting Policies

A summary of our accounting policies is described in Note 1 to the Consolidated Financial Statements included in this annual report. Critical accounting estimates are necessary in the application of certain accounting policies and procedures and are particularly susceptible to significant change. Critical accounting policies are defined as those involving significant judgments and assumptions by management that could have a material impact on the carrying value of certain

assets or on income under different assumptions or conditions. Management believes that the most critical accounting policies, which involve the most complex or subjective decisions or assessments, are as follows:

Allowance for Loan Losses. Management considers the accounting policy relating to the allowance for loan losses to be a critical accounting policy given the inherent subjectivity and uncertainty in estimating the levels of the allowance required to cover credit losses in the portfolio and the material effect that such judgements can have on the results of operations.

Emerging Growth Company. Pursuant to the JOBS Act, an emerging growth company is provided the option to adopt new or revised accounting standards that may be issued by the Financial Accounting Standards Board (“FASB”) or the SEC either (i) within the same periods as those otherwise applicable to non-emerging growth companies or (ii) within the same time periods as private companies. We have irrevocably elected to adopt new accounting standards within the public company adoption period.

We have taken advantage of some of the reduced regulatory and reporting requirements that are available to it so long as we qualify as an emerging growth company, including, but not limited to, not being required to comply with the auditor attestation requirements of Section 404(b) of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, reduced disclosure obligations regarding executive compensation, and exemptions from the requirements of holding non-binding advisory votes on executive compensation and golden parachute payments.

Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition for the Years Ended December 31, 2020 and 2019

Assets. Our total assets were \$936.7 million at December 31, 2020, an increase of \$138.7 million from \$798.0 million at December 31, 2019. The increase was primarily due to growth in our loan portfolio and cash.

Loan Portfolio Analysis. At December 31, 2020, loans were \$672.7 million, or 71.8% of total assets, compared to \$565.0 million, or 70.8% of total assets, at December 31, 2019. Commercial loans increased \$100.5 million, or 38.9%, to \$358.4 million at December 31, 2020 from \$258.0 million at December 31, 2019. Multifamily loans increased \$17.2 million, or 11.3%, to \$169.8 million at December 31, 2020 from \$152.6 million at December 31, 2019. Commercial real estate loans increased \$2.2 million, or 4.3%, to \$54.7 million at December 31, 2020 from \$52.5 million at December 31, 2019. 1 – 4 family loans increased \$0.3 million, or 0.6%, to \$48.4 million at December 31, 2020 from \$48.1 million at December 31, 2019. Consumer loans decreased \$6.0 million or 12.6%, to \$41.4 million at December 31, 2020 from \$47.3 million at December 31, 2019. Construction loans decreased \$6.5 million, as we no longer had construction loans as of December 31, 2020.

Loan Portfolio Composition. The following table sets forth the composition of our loan portfolio by type of loan at the dates indicated.

	At December 31,			
	2020		2019	
	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent
	(Dollars in thousands)			
Real estate:				
1 – 4 family	\$ 48,433	7.20 %	\$ 48,140	8.52 %
Multifamily	169,817	25.24	152,633	27.02
Commercial real estate	54,717	8.13	52,477	9.29
Construction	—	—	6,450	1.14
Total real estate.	272,967	40.57	259,700	45.97
Commercial	358,410	53.28	257,957	45.66
Consumer.	41,362	6.15	47,322	8.37
Total Loans.	<u>\$ 672,739</u>	<u>100.00 %</u>	<u>\$ 564,979</u>	<u>100.00 %</u>
Deferred loan costs and unearned premiums, net	(318)		390	
Allowance for loan losses.	(11,402)		(6,989)	
Loans, net.	<u>\$ 661,019</u>		<u>\$ 558,380</u>	

The following table sets forth the composition of our Attorney-Related Loan portfolio by type of loan at the dates indicated.

	December 31, 2020		December 31, 2019	
	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent
(Dollars in thousands)				
Attorney-Related Loans				
Commercial Attorney-Related:				
Working capital lines of credit	\$ 202,021	61.4 %	\$ 148,186	58.4 %
Case cost lines of credit	87,104	26.4	59,057	23.2
Term loans	10,527	3.2	12,359	4.9
Post-settlement commercial and other commercial attorney-related loans	—	—	—	—
Total Commercial Attorney-Related	299,652	91.0	219,602	86.5
Consumer Attorney-Related:				
Post-settlement consumer loans	29,342	8.9	33,463	13.2
Structured settlement loans	236	0.1	746	0.3
Total Consumer Attorney-Related	29,578	9.0	34,209	13.5
Total Attorney-Related Loans	<u>\$ 329,230</u>	<u>100.0 %</u>	<u>\$ 253,811</u>	<u>100.0 %</u>

The largest contributor of growth in the portfolio from December 31, 2019 was our Attorney-Related loans. At December 31, 2020, our Attorney-Related Loans, which include commercial and consumer lending to attorneys, law firms and plaintiffs/claimants, totaled \$329.2 million, or 48.9% of our total loan portfolio, compared to \$253.8 million at December 31, 2019. In addition, we had \$18.4 million in PPP loans as of December 31, 2020 to attorney customers which are excluded from the table above.

Loan Maturity. The following table sets forth certain information at December 31, 2020 regarding the contractual maturity of our loan portfolio. Demand loans, loans having no stated repayment schedule or maturity, and overdraft loans are reported as being due in one year or less. The table does not include any estimate of prepayments that could significantly shorten the average life of all loans and may cause our actual repayment experience to differ from that shown below.

December 31, 2020	1 – 4 Family	Multifamily	Commercial Real Estate	Construction (In thousands)	Commercial	Consumer	Total
Amounts due in:							
One year or less	\$ 11,712	\$ 22,053	\$ 4,252	\$ —	\$ 223,038	\$ 22,854	\$ 283,909
More than one to five years	32,655	131,415	36,405	—	127,093	18,478	346,046
More than five to fifteen years	2,748	11,036	13,632	—	8,279	30	35,725
More than fifteen years	1,318	5,313	428	—	—	—	7,059
Total	<u>\$ 48,433</u>	<u>\$ 169,817</u>	<u>\$ 54,717</u>	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ 358,410</u>	<u>\$ 41,362</u>	<u>\$ 672,739</u>

The following table sets forth fixed and adjustable-rate loans at December 31, 2020 that are contractually due after December 31, 2021.

	Due After December 31, 2021		
	Fixed	Adjustable	Total
	(In thousands)		
Real estate			
1 – 4 family	\$ 35,306	\$ 1,415	\$ 36,721
Multifamily	133,935	13,829	147,764
Commercial real estate	35,456	15,009	50,465
Construction	—	—	—
Commercial	31,855	103,517	135,372
Consumer	16,994	1,514	18,508
Total	<u>\$ 253,546</u>	<u>\$ 135,284</u>	<u>\$ 388,830</u>

At December 31, 2020, \$316.8 million, or 85.0% of our adjustable interest rate loans were at their interest rate floor.

Nonperforming Assets

Nonperforming assets include loans that are 90 or more days past due or on nonaccrual status, including troubled debt restructurings on nonaccrual status, and real estate and other loan collateral acquired through foreclosure and repossession. Loans 90 days or greater past due may remain on an accrual basis if adequately collateralized and in the process of collection. At December 31, 2020 and 2019, we did not have any accruing loans past due 90 days or greater.

Real estate that we acquire as a result of foreclosure or by deed-in-lieu of foreclosure is classified as foreclosed real estate until it is sold. When property is acquired, it is initially recorded at the fair value less costs to sell at the date of foreclosure, establishing a new cost basis. Holding costs and declines in fair value after acquisition of the property result in charges against income. At December 31, 2020 and 2019, we have not had any foreclosed assets.

Troubled debt restructurings include loans for economic or legal reasons related to the borrower's financial difficulties, for which we grant a concession to the borrower that we would not consider otherwise. Troubled debt restructurings are separately identified for impairment disclosures and are measured at the present value of estimated future cash flows using the loan's effective rate at inception. If a troubled debt restructuring is considered to be a collateral dependent loan, the loan is reported, net, at the fair value of the collateral. For troubled debt restructurings that subsequently default, we determine the amount of reserve in accordance with the accounting policy for the allowance for loan losses.

In 2020, the Company implemented a customer payment deferral program in response to the COVID-19 crisis and elected to evaluate the modified loan population under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (the "CARES Act") which allows for troubled debt restructuring categorization to be suspended. The Company had no loans identified as troubled debt restructurings at December 31, 2020 and 2019. Further, there were no loan modifications during 2020, 2019, and 2018 that were troubled debt restructurings.

The implemented customer payment deferral program (principal and interest) is designed to assist business borrowers and certain consumers that may be experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19 related challenges. These loans will continue to accrue interest during the deferral period unless otherwise classified as nonperforming. Consistent with regulatory guidance and the provisions of the CARES Act, borrowers that were otherwise current on loan payments that were granted COVID-19 related financial hardship payment deferrals will continue to be reported as current loans during the deferral period and not evaluated as to whether they are troubled debt restructurings ("TDR"). There were no delinquent loans upon adoption of our payment deferral program.

The following table provides the principal balance of payment deferral program loans as of December 31, 2020:

As of December 31, 2020				
	Number of Borrowers	Loan Balance	Weighted Average Debt Service Coverage	Weighted Average Loan to Value Ratio
		(Dollars in thousands)		
1 – 4 family	3	\$ 11,430	1.35x	69 %
Multifamily	4	10,332	1.21x	64
Commercial real estate	2	7,452	1.25x	49
Consumer	3	9	NA	NA
Total	12	\$ 29,223		

The \$29.2 million deferred loan principal balance represents 4.3% of total loans of \$672.7 million as of December 31, 2020, a decline of \$36.0 million from \$65.2 million at April 30, 2020. There are no loans that have come off of deferral that are past due or on nonaccrual as of December 31, 2020. Special mention loans on deferral totaled \$3.7 million as of December 31, 2020 which were included in the 1-4 family and multifamily portfolios.

The following table sets forth information regarding our nonperforming assets at the dates indicated.

	At December 31,	
	2020	2019
	(Dollars in thousands)	
Nonaccrual loans:		
1 – 4 family	\$ —	\$ —
Multifamily	—	—
Commercial real estate	—	—
Construction	—	—
Commercial	—	—
Consumer	2,303	1,476
Total nonaccrual loans	\$ 2,303	\$ 1,476
Other real estate owned	—	—
Loans past due 90 days and still accruing	—	—
Troubled debt restructurings	—	—
Total nonperforming assets	\$ 2,303	\$ 1,476
Total loans ⁽¹⁾	\$ 672,421	\$ 565,369
Total assets	\$ 936,714	\$ 798,008
Total nonaccrual loans to total loans	0.34 %	0.26 %
Total nonperforming assets to total assets	0.25 %	0.18 %
Allowance for loan losses to nonaccrual loans	495.08 %	473.51 %
Allowance for loan losses to nonperforming loans	495.08 %	473.51 %
Allowance for loan losses to total loans at end of the period ⁽¹⁾	1.70 %	1.24 %

(1) Loans are presented before the allowance for loan losses and include net deferred costs and unearned premiums.

Allowance for Loan Losses

Please see “— Critical Accounting Policies — Allowance for Loan Losses” for additional discussion of our allowance policy.

The allowance for loan losses is maintained at levels considered adequate by management to provide for probable loan losses inherent in the loan portfolio as of the Consolidated Statements of Financial Condition reporting dates. The

allowance for loan losses is based on management's assessment of various factors affecting the loan portfolio, including portfolio composition, delinquent and nonaccrual loans, national and local business conditions and loss experience and an overall evaluation of the quality of the underlying collateral.

The following table sets forth activity in our allowance for loan losses for the periods indicated.

	For the years ended December 31,		
	2020	2019	2018
	(In thousands)		
Allowance at beginning of year	\$ 6,989	\$ 5,629	\$ 4,264
Provision for loan losses	6,250	1,850	1,375
Charge-offs:			
1 – 4 family	—	—	—
Multifamily	—	63	—
Commercial real estate	—	—	—
Construction	—	—	—
Commercial	2	19	—
Consumer	1,835	408	10
Total charge-offs	1,837	490	10
Recoveries:			
1 – 4 family	—	—	—
Multifamily	—	—	—
Commercial real estate	—	—	—
Construction	—	—	—
Commercial	—	—	—
Consumer	—	—	—
Total recoveries	—	—	—
Allowance at end of year	<u>\$ 11,402</u>	<u>\$ 6,989</u>	<u>\$ 5,629</u>

Allocation of Allowance for Loan Losses. The following tables set forth the allowance for loan losses allocated by loan category and the percent of the allowance in each category to the total allocated allowance at the dates indicated. The allowance for loan losses allocated to each category is not necessarily indicative of future losses in any particular category and does not restrict the use of the allowance to absorb losses in other categories.

	At December 31,					
	2020			2019		
	Allowance for Loan Losses	Percent of Allowance for Loan Losses to Total Allowance	Percent of Loans in Each Category to Total Loans	Allowance for Loan Losses	Percent of Allowance for Loan Losses to Total Allowance	Percent of Loans in Each Category to Total Loans
	(Dollars in thousands)					
1 – 4 family	\$ 342	3.00 %	7.20 %	\$ 344	4.92 %	8.52 %
Commercial	5,003	43.88	53.28	4,048	57.92	45.66
Multifamily	1,278	11.21	25.24	1,048	14.99	27.02
Commercial real estate	597	5.24	8.13	560	8.01	9.29
Construction	—	—	—	161	2.30	1.14
Consumer	4,182	36.67	6.15	828	11.85	8.37
Total allocated allowance	<u>\$ 11,402</u>	<u>100.00 %</u>	<u>100.00 %</u>	<u>\$ 6,989</u>	<u>100.00 %</u>	<u>100.00 %</u>

Loans rated special mention increased \$4.5 million to \$7.9 million as of December 31, 2020 from \$3.4 million as of December 31, 2019 driven by our 1-4 family, multifamily, and consumer portfolios which increased \$3.0 million, \$0.7 million, and \$0.7 million, respectively. Loans rated substandard increased \$0.8 million to \$2.4 million as of December 31, 2020, from \$1.6 million at December 31, 2019. The allowance for loan losses as a percentage of loans was 1.70% and 1.24% as of December 31, 2020 and 2019, respectively. Charge-offs were \$1.8 million for the year ended December 31, 2020 which is an increase of \$1.3 million as compared to the prior year. The increase in the allowance as a percentage of loans, charge-offs, and substandard loans is primarily attributable to the consumer portfolio, specifically, our legacy post settlement NFL loan program as well as the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on economic and non-economic credit risk factors.

Our NFL consumer post settlement loan exposure as of December 31, 2020 is approximately \$23.6 million with a weighted average remaining maturity of approximately one year where \$4.2 million and \$2.3 million have been classified as special mention and substandard, respectively, representing approximately 28% of the remaining exposure. All substandard loan exposures related to this program have been placed on nonaccrual and \$4.2 million, or 37%, of the allowance for loan losses has been allocated to the consumer portfolio. NFL loan principal balances charged-off since inception to date and calendar year 2020 were \$2.1 million and \$1.8 million, respectively. We believe the NFL portfolio's duration has extended and there may be future risks associated with these loans (see "Item 1A—Risk Factors—Potential fraud by our post-settlement consumer loan customers who are claimants or others related to the NFL Concussion Settlement Program, revisions to qualifying physician requirements, and other administrative changes could increase our actual loan losses which would decrease earnings" on Page 24) and management has proactively refined and applied its internal risk rating criteria specific to this portfolio. This refined risk rating criteria considers factors including, but not limited to, the potential for fraud by our borrower or their representatives (i.e., lawyer, doctor); denial of our borrower's claim by the claims administrator based on revised medical guidelines issued by the claims administrator in May 2019; the COVID-19 impact on a borrower's ability to adhere to the claims administration protocols; death of our borrower; or loan maturities that are not in the process of collection. These factors, among other factors, may be used to assess future changes in risk ratings for the loans in our NFL loan portfolio.

We had impaired loans of \$2.3 million and \$1.5 million at December 31, 2020 and 2019, respectively, related to the NFL portfolio and no specific reserves were recorded. These loans were also classified as nonperforming assets.

Although we believe that we use the best information available to establish the allowance for loan losses, future adjustments to the allowance for loan losses may be necessary and our results of operations could be adversely affected if circumstances differ substantially from the assumptions used in making the determinations. Furthermore, while we believe we have established our allowance for loan losses in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles in the United States of America, there can be no assurance that regulators, in reviewing our loan portfolio, will not require us to increase our allowance for loan losses. In addition, because future events affecting borrowers and collateral cannot be predicted with certainty, there can be no assurance that the existing allowance for loan losses is adequate or that increases will not be necessary should the quality of any loans deteriorate as a result of the factors discussed above. Any material increase in the allowance for loan losses may adversely affect our financial condition and results of operations.

Merchant Processing Credit Risk

From a merchant processing perspective, we have taken action to identify and assess our COVID-19 related credit exposure, primarily defined as merchant returns and chargebacks, by merchant industry type and category. These industry types include, but are not limited to, restaurants, hospitality, travel, and entertainment. We have also assessed the level and adequacy of our ISO and merchant reserves held on deposit at Esquire Bank. Currently, based on our assessments, we have not identified any elevated credit risk in these affected industry types and other categories and our returns and chargeback ratios remain relatively consistent with pre-COVID-19 levels and commensurate to the merchant portfolio risk profile.

Debt Securities Portfolio

At December 31, 2020 and 2019, all debt securities were carried at fair value and we had no investments in a single company or entity, other than government and government agency securities, which had an aggregate book value in excess of 10% of our equity.

We review the investment portfolio on a quarterly basis to determine the cause, magnitude and duration of declines in the fair value of each security. In estimating other-than-temporary impairment (OTTI), we consider many factors including: (1) the length of time and extent that fair value has been less than cost, (2) the financial condition and near term prospects of the issuer, (3) whether the market decline was affected by macroeconomic conditions, and (4) whether we have the intent to sell the security or more likely than not will be required to sell the security before its anticipated recovery. If either of the criteria regarding intent or requirement to sell is met, the entire difference between amortized cost and fair value is recognized as impairment through earnings. For securities that do not meet the aforementioned criteria, the amount of impairment is split into two components as follows: (1) OTTI related to credit loss, which must be recognized in the income statement and (2) OTTI related to other factors, which is recognized in other comprehensive income. The credit loss is defined as the difference between the present value of the cash flows expected to be collected and the amortized cost basis. The assessment of whether any other than temporary decline exists may involve a high degree of subjectivity and judgment and is based on the information available to management at a point in time. We evaluate securities for OTTI at least on a quarterly basis, and more frequently when economic or market conditions warrant such an evaluation.

At December 31, 2020 and December 31, 2019, securities in unrealized loss positions were issuances from government sponsored entities. The decline in fair value is attributable to changes in interest rates and illiquidity, not credit quality and because we do not have the intent to sell the securities and it is likely that we will not be required to sell the securities before their anticipated recovery, we do not consider the securities to be other-than-temporarily impaired at December 31, 2020 and 2019.

No impairment charges were recorded for the years ended December 31, 2020, 2019 and 2018.

Portfolio Maturities and Yields. The composition and maturities of the investment securities portfolio at December 31, 2020, are summarized in the following table. Maturities are based on the final contractual payment dates and do not reflect the impact of prepayments or early redemptions that may occur. No tax-equivalent yield adjustments have been made, as we have no tax free interest earning assets.

	At December 31, 2020									
	One Year or Less		More Than One Year through Five Years		More Than Five Years Through Ten Years		More Than Ten Years		Total	
	Book Value	Weighted Average Yield	Book Value	Weighted Average Yield	Book Value	Weighted Average Yield	Book Value	Weighted Average Yield	Book Value	Weighted Average Yield
	(Dollars in thousands)									
Mortgage backed securities-agency . . .	\$ —	— %	\$ —	— %	6,664	2.69 %	48,548	1.55 %	55,212	1.69 %
Collateralized mortgage obligations-agency . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	60,474	2.10	60,474	2.10
Total securities available-for-sale . . .	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>— %</u>	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>— %</u>	<u>6,664</u>	<u>2.69 %</u>	<u>109,022</u>	<u>2.39 %</u>	<u>115,686</u>	<u>1.90 %</u>

Deposits

Total deposits increased \$123.4 million, or 18.1%, to \$804.1 million at December 31, 2020 from \$680.6 million at December 31, 2019. We continue to focus on the acquisition and expansion of core deposit relationships, which we define as all deposits except for certificates of deposit. Core deposits totaled \$792.9 million at December 31, 2020, or 98.6% of total deposits at that date.

The following tables set forth the distribution of average deposits by account type at the dates indicated.

	For the Year Ended December 31,					
	2020			2019		
	Average Balance	Percent	Average Rate	Average Balance	Percent	Average Rate
	(Dollars in thousands)					
Demand (noninterest bearing)	\$ 301,359	40.74 %	0.00 %	\$ 236,918	38.01 %	0.00 %
Savings, NOW and Money Market	421,530	56.99 %	0.21 %	366,430	58.78 %	0.56 %
Time	16,785	2.27 %	1.77 %	20,002	3.21 %	2.36 %
Total deposits.	<u>\$ 739,674</u>	<u>100.00 %</u>	<u>0.16 %</u>	<u>\$ 623,350</u>	<u>100.00 %</u>	<u>0.41 %</u>

As of December 31, 2020 and 2019, the aggregate amount of uninsured deposits (deposits in amounts greater than or equal to \$250,000, which is the maximum amount for federal deposit insurance) was \$579.8 million and \$525.5 million, respectively. These uninsured balances disclosed do not consider that FDIC insurance can be further extended by claimant within certain law firm deposit accounts. In addition, as of December 31, 2020, the aggregate amount of all our uninsured certificates of deposit was \$6.8 million. We have no deposits that are uninsured for any reason other than being in excess of the maximum amount for federal deposit insurance. The following table sets forth the maturity of the uninsured certificates of deposit as of December 31, 2020.

	At December 31, 2020 (In thousands)
Maturing period:	
Three months or less	\$ 37
Over three months through six months	—
Over six months through twelve months	13
Over twelve months	6,761
Total	<u>\$ 6,811</u>

Borrowings

At December 31, 2020, we had the ability to borrow a total of \$122.4 million from the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York. We also had an available line of credit with the Federal Reserve Bank of New York discount window of \$18.7 million. At December 31, 2020, we also had lines of credit with other financial institutions totaling \$67.5 million. No amounts were outstanding on any of the aforementioned lines as of December 31, 2020.

Stockholders' Equity

Total stockholders' equity increased \$15.0 million, or 13.5%, to \$126.1 million at December 31, 2020, from \$111.1 million at December 31, 2019. The increase for the year ended December 31, 2020 was primarily due to the increase in net income, unrealized gains on our available-for-sale portfolio and amortization of share based compensation.

Average Balance Sheets and Related Yields and Rates

The following tables present average balance sheet information, interest income, interest expense and the corresponding average yields earned and rates paid for the years ended December 31, 2020, 2019 and 2018. The average balances are daily averages and, for loans, include both performing and nonperforming balances. Interest income on loans includes the effects of discount accretion and net deferred loan origination costs accounted for as yield adjustments. No tax-equivalent adjustments have been made.

	For the Years Ended December 31,								
	2020			2019			2018		
	Average Balance	Interest	Average Yield/Cost	Average Balance	Interest	Average Yield/Cost	Average Balance	Interest	Average Yield/Cost
(Dollars in thousands)									
INTEREST EARNING ASSETS									
Loans	\$ 605,273	\$ 35,588	5.88 %	\$ 507,546	\$ 31,790	6.26 %	\$ 398,614	\$ 24,375	6.11 %
Securities, includes restricted stock	126,166	2,556	2.03 %	147,737	3,909	2.65 %	150,668	3,945	2.62 %
Securities purchased under agreements to resell	7,402	94	1.27 %	—	—	— %	—	—	— %
Interest earning cash and other	99,069	392	0.40 %	47,059	960	2.04 %	36,898	631	1.71 %
Total interest earning assets	837,910	38,630	4.61 %	702,342	36,659	5.22 %	586,180	28,951	4.94 %
NONINTEREST EARNING ASSETS	30,028			30,700			14,233		
TOTAL AVERAGE ASSETS	\$ 867,938			\$ 733,042			\$ 600,413		
INTEREST BEARING LIABILITIES									
Savings, NOW, Money Markets.	\$ 421,530	\$ 888	0.21 %	\$ 366,430	\$ 2,070	0.56 %	\$ 293,936	\$ 908	0.31 %
Time deposits	16,785	297	1.77 %	20,002	473	2.36 %	27,014	275	1.02 %
Total deposits	438,315	1,185	0.27 %	386,432	2,543	0.66 %	320,950	1,183	0.37 %
Short-term borrowings.	29	—	— %	1	—	— %	478	12	2.51 %
Secured borrowings.	84	5	5.95 %	88	5	5.68 %	246	17	6.91 %
Total interest bearing liabilities.	438,428	1,190	0.27 %	386,521	2,548	0.66 %	321,674	1,212	0.38 %
NONINTEREST BEARING LIABILITIES									
Demand deposits.	301,359			236,918			188,911		
Other liabilities	10,066			8,216			3,536		
Total noninterest bearing liabilities.	311,425			245,134			192,447		
Stockholders' equity	118,085			101,387			86,292		
TOTAL AVG. LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$ 867,938			\$ 733,042			\$ 600,413		
Net interest income		\$ 37,440			\$ 34,111			\$ 27,739	
Net interest spread.			4.34 %			4.56 %			4.56 %
Net interest margin			4.47 %			4.86 %			4.73 %

The following table presents the dollar amount of changes in interest income and interest expense for major components of interest earning assets and interest bearing liabilities for the periods indicated. The table distinguishes between: (1) changes attributable to volume (changes in volume multiplied by the prior period's rate); (2) changes attributable to rate (change in rate multiplied by the prior year's volume) and (3) total increase (decrease) (the sum of the

previous columns). Changes attributable to both volume and rate are allocated ratably between the volume and rate categories.

	For the Years Ended December 31, 2020 vs. 2019		
	Increase (Decrease) due to		Total Increase
	Volume	Rate	(Decrease)
	(Dollars in thousands)		
Interest earned on:			
Loans	\$ 5,837	\$ (2,039)	\$ 3,798
Securities, includes restricted stock	(519)	(834)	(1,353)
Securities purchased under agreements to resell.	94	—	94
Interest earning cash and other.	566	(1,134)	(568)
Total interest income	<u>5,978</u>	<u>(4,007)</u>	<u>1,971</u>
Interest paid on:			
Savings, NOW, Money Markets	274	(1,456)	(1,182)
Time deposits	(69)	(107)	(176)
Total deposits	<u>205</u>	<u>(1,563)</u>	<u>(1,358)</u>
Short-term borrowings	—	—	—
Secured borrowings	—	—	—
Total interest expense	<u>205</u>	<u>(1,563)</u>	<u>(1,358)</u>
Change in net interest income	<u>\$ 5,773</u>	<u>\$ (2,444)</u>	<u>\$ 3,329</u>

	For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 vs. 2018		
	Increase (Decrease) due to		Total Increase (Decrease)
	Volume	Rate	(Decrease)
	(Dollars in thousands)		
Interest earned on:			
Loans	\$ 6,810	\$ 605	\$ 7,415
Securities, includes restricted stock	(77)	41	(36)
Securities purchased under agreements to resell.	—	—	—
Interest earning cash and other.	193	136	329
Total interest income	<u>6,926</u>	<u>782</u>	<u>7,708</u>
Interest paid on:			
Savings, NOW, Money Markets	267	895	1,162
Time deposits	(87)	285	198
Total deposits	<u>180</u>	<u>1,180</u>	<u>1,360</u>
Short-term borrowings	(12)	—	(12)
Secured borrowings	(9)	(3)	(12)
Total interest expense	<u>159</u>	<u>1,177</u>	<u>1,336</u>
Change in net interest income	<u>\$ 6,767</u>	<u>\$ (395)</u>	<u>\$ 6,372</u>

Results of Operations for the Years Ended December 31, 2020 and 2019

General. Net income decreased \$1.5 million or 10.8%, to \$12.6 million for the year ended December 31, 2020 from \$14.1 million for the year ended December 31, 2019. The decrease resulted from a \$4.4 million increase in provision for loan losses as a result of the effects of the pandemic on the economic and non-economic risk factors associated with the

allowance for loan losses, a \$3.7 million increase in noninterest expense, partially offset by an increase in net interest income of \$3.3 million and a \$2.8 million increase in noninterest income.

Net Interest Income. Net interest income increased \$3.3 million, or 9.8%, to \$37.4 million for the year ended December 31, 2020 from \$34.1 million for the year ended December 31, 2019, due to a \$2.0 million net increase in interest income and a \$1.4 million decrease in interest expense.

Our net interest margin decreased 39 basis points to 4.47% for the year ended December 31, 2020 from 4.86% for the year ended December 31, 2019. The decrease in net interest margin was due to a 61 basis point decrease in the yields on interest earning assets, primarily due to the historically low interest rate environment caused by the pandemic and changing composition of our interest earning assets. This decrease was offset by a 39 basis point decrease in our cost of funds on average interest bearing liabilities.

Interest Income. Interest income increased \$2.0 million or 5.4%, to \$38.6 million for the year ended December 31, 2020 from \$36.7 million for the year ended December 31, 2019 and was attributable to an increase in loan and reverse repurchase interest income offset by a decrease in interest income on securities and interest earning cash and other.

Loan interest income increased \$3.8 million, or 11.9%, to \$35.6 million for the year ended December 31, 2020 from \$31.8 million for the year ended December 31, 2019. This increase was attributable to a \$97.7 million, or 19.3%, increase in the average loan balance from our attorney-related, multifamily, and commercial real estate portfolios offset by a 38 basis point decrease in loan yields. The decrease in loan yields is due to the historically low interest rate environment caused by the pandemic and its effects on the overall economy. The impact of the decline in loan yields on interest income was primarily offset by a 39 basis point decrease in rates on interest bearing deposits as part of the Company's overall asset/liability management strategy.

Securities interest income decreased \$1.4 million, or 34.6%, to \$2.6 million for the year ended December 31, 2020 from \$3.9 million for the year ended December 31, 2019. This decrease was attributable to a \$21.6 million, or 14.6%, decrease in average securities balances and a 62 basis point decrease in yields, both driven by accelerated prepayments due to the current interest rate environment.

Interest earning cash and other interest income decreased \$568 thousand, or 59.2%, to \$392 thousand for the year ended December 31, 2020 from \$960 thousand for the year ended December 31, 2019. This decrease was attributable to a 164 basis point decrease in yields driven by the current interest rate environment offset by a \$52.0 million, or 110.5%, increase in average cash balance primarily due to growth in our merchant payment processing volumes as well as increases in our core deposits.

Interest Expense. Interest expense decreased \$1.4 million, or 53.3%, to \$1.2 million for the year ended December 31, 2020 from \$2.5 million for the year ended December 31, 2019, primarily attributable to rate reductions on deposits. Interest rates we paid on interest bearing deposits decreased 39 basis points to 0.27% for the year ended December 31, 2020 from 0.66% for the year ended December 31, 2019. Our average balance of interest bearing deposits increased \$51.9 million, or 13.4%, to \$438.3 million for the year ended December 31, 2020 from \$386.4 million for the year ended December 31, 2019 attributable primarily to attorney related deposit growth.

Provision for Loan Losses. Our provision for loan losses was \$6.3 million for the year ended December 31, 2020 compared to \$1.9 million for the year ended December 31, 2019. The increase from the prior year was primarily related to the effects of the pandemic on economic and non-economic risk factors associated with the allowance for loan losses, loan growth and consumer loan charge-offs related to our legacy NFL portfolio and increased duration risk in our legacy NFL portfolio.

Noninterest Income. Noninterest income information is as follows:

	For the Year Ended December 31,		Change	
	2020	2019	Amount	Percent
	(Dollars in thousands)			
Noninterest income				
Customer related fees and service charges				
Administrative service income	\$ 183	\$ 491	\$ (308)	(62.7)%
Merchant processing income				
Merchant services income	13,403	10,403	3,000	28.8
ACH income	696	573	123	21.5
Other	365	344	21	6.1
Total noninterest income	<u>\$ 14,647</u>	<u>\$ 11,811</u>	<u>\$ 2,836</u>	<u>24.0 %</u>

Merchant processing income increased due to the expansion of our sales channels through ISOs, merchants and additional fee allocation arrangements, with annual volumes increasing 25.2% to \$14.8 billion for 2020 compared to \$11.9 billion for 2019. For the month ended December 2020 volumes increased 37.4% to \$1.5 billion compared to \$1.1 billion for the month ended December 2019. Customer related fees and charges have decreased due to decreases in administrative service income due to reductions in short term rates offset by an increase in off balance sheet funds. Our off balance sheet funds increased \$120.9 million, or 46.6%, to \$380.3 million as of December 31, 2020 as compared to adjustable \$259.3 million as of December 31, 2019. These administrative service fees are impacted by the volume of off-balance sheet funds, the duration of these funds and short-term interest rates.

Noninterest Expense. Noninterest expense information is as follows:

	For the Year Ended December 31,		Change	
	2020	2019	Amount	Percent
	(Dollars in thousands)			
Noninterest expense				
Employee compensation and benefits	\$ 16,873	\$ 14,677	\$ 2,196	15.0 %
Occupancy and equipment	2,422	1,913	509	26.6
Professional and consulting services	3,229	2,919	310	10.6
FDIC and regulatory assessments	375	242	133	55.0
Advertising and marketing	584	518	66	12.7
Travel and business relations	210	548	(338)	(61.7)
Data processing	3,120	2,470	650	26.3
Other operating expenses	1,857	1,647	210	12.8
Total noninterest expense	<u>\$ 28,670</u>	<u>\$ 24,934</u>	<u>\$ 3,736</u>	<u>15.0 %</u>

Employee compensation and benefits costs increased due to increases in staffing to support our continued growth, investment in our digital platform and the impact of salary and stock-based compensation increases. Data processing costs increased due to increased processing volume, primarily driven by our core banking platform, as well as additional costs related to our technology implementations. Occupancy and equipment costs increased primarily due to our investment in internally developed software to support our digital platform, precautionary office cleaning costs related to COVID-19 and additional office space to support growth. Professional and consulting fees increased due to the expansion of our technology initiatives tied to our digital platform. Other operating expenses increased due to donations to charitable organizations as we focused on our corporate responsibility to support those impacted by the current crisis. Travel and sales related costs decreased due to a freeze on travel and a transition to webcast-based business development and digital marketing.

Income Tax Expense. We recorded income tax expense of \$4.5 million for the year ended December 31, 2020, reflecting an effective tax rate of 26.5%, compared to \$5.0 million, or an effective tax rate of 26.1%, for the year ended December 31, 2019.

Results of Operations for the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

General. Net income increased \$5.4 million or 61.9%, to \$14.1 million for the year ended December 31, 2019 from \$8.7 million for the year ended December 31, 2018. The increase resulted from a \$6.4 million increase in net interest income and a \$4.0 million increase in noninterest income, which were partially offset by a \$2.6 million increase in noninterest expense.

Interest Income. Interest income increased \$7.7 million or 26.6%, to \$36.7 million for the year ended December 31, 2019 from \$29.0 million for the year ended December 31, 2018. This was attributable to an increase in the average balance of interest earning assets totaling \$116.2 million, or 19.8%, to \$702.3 million when compared to the year ended 2018. Average loans increased \$108.9 million, or 27.3%, to \$507.5 million for the year ended December 31, 2019 from \$398.6 million for the year ended December 31, 2018.

Interest Expense. Interest expense increased \$1.3 million, or 110.2%, to \$2.5 million for the year ended December 31, 2019 from \$1.2 million for the year ended December 31, 2018, primarily attributable to an increase in average balance of interest-bearing deposits and an increase in average rate on interest bearing deposits. Interest rates we paid on interest bearing deposits increased 29 basis points to 0.66% for the year ended December 31, 2019 from 0.37% for the year ended December 31, 2018. Our average balance of interest bearing deposits increased \$65.5 million, or 20.4%, to \$386.4 million for the year ended December 31, 2019 from \$321.0 million for the year ended December 31, 2018.

Net Interest Income. Net interest income increased \$6.4 million, or 23.0%, to \$34.1 million for the year ended December 31, 2019 from \$27.7 million for the year ended December 31, 2018. Our net interest margin increased 13 basis points to 4.86% for the year ended December 31, 2019 from 4.73% for the year ended December 31, 2018. Our net interest spread remained consistent year over year at 4.56%.

Provision for Loan Losses. Our provision for loan losses was \$1.9 million for the year ended December 31, 2019 compared to \$1.4 million for the year ended December 31, 2018. The increase from prior year was primarily related to growth, composition of the loan portfolio, and to replenish the reserve for charge-offs incurred during the year, including a \$324 thousand charge-off related to an NFL consumer post-settlement loan. The provisions recorded resulted in an allowance for loan losses of \$7.0 million, or 1.24% of total loans at December 31, 2019, compared to \$5.6 million, or 1.20% of total loans at December 31, 2018.

Noninterest Income. Noninterest income information is as follows:

	For the Years Ended December 31,		Change	
	2019	2018	Amount	Percent
(Dollars in thousands)				
Noninterest income				
Merchant processing income	\$ 10,976	\$ 4,961	\$ 6,015	121.2 %
Customer related fees and service charges	835	2,894	(2,059)	(71.1)
Total noninterest income	\$ 11,811	\$ 7,855	\$ 3,956	50.4 %

Merchant processing income increased due to expansion of our sales channels through ISOs, merchants and additional fee allocation arrangements, with annual volumes increasing 65.7% to \$11.9 billion for 2019 compared to \$7.2 billion for 2018. For the month ended December 2019 volumes increased to \$1.1 billion compared to \$685.7 million for the month ended December 2018. Customer related fees and charges have decreased due to decreases in administrative service income on off-balance sheet funds which is impacted by the volume of off-balance sheet funds, the duration of these funds and short-term interest rates.

Noninterest Expense. Noninterest expense information is as follows:

	For the Years Ended December 31,		Change	
	2019	2018	Amount	Percent
	(Dollars in thousands)			
Noninterest expense				
Employee compensation and benefits	\$ 14,677	\$ 13,039	\$ 1,638	12.6 %
Occupancy and equipment	1,913	1,736	177	10.2
Professional and consulting services	2,919	2,589	330	12.7
FDIC and regulatory assessments	242	321	(79)	(24.6)
Advertising and marketing	718	524	194	37.0
Travel and business relations	548	504	44	8.7
Data processing	2,470	1,896	574	30.3
Other operating expenses	1,447	1,686	(239)	(14.2)
Total noninterest expense	\$ 24,934	\$ 22,295	\$ 2,639	11.8 %

Employee compensation and benefits increased for the year ended December 31, 2019 from the year ended December 31, 2018 primarily due to an increase in the number of employees as well as increases in salary and bonuses. Data processing costs increased as processing volumes increased as well as additional costs related to certain system implementations. Professional and consulting costs increased due to our IT enterprise-wide architecture assessments and our investment in certain proprietary technology.

Income Tax Expense. We recorded an income tax expense of \$5.0 million for the year ended December 31, 2019, reflecting an effective tax rate of 26.1%, compared to \$3.2 million, or an effective tax rate of 26.8%, for the year ended December 31, 2018. The decrease in the effective tax rate was a result of tax credits from our investment in proprietary technology and the continued expansion of our national litigation and merchant platforms.

Management of Market Risk

General. The principal objective of our asset and liability management function is to evaluate the interest rate risk within the balance sheet and pursue a controlled assumption of interest rate risk while maximizing net income and preserving adequate levels of liquidity and capital. The board of directors of our bank has oversight of our asset and liability management function, which is managed by our Asset/Liability Management Committee. Our Asset/Liability Management Committee meets regularly to review, among other things, the sensitivity of our assets and liabilities to market interest rate changes, local and national market conditions and market interest rates. That group also reviews our liquidity, capital, deposit mix, loan mix and investment positions.

As a financial institution, our primary component of market risk is interest rate volatility. Fluctuations in interest rates will ultimately impact both the level of income and expense recorded on most of our assets and liabilities, and the fair value of all interest earning assets and interest bearing liabilities, other than those which have a short term to maturity. Interest rate risk is the potential of economic losses due to future interest rate changes. These economic losses can be reflected as a loss of future net interest income and/or a loss of current fair values. The objective is to measure the effect on net interest income and to adjust the balance sheet to minimize the inherent risk while at the same time maximizing income.

We manage our exposure to interest rates primarily by structuring our balance sheet in the ordinary course of business. We do not typically enter into derivative contracts for the purpose of managing interest rate risk, but we may do so in the future. Based upon the nature of our operations, we are not subject to foreign exchange or commodity price risk. We do not own any trading assets.

Net Interest Income Simulation. We use an interest rate risk simulation model to test the interest rate sensitivity of net interest income and the balance sheet. Instantaneous parallel rate shift scenarios are modeled and utilized to evaluate risk and establish exposure limits for acceptable changes in net interest margin. These scenarios, known as rate shocks,

simulate an instantaneous change in interest rates and use various assumptions, including, but not limited to, prepayments on loans and securities, deposit decay rates, pricing decisions on loans and deposits, reinvestment and replacement of asset and liability cash flows.

The following table presents the estimated changes in net interest income of Esquire Bank, National Association, calculated on a bank-only basis, which would result from changes in market interest rates over twelve-month periods beginning December 31, 2020. The tables below demonstrate that we are asset-sensitive in a rising interest rate environment.

Changes in Interest Rates (Basis Points)	At December 31, 2020	
	Estimated 12-Months Net Interest	
	Income	
	Change (Dollars in thousands)	
400	\$ 56,075	15,811
300	51,800	11,536
200	47,556	7,292
100	43,907	3,643
0	40,264	—
-100	38,458	(1,806)
-200	37,646	(2,618)

Economic Value of Equity Simulation. We also analyze our sensitivity to changes in interest rates through an economic value of equity (“EVE”) model. EVE represents the present value of the expected cash flows from our assets less the present value of the expected cash flows arising from our liabilities adjusted for the value of off-balance sheet contracts. EVE attempts to quantify our economic value using a discounted cash flow methodology. We estimate what our EVE would be as of a specific date. We then calculate what EVE would be as of the same date throughout a series of interest rate scenarios representing immediate and permanent, parallel shifts in the yield curve. We currently calculate EVE under the assumptions that interest rates increase 100, 200, 300 and 400 basis points from current market rates, and under the assumption that interest rates decrease 100 and 200 basis points from current market rates.

The following table presents the estimated changes in EVE of Esquire Bank, National Association, calculated on a bank-only basis, that would result from changes in market interest rates as of December 31, 2020.

Changes in Interest Rates (Basis Points)	At December 31, 2020	
	Economic Value of Equity	
	Change	
	(Dollars in thousands)	
400	\$ 184,363	63,995
300	170,755	50,387
200	155,590	35,222
100	139,597	19,229
0	120,368	—
-100	98,818	(21,550)
-200	96,367	(24,001)

Many assumptions are used to calculate the impact of interest rate fluctuations. Actual results may be significantly different than our projections due to several factors, including the timing and frequency of rate changes, market conditions and the shape of the yield curve. The computations of interest rate risk shown above do not include actions that our management may undertake to manage the risks in response to anticipated changes in interest rates, and actual results may also differ due to any actions taken in response to the changing rates.

Liquidity and Capital Resources

Liquidity is the ability to meet current and future financial obligations of a short-term nature. Our primary sources of funds consist of deposit inflows, loan repayments and maturities and sales of securities. While maturities and scheduled amortization of loans and securities are predictable sources of funds, deposit flows and mortgage prepayments are greatly influenced by general interest rates, economic conditions and competition.

We regularly review the need to adjust our investments in liquid assets based upon our assessment of: (1) expected loan demand, (2) expected deposit flows, (3) yields available on interest earning deposits and securities, and (4) the objectives of our asset/liability management program. Excess liquid assets are invested generally in interest earning deposits and short-and intermediate-term securities.

Our most liquid assets are cash and cash equivalents. The levels of these assets are dependent on our operating, financing, lending and investing activities during any given period. At December 31, 2020 and 2019, cash and cash equivalents totaled \$65.2 million and \$61.8 million, respectively. As of December 31, 2020, management is not aware of any events that are reasonably likely to have a material adverse impact on our liquidity, capital resources or operations. In addition, management is not aware of any regulatory recommendations regarding liquidity that would have a material adverse effect on us.

At December 31, 2019, through pledging of our securities and certain loans, we had the ability to borrow a total of \$122.4 million from the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York and had an available line of credit with the Federal Reserve Bank of New York discount window of \$18.7 million. At December 31, 2020, we also had \$67.5 million in aggregated unsecured lines of credit with unaffiliated correspondent banks. No amounts were outstanding on any of the aforementioned lines as of December 31, 2020.

We have no material commitments or demands that are likely to affect our liquidity. In the event loan demand were to increase faster than expected, or any unforeseen demand or commitment were to occur, we could access our borrowing capacity with the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York or obtain additional funds through brokered certificates of deposit.

Esquire Bank, National Association is subject to various regulatory capital requirements administered by Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. At December 31, 2020 and 2019, Esquire Bank exceeded all applicable regulatory capital requirements, and was considered “well capitalized” under regulatory guidelines. See Note 13 of the Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements for additional information.

We manage our capital to comply with our internal planning targets and regulatory capital standards administered by the OCC and review capital levels on a monthly basis. At December 31, 2020, Esquire Bank was classified as well-capitalized.

The following table presents our capital ratios as of the indicated dates for Esquire Bank.

	<u>“Well Capitalized”</u>	<u>For Capital Adequacy Purposes Minimum Capital with Conservation Buffer</u>	<u>Actual At December 31, 2020</u>
<u>Total Risk-based Capital Ratio</u>			
Bank	10.00 %	10.50 %	16.69 %
<u>Tier 1 Risk-based Capital Ratio</u>			
Bank	8.00 %	8.50 %	15.44 %
<u>Common Equity Tier 1 Capital Ratio</u>			
Bank	6.50 %	7.00 %	15.44 %
<u>Tier 1 Leverage Ratio</u>			
Bank	5.00 %	4.00 %	12.51 %

Effective January 1, 2020, the federal banking agencies adopted a rule to establish for institutions with assets of less than \$10 billion that meet other specified criteria a “community bank leverage ratio” (the ratio of a bank’s tangible equity capital to average total consolidated assets) of 9% that such institutions may elect to utilize in lieu of the generally applicable leverage and risk-based capital requirements noted above. A “qualifying community bank” with capital exceeding 9% will be considered compliant with all applicable regulatory capital and leverage requirements, including the requirement to be “well capitalized”. The CARES Act and implementing rules temporarily reduced the community bank leverage ratio to 8%, to be gradually increased back to 9% by 2022. The CARES Act also provides that, during the same time period, if a qualifying community banking organization falls no more than 1% below the community bank leverage ratio, it will have a two-quarter grace period to satisfy the community bank leverage ratio. For the current period, Esquire Bank has elected to continue to utilize the generally applicable leverage and risk based requirements and not apply the community bank leverage ratio.

Off-Balance Sheet Arrangements

Off-Balance Sheet Arrangements. We are a party to financial instruments with off-balance sheet risk in the normal course of business to meet the financing needs of our customers. These financial instruments include commitments to extend credit, which involve elements of credit and interest rate risk in excess of the amount recognized in the Consolidated Statements of Financial Condition. Our exposure to credit loss is represented by the contractual amount of the instruments. We use the same credit policies in making commitments as we do for on-balance sheet instruments.

For further information, see Note 11 of the Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements.

ITEM 7A. Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures About Market Risk

The quantitative and qualitative disclosures about market risk are included under the section of this Annual Report entitled “Item 7—Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations—Management of Market Risk.”

ITEM 8. Financial Statements and Supplementary Data



Crowe LLP
Independent Member Crowe Global

Report of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm

Shareholders and the Board of Directors of
Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc.
Jericho, New York

Opinion on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying consolidated statements of financial condition of Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. (the "Company") as of December 31, 2020 and 2019, the related consolidated statements of income, comprehensive income, changes in stockholders' equity, and cash flows for each of the years in the three-year period ended December 31, 2020, and the related notes (collectively referred to as the "financial statements"). In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Company as of December 31, 2020 and 2019, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for each of the years in the three-year period ended December 31, 2020, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinion

These financial statements are the responsibility of the Company's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the Company's financial statements based on our audits. We are a public accounting firm registered with the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (United States) ("PCAOB") and are required to be independent with respect to the Company in accordance with the U.S. federal securities laws and the applicable rules and regulations of the Securities and Exchange Commission and the PCAOB.

We conducted our audits in accordance with the standards of the PCAOB. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement, whether due to error or fraud. The Company is not required to have, nor were we engaged to perform, an audit of its internal control over financial reporting. As part of our audits we are required to obtain an understanding of internal control over financial reporting but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Company's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we express no such opinion.

Our audits included performing procedures to assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to error or fraud, and performing procedures that respond to those risks. Such procedures included examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. Our audits also included evaluating the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

/s/ Crowe LLP

We have served as the Company's auditor since 2006.

New York, New York
March 19, 2021

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL CONDITION
(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

	December 31, 2020	December 31, 2019
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 65,185	\$ 61,806
Securities purchased under agreements to resell, at cost	51,726	—
Securities available-for-sale, at fair value	117,655	146,419
Securities, restricted, at cost	2,694	2,665
Loans	672,421	565,369
Less: allowance for loan losses	(11,402)	(6,989)
Loans, net	661,019	558,380
Premises and equipment, net	3,017	2,835
Accrued interest receivable	4,529	3,242
Deferred tax assets	2,597	2,049
Other assets	28,292	20,612
Total assets	<u>\$ 936,714</u>	<u>\$ 798,008</u>
LIABILITIES AND STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY		
Deposits:		
Demand	\$ 351,692	\$ 201,837
Savings, NOW and money market	441,160	459,037
Time	11,202	19,746
Total deposits	804,054	680,620
Secured borrowings	49	86
Accrued expenses and other liabilities	6,535	6,240
Total liabilities	<u>\$ 810,638</u>	<u>\$ 686,946</u>
Commitments and contingencies	—	—
Stockholders' equity:		
Preferred stock, par value \$0.01; authorized 2,000,000 shares; no shares issued and outstanding at December 31, 2020 and December 31, 2019	—	—
Common stock, par value \$0.01; authorized 15,000,000 shares; 7,827,788 and 7,652,170 shares issued, respectively; and 7,793,482 and 7,652,170 shares outstanding, respectively	78	77
Additional paid-in capital	91,622	89,682
Retained earnings	33,535	20,917
Accumulated other comprehensive income	1,408	386
Treasury stock at cost, 34,306 and 0 shares, respectively	(567)	—
Total stockholders' equity	<u>126,076</u>	<u>111,062</u>
Total liabilities and stockholders' equity	<u>\$ 936,714</u>	<u>\$ 798,008</u>

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF INCOME
(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

	For the Years Ended December 31,		
	2020	2019	2018
Interest income:			
Loans	\$ 35,588	\$ 31,790	\$ 24,375
Securities	2,556	3,909	3,945
Securities purchased under agreements to resell	94	—	—
Interest earning deposits and other	392	960	631
Total interest income	38,630	36,659	28,951
Interest expense:			
Savings, NOW and money market deposits	888	2,070	908
Time deposits	297	473	275
Borrowings	5	5	29
Total interest expense	1,190	2,548	1,212
Net interest income	37,440	34,111	27,739
Provision for loan losses	6,250	1,850	1,375
Net interest income after provision for loan losses	31,190	32,261	26,364
Noninterest income:			
Merchant processing income	14,099	10,976	4,961
Customer related fees and service charges	548	835	2,894
Total noninterest income	14,647	11,811	7,855
Noninterest expense:			
Employee compensation and benefits	16,873	14,677	13,039
Occupancy and equipment	2,422	1,913	1,736
Professional and consulting services	3,229	2,919	2,589
FDIC and regulatory assessments	375	242	321
Advertising and marketing	584	518	392
Travel and business relations	210	548	504
Data processing	3,120	2,470	1,896
Other operating expenses	1,857	1,647	1,818
Total noninterest expense	28,670	24,934	22,295
Net income before income taxes	17,167	19,138	11,924
Income tax expense	4,549	4,995	3,190
Net income	\$ 12,618	\$ 14,143	\$ 8,734
Earnings per share			
Basic	\$ 1.70	\$ 1.91	\$ 1.18
Diluted	\$ 1.65	\$ 1.82	\$ 1.13

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

(Dollars in thousands)

	For the Years Ended December 31,		
	2020	2019	2018
Net income.....	\$ 12,618	\$ 14,143	\$ 8,734
Other comprehensive income:			
Unrealized (losses) gains arising during the period on securities			
available-for-sale	1,429	4,139	(1,685)
Reclassification adjustment for net gains included in net income.	—	—	—
Tax effect.....	(407)	(1,139)	461
Total other comprehensive income.....	1,022	3,000	(1,224)
Total comprehensive income	<u>\$ 13,640</u>	<u>\$ 17,143</u>	<u>\$ 7,510</u>

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CHANGES IN STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY
(Dollars in thousands)

	Preferred shares	Common shares	Preferred stock	Common stock	Additional paid-in capital	Retained earnings (deficit)	Accumulated other comprehensive income (loss)	Treasury stock	Total stockholders' equity
Balance at January 1, 2018.	—	7,326,536	\$ —	\$ 73	\$ 86,660	\$ (1,960)	\$ (1,390)	\$ —	\$ 83,383
Net income.	—	—	—	—	—	8,734	—	—	8,734
Other comprehensive loss.	—	—	—	—	—	—	(1,224)	—	(1,224)
Exercise of stock options, net of repurchases.	—	42,687	—	—	378	—	—	—	378
Restricted stock grants.	—	163,500	—	2	(2)	—	—	—	—
Stock compensation expense.	—	—	—	—	1,503	—	—	—	1,503
Balance at December 31, 2018.	—	7,532,723	\$ —	\$ 75	\$ 88,539	\$ 6,774	\$ (2,614)	\$ —	\$ 92,774
Net income.	—	—	—	—	—	14,143	—	—	14,143
Other comprehensive income.	—	—	—	—	—	—	3,000	—	3,000
Exercise of stock options, net of repurchases.	—	8,947	—	—	50	—	—	—	50
Restricted stock grants.	—	110,500	—	2	(2)	—	—	—	—
Stock compensation expense.	—	—	—	—	1,095	—	—	—	1,095
Balance at December 31, 2019.	—	7,652,170	\$ —	\$ 77	\$ 89,682	\$ 20,917	\$ 386	\$ —	\$ 111,062
Net income.	—	—	—	—	—	12,618	—	—	12,618
Other comprehensive income.	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,022	—	1,022
Exercise of stock options, net of repurchases.	—	53,868	—	—	401	—	—	—	401
Restricted stock grants.	—	121,750	—	1	(1)	—	—	—	—
Stock compensation expense.	—	—	—	—	1,540	—	—	—	1,540
Purchase of common stock.	—	(34,306)	—	—	—	—	—	(567)	(567)
Balance at December 31, 2020.	—	7,793,482	\$ —	\$ 78	\$ 91,622	\$ 33,535	\$ 1,408	\$ (567)	\$ 126,076

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS
(Dollars in thousands)

	For the Years Ended December 31,		
	2020	2019	2018
Cash flows from operating activities:			
Net income	\$ 12,618	\$ 14,143	\$ 8,734
Adjustments to reconcile net income to net cash provided by operating activities:			
Provision for loan losses	6,250	1,850	1,375
Depreciation	568	506	421
Stock compensation expense	1,540	1,095	1,503
Deferred tax (benefit) expense	(955)	(116)	(370)
Net amortization (accretion):			
Securities	1,079	550	446
Loans	(339)	278	476
Right of use asset	391	382	—
Software	665	402	374
Changes in other assets and liabilities:			
Accrued interest receivable	(1,287)	613	(1,019)
Other assets	(4,611)	(3,961)	(3,041)
Operating lease liability	(418)	(314)	—
Accrued expenses and other liabilities	89	882	1,213
Net cash provided by operating activities	15,590	16,310	10,112
Cash flows from investing activities:			
Net change in loans	(109,665)	(98,036)	(119,609)
Net change in securities purchased under agreements to resell	(51,726)	—	—
Purchases of securities available-for-sale	(37,975)	(28,202)	(42,482)
Principal repayments on securities available-for-sale	67,089	31,070	23,411
Purchase of securities, restricted	(29)	(82)	(400)
Purchase of equity investment without readily determinable fair value	—	—	(2,410)
Purchases of premises and equipment	(750)	(647)	(569)
Development of capitalized software	(2,386)	(1,415)	(684)
Net cash used in investing activities	(135,442)	(97,312)	(142,743)
Cash flows from financing activities:			
Net increase in deposits	123,434	112,199	119,927
Decrease in secured borrowings	(37)	(3)	(189)
Exercise of stock options	401	50	378
Purchase of common stock	(567)	—	—
Net cash provided by financing activities	123,231	112,246	120,116
Increase in cash and cash equivalents	3,379	31,244	(12,515)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the period	61,806	30,562	43,077
Cash and cash equivalents at end of the period	<u>\$ 65,185</u>	<u>\$ 61,806</u>	<u>\$ 30,562</u>
Supplemental disclosures of cash flow information:			
Cash paid during the period for:			
Interest	\$ 1,202	\$ 2,551	\$ 1,203
Taxes	6,246	5,149	2,675
Noncash transactions:			
Right of use asset obtained in exchange for lease liability	624	3,640	—

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

NOTE 1 — Business and Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Business

Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. (the “Company”) is a financial holding company incorporated in Maryland and headquartered in Jericho, New York, with one branch office in Jericho, New York and an administrative office in Boca Raton, Florida. Its wholly-owned subsidiary, Esquire Bank, National Association (the “Bank”), is a full service commercial bank dedicated to serving the financial needs of the legal industry and small businesses nationally, as well as commercial and retail customers in the New York metropolitan area.

The Bank offers tailored products and solutions to the legal community and their clients as well as dynamic and flexible merchant services solutions to small business owners. Banking products offered for businesses and consumers include checking, savings, money market and time deposits; a wide range of commercial and consumer loans, as well as customary banking services. These activities, primarily anchored by our legal community focus, generate a stable source of low cost core deposits and a diverse asset base to support our overall operations.

The Bank operates a merchant services platform through third party Independent Sales Organizations (“ISOs”). As an acquiring bank, fees are charged to merchants for the settlement of credit card, debit card and ACH transactions. The Bank’s revenue from these operational services is presented as merchant processing income on the Consolidated Statement of Income.

The Consolidated Financial Statements include Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. and its wholly owned subsidiary, Esquire Bank, N.A. and are referred to as “the Company.” Intercompany transactions and balances are eliminated in consolidation.

Risks and Uncertainties

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus, a pandemic as a result of the global spread of the coronavirus illness. In response to the outbreak, federal and state authorities in the U.S. introduced various measures to try to limit or slow the spread of the virus, including travel restrictions, nonessential business closures, stay-at-home orders, and strict social distancing. The full impact of COVID-19 is unknown and rapidly evolving.

We have implemented a customer payment deferral program (principal and interest) to assist business borrowers and certain consumers that may be experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19 related challenges. These loans will continue to accrue interest during the deferral period unless otherwise classified as nonperforming. Consistent with regulatory guidance and the provisions of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (the “CARES Act”), borrowers that were otherwise current on loan payments that were granted COVID-19 related financial hardship payment deferrals will continue to be reported as current loans during the deferral period and not evaluated as to whether they are troubled debt restructurings (“TDR”). There were no delinquent loans upon adoption of our payment deferral program.

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

At December 31, 2020 the Company had 12 loans in the COVID-19 payment deferral program with a total principal balance of \$29,223.

From a merchant processing perspective, we have taken action to identify and assess our COVID-19 related credit exposure, primarily defined as merchant returns and chargebacks, by merchant industry type and category. These industry types include, but are not limited to, restaurants, hospitality, travel, and entertainment. We have also assessed the level and adequacy of our ISO and merchant reserves held on deposit at Esquire Bank. Currently, based on our assessments, we have not identified any elevated credit risk in these affected industry types and other categories and our returns and chargeback ratios remain relatively consistent with pre-COVID-19 levels and commensurate to the merchant portfolio risk profile.

At this time, it is difficult to quantify the impact COVID-19 will have on future periods. This could cause the Company to experience a material adverse effect on our business operations, asset valuations, financial condition, and results of operations. Material adverse impacts may include all or a combination of an increase in the allowance for loan losses, valuation impairments on our investments or deferred tax assets. The Company has evaluated the impact of the effects of COVID-19 and determined that there were no material or systematic adverse impacts on the Company's 2020 Consolidated Statement of Financial Condition and Consolidated Statement of Income except for a continued elevated level of general provisioning for loan losses and related allowance for loan losses.

Common Stock

In 2017, we completed our initial public offering ("IPO") and sold 2,154,580 shares of common stock for aggregate net proceeds of approximately \$26,341, after deducting underwriting discount and other offering related expenses.

Preferred Stock

In December of 2014, the Company issued 157,985 0.00% Series B Non-Voting Preferred shares at a price of \$12.50 per share for proceeds, net of offering costs, of approximately \$1,800. The preferred stock did not have a maturity date and was not convertible by the holder, but was convertible on a one for one basis into common stock by us under certain circumstances. In addition, the preferred stock did not have a liquidation preference and had equal rights to receive dividends when dividends are declared on common stock, and thus were considered participating securities. These shares were later exchanged for 157,985 shares of common stock, par value \$0.01. As of December 31, 2020 and 2019, there are no preferred shares outstanding.

Dividend Restriction

Banking regulations require maintaining certain capital levels and may limit the dividends paid by the bank to the holding company or by the holding company to shareholders.

Basis of Presentation and Use of Estimates

The accounting and financial reporting policies are in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). The preparation of financial statements requires that management make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of income and expenses during the reporting period. Such estimates are subject to

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

change in the future as additional information becomes available or previously existing circumstances are modified. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Statement of Cash Flows

For purposes of the accompanying statements of cash flows, cash and cash equivalents are defined as the amounts included in the Consolidated Statements of Financial Condition under the captions "Cash and cash equivalents", with contractual maturities of less than 90 days. Net cash flows are reported for customer loan and deposit transactions.

Securities Purchased Under Agreements to Resell

The Company enters into purchases of securities under agreements to resell identical securities which consist of mortgage loans that meet the GNMA pooling qualifications. The cash advanced to the counterparty are reflected as assets on the Statement of Financial Condition and are accounted for at cost. The Company obtains possession of securities collateral with a market value equal to or in excess of the principal amount loaned under the resell agreement and has the right to request additional collateral, based on its daily monitoring of the fair value of the securities. As of December 31, 2020, there is one open contract with one counterparty that is scheduled to mature within thirty days.

Debt Securities

All securities are classified as available-for-sale and carried at fair value. Unrealized gains and losses on these securities are reported, net of applicable taxes, as a separate component of accumulated other comprehensive income (loss), a component of stockholders' equity.

Interest income on securities, including amortization of premiums and accretion of discounts, is recognized using the level yield method without anticipating prepayments (except for mortgage-backed securities where prepayments are anticipated) over the lives of the individual securities. Realized gains and losses on sales of securities are computed using the specific identification method.

Loans

Loans that management has the intent and ability to hold for the foreseeable future until maturity or payoff are stated at the principal amount outstanding, net of deferred loan fees and costs for originated loans and net of unamortized premiums or discounts for purchased loans. Interest income is recognized using the level yield method. Net deferred loan fees, origination costs, unamortized premiums or discounts are recognized in interest income over the loan term as a yield adjustment.

Nonaccrual

Interest income on mortgage and commercial loans is discontinued at the time the loan is 90 days delinquent unless the loan is well-secured and in process of collection. Consumer loans are typically charged-off no later than 120 days past due. Past due status is based on the contractual terms of the loan. In all cases, loans are placed on nonaccrual or charged-off at an earlier date if collection of principal or interest is considered doubtful. Nonaccrual loans and loans past due 90 days still on accrual include both smaller balance homogeneous loans that are collectively evaluated for impairment and individually classified impaired loans. A loan is moved to nonaccrual status in accordance with the Company's policy, typically after 90 days of non-payment.

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

All interest accrued but not received for loans placed on nonaccrual is reversed against interest income. Interest received on such loans is accounted for on the cash-basis or cost-recovery method, until qualifying for return to accrual. Loans are returned to accrual status when all the principal and interest amounts contractually due are brought current and future payments are reasonably assured.

Provision and Allowance for Loan Losses

The allowance for loan losses is a valuation allowance for probable incurred credit losses. The allowance for loan losses is increased by provisions for loan losses charged to income. Losses are charged to the allowance when all or a portion of a loan is deemed to be uncollectible. Subsequent recoveries of loans previously charged-off are credited to the allowance for loan losses when realized. Management estimates the allowance balance required using past loan loss experience, the nature and volume of the portfolio, information about specific borrower situations and estimated collateral values, economic conditions and other factors. Allocations of the allowance may be made for specific loans, but the entire allowance is available for any loan that, in management's judgment, should be charged-off.

The allowance consists of specific and general components. The specific component relates to loans that are individually classified as impaired when, based on current information and events, it is probable that the Company will be unable to collect all amounts due according to the contractual terms of the loan agreement.

Factors considered by management in determining impairment include payment status, collateral value, and the probability of collecting scheduled principal and interest payments when due. Loans that experience insignificant payment delays and payment shortfalls generally are not classified as impaired. Management determines the significance of payment delays and payment shortfalls on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration all of the circumstances surrounding the loan and the borrower, including the length of the delay, the reasons for the delay, the borrower's prior payment record, and the amount of the shortfall in relation to the principal and interest owed.

All loans, except for smaller dollar consumer loans, are individually evaluated for impairment. If a loan is impaired, a portion of the allowance is allocated as a specific allowance. The measurement of an impaired loan is based on (i) the present value of expected future cash flows discounted at the loan's effective interest rate, (ii) the loan's observable market price or (iii) the fair value of the collateral if the loan is collateral dependent.

Loans for which the terms have been modified resulting in a concession, and for which the borrower is experiencing financial difficulties, are considered troubled debt restructurings and classified as impaired. Troubled debt restructurings are separately identified for impairment disclosures and are measured at the present value of estimated future cash flows using the loan's effective rate at inception. If a troubled debt restructuring is considered to be a collateral dependent loan, the loan is reported, net, at the fair value of the collateral. For troubled debt restructurings that subsequently default, the Company determines the amount of reserve in accordance with the accounting policy for the allowance for loan losses.

The general component is based on historical loss experience adjusted for current factors. The historical loss experience is determined by portfolio segment and is based on the actual loss history experienced by the Company. This actual loss experience is supplemented with other economic factors based on the risks present for each portfolio segment. These economic factors include consideration of the following: levels of and trends in delinquencies and impaired loans; levels of and trends in charge-offs and recoveries; trends in volume and terms of loans; effects of any changes in risk selection and underwriting standards; other changes in lending policies, procedures, and practices; experience, ability, and depth of lending management and other relevant staff; national and local economic trends and conditions; industry conditions; and effects of changes in credit concentrations. The determination of the economic factors is a qualitative assessment that involves significant management judgment and subjective measurement.

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

Management has identified the following loan segments: Commercial Real Estate, Multifamily, Construction, Commercial, 1 – 4 Family and Consumer. The risks associated with a concentration in real estate loans include potential losses from fluctuating values of land and improved properties. Commercial Real Estate and Multifamily loans are expected to be repaid from the cash flow of the underlying property so the collective amount of rents must be sufficient to cover all operating expenses, property management and maintenance, taxes and debt service. Increases in vacancy rates, interest rates or other changes in general economic conditions can all have an impact on the borrower and their ability to repay the loan. Construction loans are considered riskier than commercial financing on improved and established commercial real estate. The risk of potential loss increases if the original cost estimates or time to complete are significantly off. The remainder of the loan portfolio is comprised of commercial and consumer loans. The primary risks associated with the commercial loans is the cash flow of the business, the experience and quality of the borrowers' management, the business climate, and the impact of economic factors. The primary risks associated with 1 – 4 Family and Consumer loans relate to the borrower, such as the risk of a borrower's unemployment as a result of deteriorating economic conditions or the amount and nature of a borrower's other existing indebtedness, and the value of the collateral securing the loan if the Bank must take possession of the collateral. Post-settlement consumer loans are also subject to unforeseen rulings or administrative legal anomalies that may eliminate or greatly reduce a borrowers settlement amount.

Premises and Equipment

Premises and equipment, including leasehold improvements, are stated at cost, net of accumulated depreciation and amortization. Equipment, which includes furniture and fixtures, are depreciated over the assets' estimated useful lives using the straight-line method (three to ten years). Amortization of leasehold improvements is recognized on a straight-line basis over the lesser of the expected lease term or the estimated useful life of the asset. Costs incurred to improve or extend the life of existing assets are capitalized. Repairs and maintenance are charged to expense.

Internal-Use Software

Implementation costs with respect to internal-use software is capitalized once the project stage is complete. Project stage includes determining the performance requirements, strategic decisions related to allocation of resources, determining the technology needed to achieve performance requirements, selection of vendors, and other items. Costs during the project stage are expensed as incurred. Once the internal-use software is placed into operation, capitalized software costs are amortized using the straight-line method over 3-5 years.

Securities, Restricted, at Cost

The Bank is a member of the Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB) system and the Federal Reserve Bank of New York (FRB), and Atlantic Central Banker's Bank where members are required to own a certain number of shares of stock in order to conduct business with these institutions. FHLB stock holdings are based on the level of mortgage related assets, borrowings and other factors while FRB stock holding levels are capital based. These equity investments are carried at cost and classified as restricted securities which are periodically evaluated for impairment based on the ultimate recovery of par value. Dividends from these equity investments are reported as interest income on the Consolidated Statements of Income.

Loan Commitments

The Company enters into commitments to extend credit to customers to meet their financing needs which are in the form of lines of credit, letters of credit, and loan funding commitments. The face amount of these financial instruments represents the exposure to loss before considering customer collateral or ability to repay. Such financial instruments are

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

recorded on balance sheet at cost when funded and presented as loans on the Consolidated Statements of Financial Condition.

Equity Investment Without Readily Determinable Fair Value

In April 2018, the Company purchased a 4.95% interest in Litify, Inc., a technology solution to automate and manage a law firm's business and cases, for a cost of \$2,410. As Litify, Inc. is a private company, the investment does not have a readily determinable fair value and management has elected to determine the recorded carrying amount based on its cost adjusted for observable price changes less impairment. At December 31, 2020, the investment's carrying amount was \$2,410. Based on our evaluation, we noted no significant adverse changes which would indicate the asset is impaired or any observable price changes as of December 31, 2020. The investment is presented within other assets on the Consolidated Statements of Financial Condition.

Transfers of Financial Assets

Transfers of financial assets are accounted for as sales, when control over the assets has been relinquished. Control over transferred assets is deemed to be surrendered when the assets have been isolated from the Company, the transferee obtains the right (free of conditions that constrain it from taking advantage of that right) to pledge or exchange the transferred assets, and the Company does not maintain effective control over the transferred assets through an agreement to repurchase them before their maturity.

Income Taxes

Income taxes are provided for under the asset and liability method. Deferred tax assets and liabilities are recognized for the future tax consequences attributable to differences between the financial statement carrying amounts of existing assets and liabilities and their respective tax bases. Deferred tax assets and liabilities are measured using enacted rates expected to apply to taxable income in the years in which those temporary differences are expected to be recovered or settled. The effect on deferred taxes of a change in tax rates is recognized in income in the period the change occurs. Deferred tax assets are reduced, through a valuation allowance, if necessary, by the amount of such benefits that are not expected to be realized based on current available evidence.

A tax position is recognized as a benefit only if it is "more likely than not" that the tax position would be sustained in a tax examination, with a tax examination being presumed to occur. The amount recognized is the largest amount of tax benefit that is greater than 50% likely of being realized on examination. For tax positions not meeting the "more likely than not" test, no tax benefit is recorded. The Company recognizes interest and/or penalties related to income tax matters in income tax expense on the Consolidated Statements of Income.

Earnings per Common Share

Basic earnings per common share is net earnings allocated to common stock divided by the weighted average number of common shares outstanding during the period. Any outstanding preferred shares are considered participating securities for computation of basic earnings per common share. Diluted earnings per common share include the dilutive effect of additional potential common shares issuable under stock options and restricted stock awards.

Share-Based Payment

Share based payment guidance requires the Company to recognize the grant-date fair value of stock options and other equity-based compensation issued to employees and non-employees in the Consolidated Statements of Income. A Black-

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

Scholes model is utilized to estimate the fair value of stock options. Compensation cost for stock options are recognized as noninterest expense in the Consolidated Statement of Income on a straight-line basis over the vesting period of each stock option grant. Compensation cost for stock options includes the impact of an estimated forfeiture rate.

Compensation expense for restricted stock awards is based on the fair value of the award on the measurement date, which is the date of grant, and the expense is recognized ratably over the service period of the award.

At December 31, 2020, no equity-based compensation had vesting conditions linked to the performance of the Company or market conditions.

Segment Reporting

The Company's operations are exclusively in the financial services industry and include the provision of traditional banking services. Management evaluates the performance of the Company based on only one business segment, that of community banking. In the opinion of management, the Company does not have any other reportable segments as defined by Accounting Standards Codification (ASC) Topic 280, "Disclosure about Segments of an Enterprise and Related Information."

Restrictions on Cash

Cash on hand or on deposit with the FRB is required to meet regulatory reserve and clearing requirements.

Reclassifications

Some items in the prior year financial statements were reclassified to conform to the current presentation. The reclassifications are immaterial and had no effect on prior year net income or stockholders' equity.

Comprehensive Income

Comprehensive income consists of net income and other comprehensive income (loss) which includes unrealized gains and losses on securities available-for-sale.

Fair Value of Financial Instruments

Fair values of financial instruments are estimated using relevant market information and other assumptions, as more fully disclosed in a separate note. Fair value estimates involve uncertainties and matters of significant judgment regarding interest rates, credit risk, prepayments, and other factors, especially in the absence of broad markets for particular items. Changes in assumptions or in market conditions could significantly affect the estimates.

Loss Contingencies

Loss contingencies, including claims and legal actions arising in the ordinary course of business, are recorded as liabilities when the likelihood of loss is probable and an amount or range of loss can be reasonably estimated. Management does not believe there now are such matters that will have a material effect on the Consolidated Financial Statements.

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

New Accounting Pronouncements

On June 16, 2016, the FASB issued Accounting Standards Update No. 2016-13, “Financial Instruments — Credit Losses (Topic 326): Measurement of Credit Losses on Financial Instruments” (the ASU). This ASU replaces the incurred loss model with an expected loss model, referred to as “current expected credit loss” (CECL) model. It will significantly change estimates for credit losses related to financial assets measured at amortized cost, including loans receivable and certain other contracts. This ASU will be effective for the Company in fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2019, including interim periods within those fiscal years. At its July 17, 2019 public meeting, FASB issued a proposal to delay the effective date of ASU 2016-13 for certain entities, including SEC filers classified as smaller reporting companies. On October 16, 2019, FASB voted for the delay, the revised effective date for adoption for the Company, which is classified as a smaller reporting company, is January 1, 2023. Due to this change in effective date, the Company plans to adopt ASU 2016-13 on or before January 1, 2023, using the required modified retrospective method with a cumulative effect adjustment as of the beginning of the reporting period. The Company has gathered the necessary data and continues to prepare for the implementation of this standard.

On March 12, 2020, the FASB issued Accounting Standards Update No. 2020-04, “Reference Rate Reform (Topic 848): Facilitation of the Effects of Reference Rate Reform on Financial Reporting.” ASU 2020-04 provides optional expedients and exceptions for accounting related to contracts, hedging relationships and other transactions affected by reference rate reform if certain criteria are met. ASU 2020-04 applies only to contracts, hedging relationships, and other transactions that reference LIBOR or another reference rate expected to be discontinued because of reference rate reform and do not apply to contract modifications made and hedging relationships entered into or evaluated after December 31, 2022, except for hedging relationships existing as of December 31, 2022, that an entity has elected certain optional expedients for and that are retained through the end of the hedging relationship. ASU 2020-04 was effective upon issuance and generally can be applied through December 31, 2022. Adoption of the standard is not expected to have a material impact on the company’s operating results or financial condition.

NOTE 2 — Debt Securities

Available-for-Sale Securities

The amortized cost, gross unrealized gains and losses and estimated fair value of securities available-for-sale were as follows at December 31:

	Amortized Cost	Gross Unrealized Gains	Gross Unrealized Losses	Fair Value
<u>December 31, 2020</u>				
Mortgage-backed securities – agency	\$ 55,212	\$ 1,237	\$ (49)	\$ 56,400
Collateralized mortgage obligations (CMOs) – agency	60,474	807	(26)	61,255
Total available-for-sale	<u>\$ 115,686</u>	<u>\$ 2,044</u>	<u>\$ (75)</u>	<u>\$ 117,655</u>
<u>December 31, 2019</u>				
Mortgage-backed securities – agency	\$ 24,603	\$ 524	\$ (90)	\$ 25,037
Collateralized mortgage obligations (CMOs) – agency	121,276	451	(345)	121,382
Total available-for-sale	<u>\$ 145,879</u>	<u>\$ 975</u>	<u>\$ (435)</u>	<u>\$ 146,419</u>

Mortgage-backed securities included all residential pass-through certificates guaranteed by FHLMC, FNMA, or GNMA and the CMO’s are backed by government agency pass-through certificates. The 2020 and 2019 pass-through

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

certificates are fixed rate instruments. CMO's, by virtue of the underlying residential collateral or structure, are fixed rate current pay sequentials or planned amortization classes (PAC's). As actual maturities may differ from contractual maturities because certain borrowers have the right to call or prepay certain obligations, these securities are not considered to have a single maturity date.

There were no sales of securities in 2020, 2019 and 2018.

At December 31, 2020, securities having a fair value of \$98,581 were pledged to the FHLB for borrowing capacity totaling \$93,830. At December 31, 2019, securities having a fair value of \$122,805 were pledged to the FHLB for borrowing capacity totaling \$116,741. At December 31, 2020 and 2019, the Company had no outstanding FHLB advances.

At December 31, 2020, securities having a fair value of \$19,074 were pledged to the FRB of New York for borrowing capacity totaling \$18,717. At December 31, 2019, securities having a fair value of \$23,614 were pledged to the FRB of New York for borrowing capacity totaling \$22,915. At December 31, 2020 and 2019, the Company had no outstanding FRB borrowings.

The following table provides the gross unrealized losses and fair value, aggregated by investment category and length of time the individual securities have been in a continuous unrealized loss position, as of December 31:

	<u>Less Than 12 Months</u>		<u>12 Months or Longer</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>Fair Value</u>	<u>Gross Unrealized Losses</u>	<u>Fair Value</u>	<u>Gross Unrealized Losses</u>	<u>Fair Value</u>	<u>Gross Unrealized Losses</u>
<u>2020</u>						
Mortgage-backed securities – agency ..	\$ 4,807	\$ (49)	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 4,807	\$ (49)
CMOs – agency	8,332	(17)	1,219	(9)	9,551	(26)
Total temporarily impaired securities ..	<u>\$ 13,139</u>	<u>\$ (66)</u>	<u>\$ 1,219</u>	<u>\$ (9)</u>	<u>\$ 14,358</u>	<u>\$ (75)</u>
<u>2019</u>						
Mortgage-backed securities - agency...	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 9,529	\$ (90)	\$ 9,529	\$ (90)
CMOs - Agency	20,639	(66)	22,295	(279)	42,934	(345)
Total temporarily impaired securities ..	<u>\$ 20,639</u>	<u>\$ (66)</u>	<u>\$ 31,824</u>	<u>\$ (369)</u>	<u>\$ 52,463</u>	<u>\$ (435)</u>

Management reviews the investment portfolio on a quarterly basis to determine the cause, magnitude and duration of declines in the fair value of each security. In estimating other-than-temporary impairment (OTTI), management considers many factors including: (1) the length of time and extent that fair value has been less than cost, (2) the financial condition and near term prospects of the issuer, (3) whether the market decline was affected by macroeconomic conditions, and (4) whether the Company has the intent to sell the security or more likely than not will be required to sell the security before its anticipated recovery. If either of the criteria regarding intent or requirement to sell is met, the entire difference between amortized cost and fair value is recognized as impairment through earnings. For securities that do not meet the aforementioned criteria, the amount of impairment is split into two components as follows: (1) OTTI related to credit loss, which must be recognized in the income statement and (2) OTTI related to other factors, which is recognized in other comprehensive income. The credit loss is defined as the difference between the present value of the cash flows expected to be collected and the amortized cost basis. The assessment of whether any other than temporary decline exists may involve a high degree of subjectivity and judgment and is based on the information available to management at a point in time. Management evaluates securities for OTTI at least on a quarterly basis, and more frequently when economic or market conditions warrant such an evaluation.

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

At December 31, 2020, securities in unrealized loss positions were issuances from government sponsored entities. Due to the decline in fair value attributable to changes in interest rates and illiquidity, not credit quality and because the Company does not have the intent to sell the securities and it is likely that it will not be required to sell the securities before their anticipated recovery, the Company does not consider the securities to be other-than-temporarily impaired at December 31, 2020.

No impairment charges were recorded in 2020, 2019 and 2018.

NOTE 3 — Loans

The composition of loans by class is summarized as follows at December 31:

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
1 – 4 family	\$ 48,433	\$ 48,140
Commercial	358,410	257,957
Multifamily	169,817	152,633
Commercial real estate	54,717	52,477
Construction	—	6,450
Consumer	<u>41,362</u>	<u>47,322</u>
Total Loans	672,739	564,979
Deferred costs and unearned premiums, net	(318)	390
Allowance for loan losses	<u>(11,402)</u>	<u>(6,989)</u>
Loans, net	<u>\$ 661,019</u>	<u>\$ 558,380</u>

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

At December 31, 2020, commercial loan balances included \$21,936 of SBA PPP loans.

The following tables present the activity in the allowance for loan losses by class for the years ending December 31, 2020, 2019 and 2018:

	<u>1-4 Family</u>	<u>Commercial</u>	<u>Multifamily</u>	<u>Commercial Real Estate</u>	<u>Construction</u>	<u>Consumer</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>December 31, 2020</u>							
Allowance for loan losses:							
Beginning balance	\$ 344	\$ 4,048	\$ 1,048	\$ 560	\$ 161	\$ 828	\$ 6,989
Provision (credit) for loan losses .	(2)	957	230	37	(161)	5,189	6,250
Recoveries	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Loans charged-off	—	(2)	—	—	—	(1,835)	(1,837)
Total ending allowance balance . .	<u>\$ 342</u>	<u>\$ 5,003</u>	<u>\$ 1,278</u>	<u>\$ 597</u>	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ 4,182</u>	<u>\$ 11,402</u>
<u>December 31, 2019</u>							
Allowance for loan losses:							
Beginning balance	\$ 407	\$ 3,110	\$ 952	\$ 357	\$ 149	\$ 654	\$ 5,629
Provision (credit) for loan losses .	(63)	957	159	203	12	582	1,850
Recoveries	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Loans charged-off	—	(19)	(63)	—	—	(408)	(490)
Total ending allowance balance . .	<u>\$ 344</u>	<u>\$ 4,048</u>	<u>\$ 1,048</u>	<u>\$ 560</u>	<u>\$ 161</u>	<u>\$ 828</u>	<u>\$ 6,989</u>
<u>December 31, 2018</u>							
Allowance for loan losses:							
Beginning balance	\$ 382	\$ 2,272	\$ 713	\$ 266	\$ 127	\$ 504	\$ 4,264
Provision for loan losses	25	838	239	91	22	160	1,375
Recoveries	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Loans charged-off	—	—	—	—	—	(10)	(10)
Total ending allowance balance . .	<u>\$ 407</u>	<u>\$ 3,110</u>	<u>\$ 952</u>	<u>\$ 357</u>	<u>\$ 149</u>	<u>\$ 654</u>	<u>\$ 5,629</u>

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

The following tables present the balance in the allowance for loan losses and the recorded investment in loans by class and based on impairment method as of December 31, 2020 and 2019:

	<u>1-4 Family</u>	<u>Commercial</u>	<u>Multifamily</u>	<u>Commercial Real Estate</u>	<u>Construction</u>	<u>Consumer</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>December 31, 2020</u>							
Allowance for loan losses:							
Ending allowance balance attributable to loans:							
Individually evaluated for impairment	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —
Collectively evaluated for impairment	<u>342</u>	<u>5,003</u>	<u>1,278</u>	<u>597</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>4,182</u>	<u>11,402</u>
Total ending allowance balance ...	<u>\$ 342</u>	<u>\$ 5,003</u>	<u>\$ 1,278</u>	<u>\$ 597</u>	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ 4,182</u>	<u>\$ 11,402</u>
Loans:							
Loans individually evaluated for impairment	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 2,303	\$ 2,303
Loans collectively evaluated for impairment	<u>48,433</u>	<u>358,410</u>	<u>169,817</u>	<u>54,717</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>39,059</u>	<u>670,436</u>
Total ending loans balance	<u>\$ 48,433</u>	<u>\$ 358,410</u>	<u>\$ 169,817</u>	<u>\$ 54,717</u>	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ 41,362</u>	<u>\$ 672,739</u>

Recorded investment is not adjusted for accrued interest, unearned premiums or deferred costs.

	<u>1-4 Family</u>	<u>Commercial</u>	<u>Multifamily</u>	<u>Commercial Real Estate</u>	<u>Construction</u>	<u>Consumer</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>December 31, 2019</u>							
Allowance for loan losses:							
Ending allowance Balance attributable to loans:							
Individually evaluated for impairment	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —
Collectively evaluated for impairment	<u>344</u>	<u>4,048</u>	<u>1,048</u>	<u>560</u>	<u>161</u>	<u>828</u>	<u>6,989</u>
Total ending allowance balance ...	<u>\$ 344</u>	<u>\$ 4,048</u>	<u>\$ 1,048</u>	<u>\$ 560</u>	<u>\$ 161</u>	<u>\$ 828</u>	<u>\$ 6,989</u>
Loans:							
Loans individually evaluated for impairment	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 1,476	\$ 1,476
Loans collectively evaluated for impairment	<u>48,140</u>	<u>257,957</u>	<u>152,633</u>	<u>52,477</u>	<u>6,450</u>	<u>45,846</u>	<u>563,503</u>
Total ending loans balance	<u>\$ 48,140</u>	<u>\$ 257,957</u>	<u>\$ 152,633</u>	<u>\$ 52,477</u>	<u>\$ 6,450</u>	<u>\$ 47,322</u>	<u>\$ 564,979</u>

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

The following tables provide an analysis of the impaired loans by segment as of December 31, 2020 and 2019:

	December 31, 2020		December 31, 2019	
	Recorded Investment	Unpaid Principal Balance	Recorded Investment	Unpaid Principal Balance
1-4 family	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —
Commercial	—	—	—	—
Multifamily	—	—	—	—
Commercial real estate	—	—	—	—
Construction	—	—	—	—
Consumer	2,303	2,303	1,476	1,476
Total	<u>\$ 2,303</u>	<u>\$ 2,303</u>	<u>\$ 1,476</u>	<u>\$ 1,476</u>

	Years ended December 31, 2020		2019	
	Average Recorded Investment	Interest Income Recognized	Average Recorded Investment	Interest Income Recognized
1-4 family	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —
Commercial	—	—	—	—
Multifamily	—	—	—	—
Commercial real estate	—	—	—	—
Construction	—	—	—	—
Consumer	1,381	—	541	—
Total	<u>\$ 1,381</u>	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ 541</u>	<u>\$ —</u>

There were no impaired loans during the year ended December 31, 2018.

The following tables present the aging of the recorded investment in past due loans by class of loans as of December 31, 2020 and 2019:

	30-59 Days Past Due	60-89 Days Past Due	Greater than 90 Days Past Due	Nonaccrual Loans	Total Past Due & Nonaccrual Loans	Loans Not Past Due	Total
<u>December 31, 2020</u>							
1 – 4 family	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 48,433	\$ 48,433
Commercial	—	—	—	—	—	358,410	358,410
Multifamily	—	—	—	—	—	169,817	169,817
Commercial real estate	—	—	—	—	—	54,717	54,717
Construction	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Consumer	26	—	—	2,303	2,329	39,033	41,362
Total	<u>\$ 26</u>	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ 2,303</u>	<u>\$ 2,329</u>	<u>\$ 670,410</u>	<u>\$ 672,739</u>

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

	30-59 Days Past Due	60-89 Days Past Due	Greater than 90 Days Past Due	Nonaccrual Loans	Total Past Due & Nonaccrual Loans	Loans Not Past Due	Total
<u>December 31, 2019</u>							
1 – 4 family	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 48,140	\$ 48,140
Commercial	—	—	—	—	—	257,957	257,957
Multifamily	—	2,602	—	—	2,602	150,031	152,633
Commercial real estate	—	—	—	—	—	52,477	52,477
Construction	—	—	—	—	—	6,450	6,450
Consumer	—	6	—	1,476	1,482	45,840	47,322
Total	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ 2,608</u>	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ 1,476</u>	<u>\$ 4,084</u>	<u>\$ 560,895</u>	<u>\$ 564,979</u>

Credit Quality Indicators

The Company categorizes loans into risk categories based on relevant information about the ability of borrowers to service their debt such as: current financial information, historical payment experience, credit documentation, public information, and current economic trends, among other factors. The Company analyzes loans individually by classifying the loans as to credit risk. This analysis is performed whenever a credit is extended, renewed or modified, or when an observable event occurs indicating a potential decline in credit quality, and no less than annually for large balance loans.

The Company uses the following definitions for risk ratings:

Special Mention — Loans classified as special mention have a potential weakness that deserves management’s close attention. If left uncorrected, these potential weaknesses may result in deterioration of the repayment prospects for the loan or of the institution’s credit position at some future date.

Substandard — Loans classified as substandard are inadequately protected by the current net worth and paying capacity of the obligor or of the collateral pledged, if any. Loans so classified have a well-defined weakness or weaknesses that jeopardize the liquidation of the debt. They are characterized by the distinct possibility that the institution will sustain some loss if the deficiencies are not corrected.

Doubtful — Loans classified as doubtful have all the weaknesses inherent in those classified as substandard, with the added characteristic that the weaknesses make collection or liquidation in full, on the basis of currently existing facts, conditions, and values, highly questionable and improbable.

Loans not meeting the criteria above that are analyzed individually as part of the above described process are considered to be pass rated loans.

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

Based on the most recent analysis performed, the risk category of loans by class of loans is as follows:

	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Special Mention</u>	<u>Substandard</u>	<u>Doubtful</u>
<u>December 31, 2020</u>				
1 – 4 family	\$ 45,418	\$ 3,015	\$ —	\$ —
Commercial	358,295	—	115	—
Multifamily	169,096	721	—	—
Commercial real estate	54,717	—	—	—
Construction	—	—	—	—
Consumer	34,896	4,163	2,303	—
Total	<u>\$ 662,422</u>	<u>\$ 7,899</u>	<u>\$ 2,418</u>	<u>\$ —</u>
	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Special Mention</u>	<u>Substandard</u>	<u>Doubtful</u>
<u>December 31, 2019</u>				
1 – 4 family	\$ 48,140	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —
Commercial	257,832	—	125	—
Multifamily	152,633	—	—	—
Commercial real estate	52,477	—	—	—
Construction	6,450	—	—	—
Consumer	42,431	3,415	1,476	—
Total	<u>\$ 559,963</u>	<u>\$ 3,415</u>	<u>\$ 1,601</u>	<u>\$ —</u>

The Company considers the performance of the loan portfolio and its impact on the allowance for loan losses. For smaller dollar commercial and consumer loan classes, the Company evaluates credit quality based on the aging status of the loan, which was previously presented, and by payment activity.

The Company has no loans identified as troubled debt restructurings at December 31, 2020 and 2019. Furthermore, there were no loan modifications during 2020, 2019 and 2018 that were troubled debt restructurings. In order to determine whether a borrower is experiencing financial difficulty, an evaluation is performed of the probability that the borrower will be in payment default on any of its debt in the foreseeable future without the modification. As discussed in Note 1, the Company implemented a payment deferral program in response to the COVID-19 crisis and elected to evaluate the modified loan population under the CARES act which allows for troubled debt restructuring categorization to be suspended.

Related Party Loans

Loans to related parties include loans to directors, their related companies and executive officers of the Company.

Loans to principal officers, directors, and their affiliates during 2020 were as follows:

Beginning balance	\$ 8,217
New advances	302
Repayments	(28)
Ending balance	<u>\$ 8,491</u>

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

Pledged Loans

At December 31, 2020, loans totaling \$37,519 were pledged to the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York for borrowing capacity totaling \$28,561. At December 31, 2019, loans totaling \$39,896 were pledged to the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York for borrowing capacity totaling \$26,991.

NOTE 4 — Premises and Equipment

The following is a summary of premises and equipment at December 31:

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Leasehold improvements	\$ 2,128	\$ 2,128
Equipment	3,518	3,462
Construction in progress	718	24
	<u>6,364</u>	<u>5,614</u>
Less: accumulated depreciation and amortization	3,347	2,779
Total premises and equipment, net	<u>\$ 3,017</u>	<u>\$ 2,835</u>

Depreciation and amortization of premises and equipment, reflected as a component of occupancy and equipment, net in the Consolidated Statements of Income, was \$568, \$506 and \$421 for the periods ended December 31, 2020, 2019 and 2018, respectively.

NOTE 5 — Deposits

As of December 31, 2020, deposits of \$804,054, was comprised of core deposit relationships of \$792,852 and certificates of deposit of \$11,202. Core deposits are defined as all deposits except certificates of deposits which include demand, savings, NOW, and money market deposit accounts. Our noninterest bearing demand deposits are presented as demand deposits and all core interest bearing deposits are presented as savings, NOW and money market deposits on the Consolidated Statements of Financial Condition. Certificates of deposit are presented as time deposits on the Consolidated Statements of Financial Condition.

The contractual maturities of certificates of deposit as of December 31, 2020, are as follows:

	<u>Total</u>
2021	\$ 3,245
2022	<u>7,957</u>
Total	<u>\$ 11,202</u>

As of December 31, 2020 and 2019, certificates of deposits greater than \$250 were \$7,561 and \$15,543, respectively.

Deposits from principal officers, directors, and their affiliates at year-end 2020 and 2019 were \$5,089 and \$9,869, respectively.

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

NOTE 6 — Borrowings

The Company had a secured borrowing of \$49 and \$86 as of December 31, 2020 and 2019, respectively, relating to certain loan participations sold by the Company that did not qualify for sales treatment.

At December 31, 2020 and 2019, we had the ability to borrow a total of \$122,391 and \$143,732, respectively, from the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York. We also had an available line of credit with the Federal Reserve Bank of New York discount window of \$18,717 and \$22,915 at December 31, 2020 and 2019, respectively. These borrowings are collateralized by loans and securities. At December 31, 2020 and 2019, we also had lines of credit with other financial institutions totaling \$67,500. No amounts were outstanding on any of the aforementioned lines as of December 31, 2020 and 2019.

NOTE 7 — Noninterest Income

The majority of the Company's revenue-generating transactions are not subject to ASC 606, including revenue generated from financial instruments, such as loans, letters of credit, and investment securities. Descriptions of revenue-generating activities that are within the scope of ASC 606, and are presented in the accompanying Consolidated Statements of Income as components of noninterest income, are as follows:

	For the Year Ended December 31,	
	2020	2019
Noninterest income		
Customer related fees and service charges		
Administrative service income	\$ 183	\$ 491
Merchant processing income		
Merchant services income	13,403	10,403
ACH income	696	573
Other	365	344
Total noninterest income	\$ 14,647	\$ 11,811

The Company has made no significant judgments in applying the revenue guidance prescribed in ASC 606 that affect the determination of the amount and timing of revenue from the above-described contracts with customers.

- Administrative service income – Administrative service income is derived primarily from the management of qualified settlement funds (QSFs), which are funds from settled mass torts and class action lawsuits. Our performance obligations with the QSFs are outlined in court approved orders which includes ensuring funds are invested into safe investment vehicles such as U.S. treasuries and FDIC insured products. Our fees for placing these funds in appropriate vehicles are earned over the course of a month, representing the period over which the Company satisfies the performance obligation.
- Merchant services income – We provide merchant services as an acquiring bank through the third-party or ISO business model in which we process credit and debit card transactions on behalf of merchants. We enter into a tri-party merchant agreement, between the company, ISO and each merchant. The Company's performance obligation is clearing and settling credit and debit transactions on behalf of the merchants. The Company recognizes revenue monthly once it summarizes and computes all revenue and expenses applicable to each ISO, which is our performance obligation.

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

- ACH income – We provide ACH services for merchants and other commercial customers. Contracts are entered into with third parties that require ACH transactions processed on behalf of their customers. Fees are variable and based on the volume of transactions within a given month. Our performance obligations are processing and settling ACHs on behalf of the customers. Our obligation is satisfied within each business day when the transactions (ACH files) are sent to the Federal Reserve Bank for clearing. Revenue is recognized based on the total volume of transactions processed that month for a given customer.
- Other – The other category includes revenue from service charges on deposit accounts, debit card interchange fees, and certain loan related fees where revenue is recognized as performance obligations are satisfied.

NOTE 8 — Income Taxes

The following summarizes components of income tax expense for the years ended December 31:

	2020	2019	2018
Current			
Federal expense	\$ 4,203	\$ 3,905	\$ 2,761
State and city expense	1,301	1,206	799
Total current tax expense	5,504	5,111	3,560
Deferred			
Federal (benefit) expense	(641)	153	(257)
State and city (benefit) expense	(314)	(269)	(113)
Total deferred tax (benefit) expense	(955)	(116)	(370)
Income tax expense	\$ 4,549	\$ 4,995	\$ 3,190

The following is a reconciliation of the Company's statutory federal income tax rate of 21% to its effective tax rate at December 31:

	2020	2019	2018
Federal tax expense at statutory rate	\$ 3,605	\$ 4,019	\$ 2,504
State and local income taxes, net of federal income tax benefit . .	974	1,157	608
Incentive stock options	53	48	33
Stock-based compensation excess tax benefit	(85)	(23)	(60)
Research and development tax credits	(77)	(129)	—
Other	79	(77)	105
Income tax expense	\$ 4,549	\$ 4,995	\$ 3,190

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

The following summarizes the components of the Company's deferred tax assets and deferred tax liabilities at December 31:

	2020	2019
Deferred tax assets:		
Net operating loss carry forwards	\$ 256	\$ 321
Stock based compensation	1,084	754
Allowance for loan loss	3,174	1,931
Deferred loan fees, net	115	—
Other	383	44
Total deferred tax assets	5,012	3,050
Deferred tax liabilities:		
Fixed assets	(1,108)	(414)
Unrealized gain on securities available-for-sale	(562)	(154)
Investment in partnership	(570)	(352)
Deferred loan fees, net	—	(29)
Other	(175)	(52)
Total deferred tax liabilities	(2,415)	(1,001)
Deferred tax asset, net.	<u>\$ 2,597</u>	<u>\$ 2,049</u>

The Company has New York state and city net operating loss carryforwards of \$3,579 and \$269, respectively, as of December 31, 2020. The net operating losses are available to reduce future taxable income and begin to expire in 2026.

Realization of deferred tax assets is dependent upon the generation of future taxable income. A valuation allowance is provided when it is more likely than not that some portion of the deferred tax asset will not be realized. Based on its evaluation, the Company has determined that it is more likely than not that the deferred tax asset as of December 31, 2020 and 2019, will be realized.

The Company does not have any unrecognized tax benefits at December 31, 2020 and 2019, and does not expect this to increase in the next twelve months. There were no interest and penalties recorded in the Consolidated Statements of Income for the years ended December 31, 2020, 2019 and 2018. The Company is subject to U.S. federal income tax as well as income tax in ten state and local jurisdictions. The Company is no longer subject to examination by taxing authorities for years before 2017.

NOTE 9 — Employee Benefits

401(k) Plan

A savings plan is maintained under section 401(k) of the Internal Revenue Code and covers substantially all current full-time employees. Newly hired employees can elect to participate in the savings plan after completing one month of service. In 2020, 2019 and 2018, the Company matched 100% of employee contributions up to 2% of their salary in 2020 and 2019 and 1% in 2018 resulting in total expenses of \$150, \$126 and \$47, respectively.

Share Based Payment Plans

The Company issues incentive and non-statutory stock options and restricted stock awards to certain employees and directors pursuant to its equity incentive plans, which have been approved by the stockholders. Share-based awards are granted by the Compensation Committee of the Board of Directors.

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

The Company's 2007 Stock Option Plan allowed for a maximum of 270,000 shares of common stock to be issued. As of December 31, 2020, 269,500 shares have been issued. The 2007 Stock Option Plan expired in May of 2017 and no new options can be granted from the plan.

The Company's 2011 Stock Compensation Plan allows for a maximum of 754,607 shares of common stock to be issued. The Company has 62 shares available for issuance under the 2011 Stock Compensation Plan as of December 31, 2020.

The Company's 2017 Equity Incentive Plan allows for a maximum of 300,000 shares of common stock to be issued. A total of 84 shares remain available for grant under the 2017 Equity Incentive Plan all of which are to be granted as stock options.

The Company's 2019 Equity Incentive Plan allows for a maximum of 300,000 shares of common stock to be issued. A total of 46,150 shares remain available for grant under the 2019 Equity Incentive Plan of which 41,900 and 4,250 can be granted as stock options and restricted shares, respectively.

Under the plans, options are granted with an exercise price equal to the fair value of the Company's stock at the date of the grant. Options granted vest over three or five years and have ten-year contractual terms. All options provide for accelerated vesting upon a change in control (as defined in the plans). Restricted shares are granted at the fair value on the date of grant and typically vest over 6 years with a third vesting after years four, five, and six. Restricted shares have the same voting rights as common stock and nonvested restricted shareholders do not have rights to the accrued dividends until vested.

The fair value of each option award is estimated on the date of grant using a closed form option valuation (Black-Scholes) model that uses the assumptions noted in the table below. Expected volatilities are based on peer volatility. The Company uses peer data to estimate option exercise and post-vesting termination behavior. The expected term of options granted is based on peer data and represents the period of time that options granted are expected to be outstanding, which takes into account that the options are not transferable. The risk-free interest rate for the expected term of the option is based on the U.S. Treasury yield curve in effect at the time of the grant.

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

The fair value of options granted was determined using the following weighted-average assumptions as of grant date.

	2020	2019	2018
Risk-Free Interest Rate	0.61 %	1.85 %	2.65 %
Expected Term.	84 months	84 months	84 months
Expected Stock Price Volatility	52.4 %	22.1 %	20.6 %
Dividend Yield	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %
Weighted Average Fair Value	\$ 10.99	\$ 7.18	\$ 6.43

The following table presents a summary of the activity related to options as of December 31, 2020:

	Options	Weighted Average Exercise Price	Weighted Average Remaining Contractual Life (Years)
<u>December 31, 2020</u>			
Outstanding at beginning of year	916,425	\$ 13.56	
Granted.	67,100	20.29	
Exercised	(74,092)	12.50	
Forfeited.	(1,834)	25.06	
Expired.	(500)	24.90	
Outstanding at period end.	<u>907,099</u>	<u>\$ 14.11</u>	<u>5.70</u>
Vested or expected to vest	<u>907,099</u>	<u>\$ 14.11</u>	<u>5.70</u>
Exercisable at period end	<u>762,549</u>	<u>\$ 13.29</u>	<u>5.24</u>

The Company recognized compensation expense related to options of \$492, \$521 and \$1,007 for the years ended December 31, 2020, 2019 and 2018, respectively. At December 31, 2020, unrecognized compensation cost related to non-vested options was approximately \$947 and is expected to be recognized over a weighted average period of 2.41 years. The intrinsic value for outstanding options net of expected forfeitures was \$5,006. The intrinsic value for exercisable options at December 31, 2019 was \$9,312. The intrinsic value of options exercised in 2020 was \$943 and the related cash received was \$401 where an excess tax benefit of \$107 was recognized.

The following table presents a summary of the activity related to restricted stock as of December 31, 2020:

	Shares	Weighted Average Grant Date Fair Value
<u>December 31, 2020</u>		
Outstanding at beginning of year	259,000	\$ 23.81
Granted.	121,750	20.85
Vested.	—	—
Outstanding at period end.	<u>380,750</u>	<u>\$ 22.87</u>

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

The Company recognized compensation expense related to restricted stock of \$1,048, \$574 and \$496 for the years ended December 31, 2020, 2019 and 2018, respectively. As of December 31, 2020, there was \$6,877 of total unrecognized compensation cost related to non-vested shares granted under the plan. The cost is expected to be recognized over a weighted-average period of 4.95 years.

NOTE 10 — Earnings per Common Share

The two-class method is used in the calculation of basic and diluted earnings per share. Under the two-class method, earnings available to common shareholders for the period are allocated between common shareholders and participating securities according to participation rights in undistributed earnings. The factors used in earnings per share computation follow:

	For the Years Ended December 31,		
	2020	2019	2018
<u>Basic</u>			
Net income.....	\$ 12,618	\$ 14,143	\$ 8,734
Weighted average common shares outstanding	7,412,131	7,388,702	7,374,013
Basic earnings per share	\$ 1.70	\$ 1.91	\$ 1.18
<u>Diluted</u>			
Net income.....	\$ 12,618	\$ 14,143	\$ 8,711
Weighted average shares outstanding for basic earnings per share.....	7,412,131	7,388,702	7,374,013
Add: Dilutive effects of share based awards	231,692	396,034	359,359
Average shares and dilutive potential common shares.....	7,643,823	7,784,736	7,733,372
Diluted earnings per share	\$ 1.65	\$ 1.82	\$ 1.13

Stock based awards totaling 394,266, 164,250 and 129,500 shares of common stock were not considered in computing diluted earnings per common share for 2020, 2019 and 2018, respectively, because they were anti-dilutive.

NOTE 11 — Commitments and Contingent Liabilities

Change-In-Control Arrangements

Certain key executive officers have arrangements that provide for the payment of a multiple of base salary, should a change-in control, as defined, occur. These payments are limited under guidelines for deductibility pursuant to the Internal Revenue Code.

Credit Related Commitments

The Company provides off-balance sheet financial products to customers in the form of commitments to extend credit which are agreements to lend to customers in accordance with contractual provisions. These commitments usually have fixed expiration dates or other termination clauses and may require the payment of a fee. Total commitments outstanding do not necessarily represent future cash flow requirements as many commitments expire without being funded.

Each customer's creditworthiness is evaluated prior to issuing these commitments and may require the customer to pledge certain collateral (i.e., inventory, income-producing property) prior to the extension of credit. Fixed rate

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

commitments are subject to interest rate risk based on changes in prevailing rates during the commitment period. The Company is also subject to credit risk in the event that the commitments are drawn upon and the customer is unable to repay the obligation.

Letters of credit are irrevocable commitments issued at the request of customers. They authorize the beneficiary to draw drafts for payment in accordance with the stated terms and conditions. Letters of credit substitute the Company's creditworthiness for that of the customer and are issued for a fee commensurate with the risk.

The Company can issue two types of letters of credit: commercial (documentary) letters of credit and standby letters of credit. Commercial letters of credit are commonly issued to finance the purchase of goods and are typically short term in nature. Standby letters of credit are issued to back financial or performance obligations of a Bank customer and are typically issued for periods up to one year. Due to their long-term nature, standby letters of credit require adequate collateral in the form of cash or other liquid assets. In most instances, standby letters of credit expire without being drawn upon.

The credit risk involved in issuing letters of credit is essentially the same as extending credit facilities to comparable customers.

	For the Years Ended December 31,			
	2020		2019	
	Fixed Rate	Variable Rate	Fixed Rate	Variable Rate
Unused lines of credit	\$ 29	\$ 17,391	\$ 80	\$ 22,580
Standby letters of credit	2,258	—	1,338	—
Total credit related commitments.	<u>\$ 2,287</u>	<u>\$ 17,391</u>	<u>\$ 1,418</u>	<u>\$ 22,580</u>

The fixed rate loan commitments have interest rates ranging from 3.75% to 18.00% and maturities ranging from 1 month to 5 years.

Litigation

The Company and its subsidiary are subject to certain pending and threatened legal actions that arise out of the normal course of business. In the opinion of management at the present time, the resolution of any pending or threatened litigation will not have a material adverse effect on its Consolidated Financial Statements.

NOTE 12 — Leases

As of January 1, 2019, the Company recognizes the present value of its operating lease payments related to its office facilities and retail branch as operating lease assets and corresponding lease liabilities on the Consolidated Statements of Financial Condition. These operating lease assets represent the Company's right to use an underlying asset for the lease term, and the lease liability represents the Company's obligation to make lease payments over the lease term. As these leases do not provide an implicit rate, the Company used its incremental borrowing rate, the rate of interest to borrow on a collateralized basis for a similar term, at the lease commencement date in order to determine present value.

Short-term lease payments, those leases with original terms of 12 months or less, are recognized in the Consolidated Statements of Income, on a straight-line basis over the lease term. Certain leases may include one or more options to renew. The exercise of lease renewal options is typically at the Company's discretion and are included in the operating lease liability if it is reasonably certain that the renewal option will be exercised. Certain real estate leases may contain

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

lease and non-lease components, such as common area maintenance charges, real estate taxes, and insurance, which are generally accounted for separately and are not included in the measurement of the lease liability since they are generally able to be segregated. The Company does not sublease any of its leased properties. The Company does not lease properties from any related parties.

As of December 31, 2020, right of use (“ROU”) lease assets and related lease liabilities were \$2.9 million and \$3.5 million, respectively. As of December 31, 2019, ROU lease assets and related lease liabilities were \$2.7 million and \$3.3 million, respectively.

As of December 31, 2020, the Company was obligated under several non-cancelable leases for certain premises and equipment. The minimum annual rental commitments, exclusive of taxes and other charges, under non-cancelable lease agreements for premises at December 31, 2020, are summarized as follows:

	Year ending December 31,
2021	\$ 645
2022	644
2023	636
2024	652
2025	668
Thereafter	627
Total operating lease payments	\$ 3,872
Less: interest	340
Present value of operating lease liabilities	\$ 3,532

	As of December 31,	
	2020	2019
Weighted-average remaining lease term	5.83 years	6.88 years
Weighted-average discount rate	3.03 %	3.11 %

The components of total lease cost are as follows:

	For the year ended December 31,	
	2020	2019
Operating lease cost	\$ 563	\$ 500
Short-term lease cost	66	61
Total lease cost	\$ 629	\$ 561

These leases contain periodic escalation clauses and all expiring leases are evaluated for extensions at renewal. Rent expense for the years ended December 31, 2020, 2019, and 2018 amounted to \$629, \$561 and \$599, respectively.

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

NOTE 13 — Fair Value Measurements

Fair value is the exchange price that would be received for an asset or paid to transfer a liability (exit price) in the principal or most advantageous market for the asset or liability in an orderly transaction between market participants on the measurement date. There are three levels of inputs that may be used to measure fair values.

Level 1 — Quoted prices (unadjusted) for identical assets or liabilities in active markets that the entity has the ability to access as of the measurement date.

Level 2 — Significant other observable inputs other than Level 1 prices such as quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities; quoted prices in markets that are not active; or other inputs that are observable or can be corroborated by observable market data.

Level 3 — Significant unobservable inputs that reflect a company's own assumptions about the assumptions that market participants would use in pricing an asset or liability.

For available-for-sale securities where quoted prices are not available, fair values are calculated based on market prices of similar securities (Level 2).

Assets and liabilities measured at fair value on a recurring basis are summarized below:

	Fair Value Measurements Using		
	Quoted Prices In Active Markets For Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Other Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Significant Unobservable Inputs (Level 3)
<u>December 31, 2020</u>			
Assets			
Available-for-sale securities			
Mortgage-backed securities – agency	\$ —	\$ 56,400	\$ —
CMOs – agency	—	61,255	—
Total	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ 117,655</u>	<u>\$ —</u>
<u>December 31, 2019</u>			
Assets			
Available-for-sale securities			
Mortgage-backed securities – agency	\$ —	\$ 25,037	\$ —
CMOs – agency	—	121,382	—
Total	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ 146,419</u>	<u>\$ —</u>

There were no transfers between Level 1 and Level 2 during the year. There were no assets measured on a non-recurring basis as of December 31, 2020 and 2019.

Estimated Fair Value of Financial Instruments

Fair value estimates are made at specific points in time and are based on existing on-and off-balance sheet financial instruments. Such estimates are generally subjective in nature and dependent upon a number of significant assumptions

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

associated with each financial instrument or group of financial instruments, including estimates of discount rates, risks associated with specific financial instruments, estimates of future cash flows, and relevant available market information. Changes in assumptions could significantly affect the estimates. In addition, fair value estimates do not reflect the value of anticipated future business, premiums or discounts that could result from offering for sale at one time the Company's entire holdings of a particular financial instrument, or the tax consequences of realizing gains or losses on the sale of financial instruments.

The Company used the following method and assumptions in estimating the fair value of its financial instruments:

Securities Available-for-Sale: The fair values for securities available-for-sale are determined by quoted market prices in active markets, if available (Level 1). For securities where quoted prices are not available, fair values are calculated based on market prices of similar securities (Level 2), using matrix pricing. Matrix pricing is a mathematical technique commonly used to price debt securities that are not actively traded, values debt securities without relying exclusively on quoted prices for the specific securities but rather by relying on the securities' relationship to other benchmark quoted securities with observable transactions (Level 2 inputs).

The following table presents the carrying amounts and fair values (represents exit price) of the Company's financial instruments:

	Fair Value Measurement at December 31, 2020, Using:				
	Carrying Value	(Level 1)	(Level 2)	(Level 3)	Total
Financial Assets:					
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 65,185	\$ 1,775	\$ 63,410	\$ —	\$ 65,185
Securities purchased under agreements to resell, at cost	51,726	—	—	51,726	51,726
Securities available-for-sale	117,655	—	117,655	—	117,655
Securities, restricted, at cost	2,694	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Loans, net.	661,019	—	—	661,992	661,992
Accrued interest receivable.	4,529	—	245	4,284	4,529
Financial Liabilities:					
Time deposits.	11,202	—	11,246	—	11,246
Demand and other deposits.	792,852	792,852	—	—	792,852
Secured borrowings.	49	—	49	—	49
Accrued interest payable	—	—	—	—	—

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

	Fair Value Measurement at December 31, 2019, Using:				
	Carrying Value	(Level 1)	(Level 2)	(Level 3)	Total
Financial Assets:					
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 61,806	\$ 669	\$ 61,007	\$ —	\$ 61,676
Securities purchased under agreements to resell, at cost	—	—	—	—	—
Securities available-for-sale	146,419	—	146,419	—	146,419
Securities, restricted, at cost	2,665	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Loans, net.	558,380	—	—	560,859	560,859
Accrued interest receivable.	3,242	—	386	2,856	3,242
Financial Liabilities:					
Time deposits.	19,746	—	19,763	—	19,763
Demand and other deposits.	660,874	660,874	—	—	660,874
Secured borrowings.	86	—	86	—	86
Accrued interest payable.	12	—	12	—	12

NOTE 14 — Capital

Banks are subject to regulatory capital requirements administered by federal banking agencies. Capital adequacy guidelines and additionally for banks, prompt corrective action regulations, involve quantitative measures of assets, liabilities and certain off-balance sheet items calculated under regulatory accounting practices. Capital amounts and classifications are also subject to qualitative judgments by regulators. Failure to meet capital requirements can initiate regulatory action. The final rules of implementing the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision's capital guidelines for U.S. Banks (Basel III rules) became effective for the Company on January 1, 2015, with full compliance with all of the requirements being phased in over a multi-year schedule, and fully phased in on January 1, 2019. The net unrealized gain or loss on available-for-sale securities and certain deferred tax assets are not included in computing regulatory capital. Management believes as of December 31, 2020, the Bank met all capital adequacy requirements to which it is subject.

Prompt corrective action regulations provide five classifications: well capitalized, adequately capitalized, undercapitalized, significantly undercapitalized and critically undercapitalized, although these terms are not used to represent overall financial condition. If adequately capitalized, regulatory approval is required to accept brokered deposits. If undercapitalized, capital distributions are limited, as is asset growth and expansion, and capital restoration plans are required.

As of December 31, 2020, the most recent notification from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation categorized the Bank as "well capitalized" under the regulatory framework for prompt corrective action. To be categorized as "well capitalized," the Bank must maintain minimum total risk-based, Tier 1 risk-based and Tier 1 leverage ratios as set forth in

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

the table below. Since that notification, there are no conditions or events that management believes have changed the institution's category.

	Actual		Required For Capital Adequacy Purposes*		For Capital Adequacy Purposes Including Capital Conservation Buffer		To be Well Capitalized Under Prompt Corrective Action Regulations*	
	Amount	Ratio	Amount	Ratio	Amount	Ratio	Amount	Ratio
<u>December 31, 2020</u>								
Total capital to risk weighted assets	\$ 118,886	16.69 %	\$ 56,974	8.00 %	\$ 74,778	10.50 %	\$ 71,218	10.00 %
Tier 1 (core) capital to risk weighted assets	109,953	15.44	42,731	6.00	60,535	8.50	56,974	8.00
Tier 1 (common) capital to risk weighted assets.	109,953	15.44	32,048	4.50	49,852	7.00	46,291	6.50
Tier 1 (core) capital to adjusted total assets.	109,953	12.51	35,152	4.00	35,152	4.00	43,941	5.00
<u>December 31, 2019</u>								
Total capital to risk weighted assets	\$ 107,738	17.83 %	\$ 48,335	8.00 %	\$ 63,439	10.50 %	\$ 60,418	10.00 %
Tier 1 (core) capital to risk weighted assets	100,748	16.68	36,251	6.00	51,356	8.50	48,335	8.00
Tier 1 (common) capital to risk weighted assets.	100,748	16.68	27,188	4.50	42,293	7.00	39,272	6.50
Tier 1 (core) capital to adjusted total assets.	100,748	13.50	29,841	4.00	29,841	4.00	37,301	5.00

* BASEL III revised the capital adequacy requirements and the Prompt Corrective Action Framework effective January 1, 2015 for the Bank and fully phased in by January 1, 2019.

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

NOTE 15 — Parent Company Only Condensed Financial Information

Condensed financial information of Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. follows:

CONDENSED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL CONDITION

	At December 31,	
	2020	2019
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 8,098	\$ 5,571
Investment in banking subsidiary	111,562	101,414
Equity investment without readily determinable fair value	2,410	2,410
Other assets	4,265	2,046
Total assets	<u>126,335</u>	<u>111,441</u>
LIABILITIES		
Other liabilities	259	379
Total liabilities	<u>259</u>	<u>379</u>
STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY		
Preferred stock	—	—
Common stock	78	77
Additional paid-in-capital	91,622	89,682
Retained earnings	33,535	20,917
Other comprehensive income	1,408	386
Treasury stock at cost	(567)	—
Total stockholders' equity	<u>\$ 126,076</u>	<u>\$ 111,062</u>
Total liabilities and equity	<u>\$ 126,335</u>	<u>\$ 111,441</u>

CONDENSED STATEMENTS OF INCOME AND COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

	For the Years Ended December 31,		
	2020	2019	2018
Interest income	\$ 86	\$ 95	\$ 156
Other expense	2,138	1,822	2,263
Loss before income tax and undistributed subsidiary income	(2,052)	(1,727)	(2,107)
Income tax benefit	544	450	563
Equity in undistributed subsidiary income	14,126	15,420	10,278
Net income	<u>\$ 12,618</u>	<u>\$ 14,143</u>	<u>\$ 8,734</u>
Comprehensive income	<u>\$ 13,640</u>	<u>\$ 17,143</u>	<u>\$ 7,510</u>

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31, 2020 and 2019

(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)

CONDENSED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS

	For the Years Ended December 31,		
	2020	2019	2018
Cash flows from operating activities:			
Net income	\$ 12,618	\$ 14,143	\$ 8,734
Adjustments:			
Stock compensation expense	1,540	1,095	1,503
Equity in undistributed subsidiary income	(14,126)	(15,420)	(10,278)
Change in other assets	(573)	(435)	(563)
Change in other liabilities	(120)	322	(9)
Net cash used in operating activities	(661)	(295)	(613)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Investments in subsidiaries	—	—	(11,000)
Net change in other	(1,646)	1,775	(1,775)
Dividends received	5,000	—	—
Purchase of equity investment without readily determinable fair value	—	—	(2,410)
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	3,354	1,775	(15,185)
Cash flows from financing activities:			
Exercise of stock options	401	50	378
Purchase of common stock	(567)	—	—
Net cash (used in) provided by financing activities	(166)	50	378
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	2,527	1,530	(15,420)
Beginning cash and cash equivalents	5,571	4,041	19,461
Ending cash and cash equivalents	<u>\$ 8,098</u>	<u>\$ 5,571</u>	<u>\$ 4,041</u>

NOTE 15 — Accumulated Other Comprehensive Income (Loss)

The following is changes in accumulated other comprehensive income (loss) by component, net of tax, for the years ending December 31, 2020, 2019, and 2018:

	For the Years Ended December 31,		
	2020	2019	2018
<u>Unrealized Gains (Losses) on Available-for-Sale Securities</u>			
Beginning balance	\$ 386	\$ (2,614)	\$ (1,390)
Other comprehensive (loss) income before reclassifications, net of tax ..	1,022	3,000	(1,224)
Amounts reclassified from accumulated other comprehensive income ..	—	—	—
Net current period other comprehensive (loss) income	1,022	3,000	(1,224)
Ending balance	<u>\$ 1,408</u>	<u>\$ 386</u>	<u>\$ (2,614)</u>

There were no reclassifications out of accumulated other comprehensive income (loss) for the years presented.

ITEM 9. Changes In and Disagreements With Accountants on Accounting and Financial Disclosure

None.

ITEM 9A. Controls and Procedures

Disclosure Controls and Procedures

An evaluation was performed under the supervision and with the participation of the Company's management, including the Principal Executive Officer and Principal Financial Officer, of the effectiveness of the design and operation of the Company's disclosure controls and procedures (as defined in Rule 13a-15(e) promulgated under the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934, as amended) as of December 31, 2020. Based on that evaluation, the Company's Principal Executive Officer and Principal Financial Officer concluded that the Company's disclosure controls and procedures were effective as of the end of the period covered by the annual report.

Report by Management on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

Management is responsible for establishing and maintaining an effective system of internal control over financial reporting. The Company's system of internal control over financial reporting is designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the reliability of financial reporting and the preparation of financial statements for external purposes in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. There are inherent limitations in the effectiveness of any system of internal control over financial reporting, including the possibility of human error and circumvention or overriding of controls. Accordingly, even an effective system of internal control over financial reporting can provide only reasonable assurance with respect to financial statement preparation. Projections of any evaluation of effectiveness to future periods are subject to the risks that controls may become inadequate because of changes in conditions or that the degree of compliance with the policies or procedures may deteriorate.

Management has assessed the Company's internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2020. This assessment was based on criteria for effective internal control over financial reporting described in *Internal Control - Integrated Framework (2013)* issued by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission. Based on this assessment, management believes that, as of December 31, 2020, the Company maintained effective internal control over financial reporting based on those criteria.

Crowe LLP, the independent registered public accounting firm, audited the consolidated financial statements of the Company included in this Annual Report on Form 10-K. Their report is included in Part II, Item 8. Financial Statements and Supplementary Data under the heading "Report of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm." The Annual Report on Form 10-K does not include an attestation report on the Company's internal control over financial reporting from the Company's independent registered public accounting firm as the rules of the Securities and Exchange Commission permit the Company to provide only management's report in this Annual Report.

Changes in Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

There has been no change in the Company's internal control over financial reporting during the quarter ended December 31, 2020, that has materially affected, or is reasonably likely to materially affect, the Company's internal control over financial reporting.

ITEM 9B. Other Information

None.

PART III

ITEM 10. Directors, Executive Officers and Corporate Governance

Esquire Financial has adopted a Code of Ethics that applies to its principal executive officer, principal financial officer and principal accounting officer or controller or persons performing similar functions. A copy of the Code is available on Esquire Financial's website at www.esquirebank.com under "Investor Relations — Governance Documents."

The information contained under the section captioned "Proposal I — Election of Directors" in the Company's definitive Proxy Statement for the 2021 Annual Meeting of Stockholders (the "Proxy Statement") is incorporated herein by reference.

ITEM 11. Executive Compensation

The information required by this item is incorporated herein by reference to the section captioned "Proposal I — Election of Directors — Executive Officer Compensation" of the Proxy Statement.

ITEM 12. Security Ownership of Certain Beneficial Owners and Management and Related Stockholder Matters

The information required by this item is incorporated herein by reference to the section captioned "Voting Securities and Principal Holders" of the Proxy Statement.

ITEM 13. Certain Relationships and Related Transactions, and Director Independence

The information required by this item is incorporated herein by reference to the sections captioned "Proposal I — Election of Directors — Transactions with Certain Related Persons," "— Board Independence" and "— Meetings and Committees of the Board of Directors" of the Proxy Statement.

ITEM 14. Principal Accountant Fees and Services

The information required by this item is incorporated herein by reference to the section captioned "Proposal II — Ratification of Appointment of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm" of the Proxy Statement.

PART IV

ITEM 15. Exhibits and Financial Statement Schedules

- 3.1 Articles of Incorporation of Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.1 in the Registration Statement on Form S-1 (File No. 333-218372) originally filed by the Company under the Securities Act of 1933 with the Commission on May 31, 2017, and all amendments or reports filed thereto)
- 3.2 Bylaws of Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.3 in the Registration Statement on Form S-1/A (File No. 333-218372) originally filed by the Company under the Securities Act of 1933 with the Commission on June 22, 2017, and all amendments or reports filed thereto)
- 4.1 Form of Common Stock Certificate of Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4 in the Registration Statement on Form S-1 (File No. 333-218372) originally filed by the Company under the Securities Act of 1933 with the Commission on May 31, 2017, and all amendments or reports filed thereto)
- 4.2 Description of Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. Common Stock (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.2 in the Annual Report on Form 10-K (File No. 001-38131) originally filed by the Company on March 12, 2020)
- 10.1 Employment Agreement by and among Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc., Esquire Bank and Andrew C. Sagliocca (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.4 in the Registration Statement on Form S-1 (File No. 333-218372) originally filed by the Company under the Securities Act of 1933 with the Commission on May 31, 2017, and all amendments or reports filed thereto)†
- 10.2 Employment Agreement by and among Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc., Esquire Bank and Eric Bader (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.5 in the Registration Statement on Form S-1 (File No. 333-218372) originally filed by the Company under the Securities Act of 1933 with the Commission on May 31, 2017, and all amendments or reports filed thereto)†
- 10.3 Employment Agreement by and among Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc., Esquire Bank and Ari Kornhaber (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.6 in the Registration Statement on Form S-1 (File No. 333-218372) originally filed by the Company under the Securities Act of 1933 with the Commission on May 31, 2017, and all amendments or reports filed thereto)†
- 10.4 Esquire Bank 2007 Stock Option Plan (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.7 in the Registration Statement on Form S-1 (File No. 333-218372) originally filed by the Company under the Securities Act of 1933 with the Commission on May 31, 2017, and all amendments or reports filed thereto)†
- 10.5 Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. 2011 Stock Compensation Plan, as amended (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.8 in the Registration Statement on Form S-1 (File No. 333-218372) originally filed by the Company under the Securities Act of 1933 with the Commission on May 31, 2017, and all amendments or reports filed thereto)†
- 10.6 Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. 2017 Equity Incentive Plan (incorporated by reference to Appendix A to the proxy statement for the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. (File No. 001-38131), filed by the Company with the Commission on Schedule 14A under the Exchange Act on October 3, 2017)†
- 10.7 First Amendment to the Employment Agreement by and among Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc., Esquire Bank and Eric Bader dated December 19, 2018 (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.10 in the Annual Report on Form 10-K (File No. 001-38131) originally filed by the Company on March 14, 2019)†
- 10.8 Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. 2019 Equity Incentive Plan (incorporated by reference to Appendix A to the proxy statement for the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. (File No. 333-232164), filed by the Company with the Commission on Schedule 14A under the Exchange Act on June 6, 2019)†
- 21 Subsidiaries of Registrant
- 23 Consent of Crowe LLP
- 31.1 Certification of Chief Executive Officer pursuant to Rule 13a-14(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, as adopted pursuant to Section 302 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002

- 31.2 Certification of Chief Financial Officer pursuant to Rule 13a-14(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, as adopted pursuant to Section 302 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002
- 32 Certification of Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer pursuant to 18 U.S.C. Section 1350, as adopted pursuant to Section 906 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002
- 101 The following materials from the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K, formatted in Inline XBRL: (i) Consolidated Statements of Financial Condition, (ii) Consolidated Statements of Income, (iii) Consolidated Statements of Comprehensive Income, (iv) Consolidated Statements of Changes in Stockholders' Equity (v) Consolidated Statements of Cash Flows and (v) Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements
- 104 The cover page from the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2020, formatted in Inline XBRL

† Management contract or compensation plan or arrangement.

ITEM 16. Form 10-K Summary

None.

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the Registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

Date: March 19, 2021

ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

By: /s/ Andrew C. Sagliocca

Andrew C. Sagliocca

President, Chief Executive Officer and Director
(Duly Authorized Representative)

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange of 1934, this report has been signed below by the following persons on behalf of the Registrant and in the capacities and on the dates indicated.

<u>Signatures</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
<u>/s/ Andrew C. Sagliocca</u> Andrew C. Sagliocca	President and Chief Executive Officer and Director (Principal Executive Officer)	March 19, 2021
<u>/s/ Michael Lacapria</u> Michael Lacapria	Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer (Principal Financial and Accounting Officer)	March 19, 2021
<u>/s/ Anthony Coelho</u> Anthony Coelho	Chairman	March 19, 2021
<u>/s/ Todd Deutsch</u> Todd Deutsch	Director	March 19, 2021
<u>/s/ Marc D. Grossman</u> Marc D. Grossman	Director	March 19, 2021
<u>/s/ Russ M. Herman</u> Russ M. Herman	Director	March 19, 2021
<u>/s/ Janet Hill</u> Janet Hill	Director	March 19, 2021
<u>/s/ Robert J. Mitzman</u> Robert J. Mitzman	Director	March 19, 2021
<u>/s/ Richard T. Powers</u> Richard T. Powers	Director	March 19, 2021
<u>/s/ Kevin C. Waterhouse</u> Kevin C. Waterhouse	Director	March 19, 2021
<u>/s/ Selig Zises</u> Selig Zises	Director	March 19, 2021

CORPORATE INFORMATION

DIRECTORS

Anthony Coelho
Chairman of the Board

Andrew C. Sagliocca
President, Chief Executive Officer and Director

Todd Deutsch

Marc Grossman

Russ M. Herman

Janet Hill

Robert J. Mitzman

Richard T. Powers

Kevin C. Waterhouse

Selig A. Zises

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Andrew C. Sagliocca
President, Chief Executive Officer and Director

Eric S. Bader
Executive Vice President, Chief Operating Officer and Corporate Secretary

Ari P. Kornhaber
*Executive Vice President,
Head of Corporate Development*

Michael Lacapria
Senior Vice President, Chief Financial Officer

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

David Bagatelle
*Senior Vice President,
Chief Banking and Revenue Officer*

Jeff DePetro
Senior Vice President, Chief Administrative Officer of Merchant Services

Fred Horn
*Senior Vice President,
Director of Merchant Services*

Martin Korn
Senior Vice President, Chief Technology Officer

Frank Lonardo
Senior Vice President, Chief Lending Officer

Kyall Mai
Senior Vice President, Chief Innovation Officer

Sean Miller
Senior Managing Director, Retail Director

Parag Tandon
*Senior Vice President,
Chief Accounting Officer & Controller*

Ann Marie Tarantino
*Senior Vice President,
Chief Compliance Officer & Risk Officer*

INVESTOR INFORMATION

Corporate Headquarters
100 Jericho Quadrangle, Suite 100
Jericho, New York 11753
(800) 996-0213
www.esquirebank.com

Special Counsel
Luse Gorman, PC
5335 Wisconsin Ave., N.W., Suite 780
Washington, D.C. 20015
(202) 274-2000

Transfer Agent
American Stock Transfer &
Trust Company, LLC
62015th Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11219
(800) 937-5449

Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm
Crowe LLP
485 Lexington Avenue, Floor 11
New York, New York 10017
(212) 572-5500

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Stockholders will be held on May 27, 2021 at 10:00 a.m., Eastern time, at the executive offices of Esquire Financial Holdings, Inc. located at 100 Jericho Quadrangle, Suite 100, Jericho, New York 11753.

GENERAL INQUIRIES

A copy of our Annual Report to the SEC may be obtained without charge by written request of stockholders to Eric Bader or by calling us at (800) 996-0213. The Annual Report is also available on our website at www.esquirebank.com. Our Code of Ethics, Audit Committee Charter, Corporate Governance and Nominating Committee Charter, Compensation Committee Charter, and Beneficial Ownership reports of our directors and executive officers are also available on our website.



ESQUIRE FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, INC.

100 JERICO QUADRANGLE, SUITE 100
JERICO, NEW YORK 11753