

META FINANCIAL GROUP INC
Form 10-Q
February 07, 2018

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549
FORM 10-Q

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

For the quarterly period ended December 31, 2017

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: 0-22140

META FINANCIAL GROUP, INC.®
(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)
Delaware 42-1406262
(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation or organization) (I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)

5501 South Broadband Lane, Sioux Falls, South Dakota 57108
(Address of principal executive offices and Zip Code)

(605) 782-1767
(Registrant's telephone number, including area code)

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

Indicate by check mark whether the Registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate web site, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the Registrant was required to submit and post such files). YES NO

Indicate by check mark whether the Registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, 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 (Check one):

Large accelerated filer Accelerated filer Non-accelerated filer Smaller Reporting Company
Emerging growth company

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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 is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act).

YES NO

Indicate the number of shares outstanding of each of the issuer's classes of common stock, as of the latest practicable date.

Class:	Outstanding at February 5, 2018:
Common Stock, \$.01 par value	9,683,841 shares
Nonvoting Common Stock, \$.01 par value	0 Nonvoting shares

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Common stock, \$.01 par value; 15,000,000 shares authorized, 9,685,398 and 9,626,431 shares issued, 9,664,846 and 9,622,595 shares outstanding at December 31, 2017 and September 30, 2017, respectively	96	96
Common stock, Nonvoting, \$.01 par value; 3,000,000 shares authorized, no shares issued or outstanding at December 31, 2017 and September 30, 2017, respectively	—	—
Additional paid-in capital	262,872	258,336
Retained earnings	170,578	167,164
Accumulated other comprehensive income	5,782	9,166
Treasury stock, at cost, 20,552 and 3,836 common shares at December 31, 2017 and September 30, 2017, respectively	(1,623	) (266)
Total stockholders' equity	437,705	434,496
Total liabilities and stockholders' equity	\$5,417,963	\$5,228,332

See Notes to Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements.

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AND SUBSIDIARIESCondensed Consolidated Statements of Operations (Unaudited)
(Dollars in Thousands, Except Share and Per Share Data)

	Three Months Ended December 31,	
	2017	2016
Interest and dividend income:		
Loans receivable, including fees	\$16,443	\$10,678
Mortgage-backed securities	3,758	3,320
Other investments	10,656	8,577
	30,857	22,575
Interest expense:		
Deposits	1,885	938
FHLB advances and other borrowings	2,776	1,804
	4,661	2,742
Net interest income	26,196	19,833
Provision for loan losses	1,068	843
Net interest income after provision for loan losses	25,128	18,990
Non-interest income:		
Refund transfer product fees	192	176
Tax advance product fees	1,947	449
Card fees	25,247	18,414
Loan fees	1,292	870
Bank-owned life insurance	669	448
Deposit fees	848	150
Loss on sale of securities available-for-sale, net (Includes (\$1,010) and (\$1,234) reclassified from accumulated other comprehensive income (loss) for net gains (losses) on available for sale securities for the three months ended December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively)	(1,010)	(1,234)
Loss on foreclosed real estate	(19)	—
Other income	102	76
Total non-interest income	29,268	19,349
Non-interest expense:		
Compensation and benefits	22,340	17,850
Refund transfer product expense	101	51
Tax advance product expense	280	27
Card processing	6,540	5,579
Occupancy and equipment	4,890	3,977
Legal and consulting	2,416	2,723
Marketing	553	470
Data processing	414	363
Intangible amortization expense	1,681	1,525

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Other expense	4,827	4,188
Total non-interest expense	44,042	36,753
Income before income tax expense	10,354	1,586
Income tax expense (Includes (\$380), and (\$463) reclassified from accumulated other comprehensive income (loss) for the three months ended December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively)	5,684	342
Net income	\$4,670	\$1,244
Earnings per common share		
Basic	\$0.48	\$0.14
Diluted	\$0.48	\$0.14
See Notes to Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements.		

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AND SUBSIDIARIESCondensed Consolidated Statements of Comprehensive Income (Loss) (Unaudited)
(Dollars in Thousands)

	Three Months Ended December 31,	
	2017	2016
Net income	\$4,670	\$1,244
Other comprehensive income (loss):		
Change in net unrealized loss on securities	(7,480)	(45,268)
Losses realized in net income	1,010	1,234
	(6,470)	(44,034)
LESS: Deferred income tax effect	(3,086)	(16,092)
Total other comprehensive loss	(3,384)	(27,942)
Total comprehensive income (loss)	\$1,286	\$(26,698)

See Notes to Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements.

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Condensed Consolidated Statements of Changes in Stockholders' Equity (Unaudited)

For the Three Months Ended December 31, 2017 and 2016

(Dollars in Thousands, Except Share and Per Share Data)

	Common Stock	Additional Paid-in Capital	Retained Earnings	Accumulated Other Comprehensive Income	Treasury Stock	Total Stockholders' Equity
Balance, September 30, 2016	\$ 85	\$ 184,780	\$ 127,190	\$ 22,920	\$—	\$ 334,975
Cash dividends declared on common stock (\$0.13 per share)	—	—	(1,195)	—	—	(1,195)
Issuance of common shares due to issuance of stock options, restricted stock and ESOP	3	3,245	—	—	—	3,248
Issuance of common shares due to acquisition	5	37,291	—	—	—	37,296
Contingent consideration equity earnout due to SCS acquisition	—	24,091	—	—	—	24,091
Stock compensation	—	69	—	—	—	69
Net change in unrealized gains on securities, net of income taxes	—	—	—	(27,942)	—	(27,942)
Net income	—	—	1,244	—	—	1,244
Balance, December 31, 2016	\$ 93	\$ 249,476	\$ 127,239	\$ (5,022)	\$—	\$ 371,786
Balance, September 30, 2017	\$ 96	\$ 258,336	\$ 167,164	\$ 9,166	\$(266)	\$ 434,496
Cash dividends declared on common stock (\$0.13 per share)	—	—	(1,256)	—	—	(1,256)
Issuance of common shares due to ESOP	—	1,606	—	—	—	1,606
Shares repurchased for tax withholdings on stock compensation	—	(314)	—	—	(1,357)	(1,671)
Stock compensation	—	3,244	—	—	—	3,244
Net change in unrealized losses on securities, net of income taxes	—	—	—	(3,384)	—	(3,384)
Net income	—	—	4,670	—	—	4,670
Balance, December 31, 2017	\$ 96	\$ 262,872	\$ 170,578	\$ 5,782	\$(1,623)	\$ 437,705

See Notes to Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements.

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Condensed Consolidated Statements of Cash Flows (Unaudited)

	Three Months Ended December 31,	
(Dollars in Thousands)	2017	2016 ⁽¹⁾
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net income	\$4,670	\$1,244
Adjustments to reconcile net income to net cash provided (used in) by operating activities:		
Depreciation, amortization and accretion, net	9,561	9,479
Stock-based compensation expense	3,244	69
Provision for loan losses	1,068	843
Provision (recovery) for deferred taxes	6,807	(927)
(Gain) on other assets	(8)	(6)
Loss on sale of foreclosed real estate	19	—
Loss on sale of securities available for sale, net	1,010	1,234
Net change in accrued interest receivable	(1,709)	(4,176)
Fair value adjustment of foreclosed real estate	23	—
Originations of loans held for sale	—	(27,191)
Proceeds from sales of loans held for sale	—	25,968
Change in bank-owned life insurance value	(669)	(448)
Net change in other assets	(1,102)	(27,164)
Net change in accrued interest payable	1,785	1,379
Net change in accrued expenses and other liabilities	(14,462)	14,255
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	10,237	(5,441)
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Purchase of securities available-for-sale	(105,327)	(144,024)
Proceeds from sales of securities available-for-sale	65,941	60,623
Proceeds from maturities and principal repayments of securities available for sale	35,065	30,849
Proceeds from maturities and principal repayments of securities held to maturity	12,021	13,301
Loans purchased	(75,163)	(136,172)
Loans sold	5,916	6,525
Net change in loans receivable	(114,827)	(59,008)
Proceeds from sales of foreclosed real estate or other assets	122	—
Net cash paid for acquisitions	—	(29,425)
Federal Home Loan Bank stock purchases	(249,920)	(140,680)
Federal Home Loan Bank stock redemptions	253,600	184,360
Proceeds from the sale of premises and equipment	—	58
Purchase of premises and equipment	(2,593)	(2,899)
Net cash used in investing activities	(175,165)	(216,492)
Cash flows from financing activities:		
Net change in checking, savings, and money market deposits	341,407	309,726
Net change in time deposits	4,583	(3,658)
Net change in wholesale deposits	(55,769)	926,987
Net change in FHLB and other borrowings	(205,000)	(100,000)
Net change in federal funds	113,000	(992,000)

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Net change in securities sold under agreements to repurchase	867	744
Principal payments on capital lease obligations	(16) (18)
Cash dividends paid	(1,256	) (1,195)
Purchase of shares by ESOP	1,606	—
Proceeds from exercise of stock options and issuance of common stock	—	3,248
Shares repurchased for tax withholdings on stock compensation	(1,671) —
Net cash provided by financing activities	197,751	143,834
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	32,823	(78,099)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of period	1,267,586	773,830
Cash and cash equivalents at end of period	\$1,300,409	\$695,731

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Supplemental disclosure of cash flow information

Cash paid during the period for:

Interest	\$6,446	\$1,362
Income taxes	218	2,110
Franchise taxes	31	20
Other taxes	1	1

Supplemental schedule of non-cash investing activities:

Securities transferred from held to maturity to available for sale	\$(306,000)	\$—
Contingent consideration - cash		\$(17,259)
Contingent consideration - equity	—	(24,091)
Stock issued for acquisition	—	(37,296)

See Notes to Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements.

⁽¹⁾ See Note 1. Basis of Presentation for further discussion on the current presentation.

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NOTE 1. BASIS OF PRESENTATION

The interim unaudited Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements contained herein should be read in conjunction with the audited consolidated financial statements and accompanying notes to the consolidated financial statements for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2017 included in Meta Financial Group, Inc.'s ("Meta Financial" or the "Company") Annual Report on Form 10-K filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") on November 29, 2017. Accordingly, footnote disclosures which would substantially duplicate the disclosures contained in the audited consolidated financial statements have been omitted.

The financial information of the Company included herein has been prepared in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles ("GAAP") for interim financial reporting and has been prepared pursuant to the rules and regulations for reporting on Form 10-Q and Rule 10-01 of Regulation S-X. Such information reflects all adjustments (consisting of normal recurring adjustments), that are, in the opinion of management, necessary for a fair presentation of the financial position and results of operations for the periods presented. The results of the three month period ended December 31, 2017 are not necessarily indicative of the results expected for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018.

In fiscal 2017, the Company early adopted Accounting Standards Update ("ASU") 2016-09, "Compensation - Stock Compensation (Topic 718): Improvements to Employee Share-Based Payment Accounting." The requirement to report the excess tax benefit related to settlements of share-based payment awards in earnings as an increase or (decrease) to income tax expense has been applied utilizing the prospective method. While the adoption of ASU 2016-09 requires retrospective application to all fiscal year periods presented, the Company elected to not recast previously reported financial statements as the impact was considered insignificant. However, the Company reclassified stock compensation from financing to operating activities on the Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows as of December 31, 2017 and December 31, 2016.

NOTE 2. CREDIT DISCLOSURES

The allowance for loan losses represents management's estimate of probable loan losses which have been incurred as of the date of the consolidated financial statements. The allowance for loan losses is increased by a provision for loan losses charged to expense and decreased by charge-offs (net of recoveries). Estimating the risk of loss and the amount of loss on any loan is necessarily subjective. Management's periodic evaluation of the appropriateness of the allowance is based on the Company's past loan loss experience, known and inherent risks in the portfolio, adverse situations that may affect the borrower's ability to repay, the estimated value of any underlying collateral, and current economic conditions. While management may periodically allocate portions of the allowance for specific problem loan situations, the entire allowance is available for any loan charge-offs that occur.

Loans are considered impaired if full principal or interest payments are not probable in accordance with the contractual loan terms. Impaired loans are carried at the present value of expected future cash flows discounted at the loan's effective interest rate or at the fair value of the collateral if the loan is collateral dependent. A portion of the allowance for loan losses is allocated to impaired loans if the value of such loans is deemed to be less than the unpaid balance.

The allowance consists of specific, general and unallocated components. The specific component relates to impaired loans. For such loans, an allowance is established when the discounted cash flows (or collateral value or observable market price) of the impaired loan is lower than the carrying value of that loan. The general component covers loans not considered impaired and is based on historical loss experience adjusted for qualitative factors. An unallocated component is maintained to cover uncertainties that could affect management's estimate of probable losses. The

unallocated component of the allowance reflects the margin of imprecision inherent in the underlying assumptions used in the methodologies for estimating specific and general losses in the portfolio.

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Homogeneous loan populations are collectively evaluated for impairment. These loan populations may include commercial insurance premium finance loans, residential first mortgage loans secured by one-to-four family residences, residential construction loans, home equity and second mortgage loans, and tax product loans. Commercial and agricultural loans as well as mortgage loans secured by other properties are monitored regularly by the Bank given the larger balances. When analysis of the borrower operating results and financial condition indicates that underlying cash flows of the borrower's business is not adequate to meet its debt service requirements, the individual loan or loan relationship is evaluated for impairment. Often this is associated with a delay or shortfall in payments of 210 days or more for commercial insurance premium finance, 180 days or more for tax and other national lending loans and 90 days or more for other loans. Non-accrual loans and all troubled debt restructurings are considered impaired. Impaired loans, or portions thereof, are charged off when deemed uncollectible.

Loans receivable at December 31, 2017 and September 30, 2017 were as follows:

	December 31, 2017	September 30, 2017
	(Dollars in Thousands)	
1-4 Family Real Estate	\$203,967	\$ 196,706
Commercial and Multi-Family Real Estate	654,029	585,510
Agricultural Real Estate	61,303	61,800
Consumer	274,981	163,004
Commercial Operating	56,516	35,759
Agricultural Operating	24,696	33,594
Commercial Insurance Premium Finance	235,671	250,459
Total Loans Receivable	1,511,163	1,326,832
Allowance for Loan Losses	(8,862)	(7,534)
Net Deferred Loan Origination Fees	(2,023)	(1,461)
Total Loans Receivable, Net	\$1,500,278	\$ 1,317,837

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Activity in the allowance for loan losses and balances of loans receivable by portfolio segment for the three months ended December 31, 2017 and 2016 was as follows:

	1-4 Family Real Estate	Commercial and Multi-Family Real Estate	Agricultural Real Estate	Consumer	Commercial Operating	Agricultural Operating	CML Insurance Premium Finance	Unallocated	Total
(Dollars in Thousands)									
Three Months Ended December 31, 2017									
Allowance for loan losses:									
Beginning balance	\$ 803	\$ 2,670	\$ 1,390	\$ 6	\$ 158	\$ 1,184	\$ 796	\$ 527	\$ 7,534
Provision (recovery) for loan losses	(118)	) 364	(210)	) 297	690	(380)	) 51	374	1,068
Charge offs	(31)	) —	—	—	—	—	(129)	) —	(160)
Recoveries	—	—	—	367	46	—	7	—	420
Ending balance	\$ 654	\$ 3,034	\$ 1,180	\$ 670	\$ 894	\$ 804	\$ 725	\$ 901	\$ 8,862
Ending balance: individually evaluated for impairment	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ending balance: collectively evaluated for impairment	654	3,034	1,180	670	894	804	725	901	8,862
Total	\$ 654	\$ 3,034	\$ 1,180	\$ 670	\$ 894	\$ 804	\$ 725	\$ 901	\$ 8,862
Loans:									
Ending balance: individually evaluated for impairment	95	707	—	61	—	1,052	—	—	1,915
Ending balance: collectively evaluated for impairment	203,872	653,322	61,303	274,920	56,516	23,644	235,671	—	1,509,248
Total	\$ 203,967	\$ 654,029	\$ 61,303	\$ 274,981	\$ 56,516	\$ 24,696	\$ 235,671	\$ —	\$ 1,511,163

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	1-4 Family Real Estate (Dollars in Thousands)	Commercial and Multi-Family Real Estate	Agricultural Real Estate	Consumer	Commercial Operating	Agricultural Operating	CML Insurance Premium Finance	Unallocated	Total
Three Months Ended December 31, 2016									
Allowance for loan losses:									
Beginning balance	\$ 654	\$ 2,198	\$ 142	\$ 51	\$ 117	\$ 1,332	\$ 588	\$ 553	\$ 5,635
Provision (recovery) for loan losses	—	(286)	334	(28)	691	(3)	110	25	843
Charge offs	—	—	—	—	—	—	(118)	—	(118)
Recoveries	—	—	—	24	5	12	14	—	55
Ending balance	\$ 654	\$ 1,912	\$ 476	\$ 47	\$ 813	\$ 1,341	\$ 594	\$ 578	\$ 6,415
Ending balance: individually evaluated for impairment	11	—	—	—	339	—	—	—	350
Ending balance: collectively evaluated for impairment	643	1,912	476	47	474	1,341	594	578	6,065
Total	\$ 654	\$ 1,912	\$ 476	\$ 47	\$ 813	\$ 1,341	\$ 594	\$ 578	\$ 6,415
Loans:									
Ending balance: individually evaluated for impairment	190	429	—	—	505	—	—	—	1,124
Ending balance: collectively evaluated for impairment	172,687	440,083	64,014	173,164	50,319	33,617	179,508	—	1,113,392
Total	\$ 172,877	\$ 440,512	\$ 64,014	\$ 173,164	\$ 50,824	\$ 33,617	\$ 179,508	\$ —	\$ 1,114,516

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Federal regulations promulgated by the Bank's primary federal regulator, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (the "OCC"), provide for the classification of loans and other assets such as debt and equity securities. The loan classification and risk rating definitions for the Company and its wholly-owned subsidiary, MetaBank (the "Bank"), are generally as follows:

Pass- A pass asset is of sufficient quality in terms of repayment, collateral and management to preclude a special mention or an adverse rating.

Watch- A watch asset is generally credit performing well under current terms and conditions but with identifiable weakness meriting additional scrutiny and corrective measures. Watch is not a regulatory classification but can be used to designate assets that are exhibiting one or more weaknesses that deserve management's attention. These assets are of better quality than special mention assets.

Special Mention- Special mention assets are credits with potential weaknesses deserving management's close attention and if left uncorrected, may result in deterioration of the repayment prospects for the asset. Special mention assets are not adversely classified and do not expose an institution to sufficient risk to warrant adverse classification. Special mention is a temporary status with aggressive credit management required to garner adequate progress and move to watch or higher.

Substandard- A substandard asset is inadequately protected by the net worth and/or repayment ability or by a weak collateral position. Assets so classified have well-defined weaknesses creating a distinct possibility that the Bank will sustain some loss if the weaknesses are not corrected. Loss potential does not have to exist for an asset to be classified as substandard.

Doubtful- A doubtful asset has weaknesses similar to those classified substandard, with the degree of weakness causing the likely loss of some principal in any reasonable collection effort. Due to pending factors the asset's classification as loss is not yet appropriate.

Loss- A loss asset is considered uncollectible and of such little value that the asset's continuance on the Company's balance sheet is no longer warranted. This classification does not necessarily mean an asset has no recovery or salvage value leaving room for future collection efforts.

General allowances represent loss allowances which have been established to recognize the inherent risk associated with lending activities, but which, unlike specific allowances, have not been allocated to particular problem assets. When assets are classified as "loss," the Company is required either to establish a specific allowance for losses equal to 100% of that portion of the asset so classified or to charge-off such amount. The Company's determinations as to the classification of its assets and the amount of its valuation allowances are subject to review by its regulatory authorities, which may order the establishment of additional general or specific loss allowances.

The Company recognizes that concentrations of credit may naturally occur and may take the form of a large volume of related loans to an individual, a specific industry, or a geographic location. Credit concentration is a direct, indirect, or contingent obligation that has a common bond where the aggregate exposure equals or exceeds a certain percentage of the Company's Tier 1 Capital plus the Allowance for Loan Losses.

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The asset classification of loans at December 31, 2017 and September 30, 2017 were as follows:

	1-4 Family Real Estate	Commercial and Multi-Family Real Estate	Agricultural Real Estate	Consumer	Commercial Operating	Agricultural Operating	CML Insurance Premium Finance	Total
December 31, 2017								
	(Dollars in Thousands)							
Pass	\$203,035	\$ 643,393	\$ 28,794	\$ 274,783	\$ 56,245	\$ 14,304	\$ 235,671	\$ 1,456,225
Watch	608	10,145	—	102	271	13	—	11,139
Special Mention	245	199	2,939	—	—	—	—	3,383
Substandard	79	292	29,570	96	—	10,379	—	40,416
Doubtful	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	\$203,967	\$ 654,029	\$ 61,303	\$ 274,981	\$ 56,516	\$ 24,696	\$ 235,671	\$ 1,511,163
September 30, 2017								
	(Dollars in Thousands)							
Pass	\$195,838	\$ 574,730	\$ 27,376	\$ 163,004	\$ 35,759	\$ 18,394	\$ 250,459	\$ 1,265,560
Watch	525	10,200	2,006	—	—	4,541	—	17,272
Special Mention	247	201	2,939	—	—	—	—	3,387
Substandard	96	379	29,479	—	—	10,659	—	40,613
Doubtful	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	\$196,706	\$ 585,510	\$ 61,800	\$ 163,004	\$ 35,759	\$ 33,594	\$ 250,459	\$ 1,326,832

One-to-Four Family Residential Mortgage Lending. One-to-four family residential mortgage loan originations are generated by the Company's marketing efforts, its present customers, walk-in customers and referrals. The Company offers fixed-rate and adjustable rate mortgage ("ARM") loans for both permanent structures and those under construction. The Company's one-to-four family residential mortgage originations are secured primarily by properties located in its primary market area and surrounding areas.

The Company originates one-to-four family residential mortgage loans with terms up to a maximum of 30 years and with loan-to-value ratios up to 100% of the lesser of the appraised value of the security property or the contract price. The Company generally requires that private mortgage insurance be obtained in an amount sufficient to reduce the Company's exposure to at or below the 80% loan to value level. Residential loans generally do not include prepayment penalties. Due to consumer demand, the Company offers fixed-rate mortgage loans with terms up to 30 years, most of which conform to secondary market standards, such as Fannie Mae, Ginnie Mae, and Freddie Mac standards. The Company typically holds all fixed-rate mortgage loans and does not engage in secondary market sales. Interest rates charged on these fixed-rate loans are competitively priced according to market conditions.

The Company also currently offers five- and ten-year ARM loans. These loans have a fixed-rate for the stated period and, thereafter, adjust annually. These loans generally provide for an annual cap of up to 200 basis points and a lifetime cap of 600 basis points over the initial rate. As a consequence of using an initial fixed-rate and caps, the interest rates on these loans may not be as rate sensitive as the Company's cost of funds. The Company's ARMs do not permit negative amortization of principal and are not convertible into fixed-rate loans. The Company's delinquency experience on its ARM loans has generally been similar to its experience on fixed-rate residential loans. The current low mortgage interest rate environment makes ARM loans relatively unattractive and very few are currently being originated.

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In underwriting one-to-four family residential real estate loans, the Company evaluates both the borrower's ability to make monthly payments and the value of the property securing the loan. Properties securing real estate loans made by the Company are appraised by independent appraisers approved by the Board of Directors of the Company. The Company generally requires borrowers to obtain an attorney's title opinion or title insurance, and fire and property insurance (including flood insurance, if necessary) in an amount not less than the amount of the loan. Real estate loans originated by the Company generally contain a "due on sale" clause allowing the Company to declare the unpaid principal balance due and payable upon the sale of the security property. The Company has not engaged in sub-prime residential mortgage originations.

Commercial and Multi-Family Real Estate Lending. The Company engages in commercial and multi-family real estate lending in its primary market area and surrounding areas and, in order to supplement its loan portfolio, has purchased whole loan and participation interests in loans from other financial institutions. The purchased loans and loan participation interests are generally secured by properties primarily located in the Midwest.

The Company's commercial and multi-family real estate loan portfolio is secured primarily by apartment buildings, office buildings and hotels. Commercial and multi-family real estate loans generally are underwritten with terms not exceeding 20 years, have loan-to-value ratios of up to 80% of the appraised value of the security property, and are typically secured by guarantees of the borrowers. The Company has a variety of rate adjustment features and other terms in its commercial and multi-family real estate loan portfolio. Commercial and multi-family real estate loans provide for a margin over a number of different indices. In underwriting these loans, the Company analyzes the financial condition of the borrower, the borrower's credit history, and the reliability and predictability of the cash flow generated by the property securing the loan. Appraisals on properties securing commercial real estate loans originated by the Company are performed by independent appraisers.

Commercial and multi-family real estate loans generally present a higher level of risk than loans secured by one-to-four family residences. This greater risk is due to several factors, including the concentration of principal in a limited number of loans and borrowers, the effect of general economic conditions on income producing properties and the increased difficulty of evaluating and monitoring these types of loans. Furthermore, the repayment of loans secured by commercial and multi-family real estate is typically dependent upon the successful operation of the related real estate project. If the cash flow from the project is reduced (for example, if leases are not obtained or renewed, or a bankruptcy court modifies a lease term, or a major tenant is unable to fulfill its lease obligations), the borrower's ability to repay the loan may be impaired.

Agricultural Lending. The Company originates loans to finance the purchase of farmland, livestock, farm machinery and equipment, seed, fertilizer and other farm-related products. Agricultural operating loans are originated at either an adjustable or fixed rate of interest for up to a one year term or, in the case of livestock, upon sale. Such loans provide for payments of principal and interest at least annually or a lump sum payment upon maturity if the original term is less than one year. Loans secured by agricultural machinery are generally originated as fixed-rate loans with terms of up to seven years.

Agricultural real estate loans are frequently originated with adjustable rates of interest. Generally, such loans provide for a fixed rate of interest for the first five to ten years, after which the loan will balloon or the interest rate will adjust annually. These loans generally amortize over a period of 20 to 25 years. Fixed-rate agricultural real estate loans generally have terms up to ten years. Agricultural real estate loans are generally limited to 75% of the value of the property securing the loan.

Agricultural lending affords the Company the opportunity to earn yields higher than those obtainable on one-to-four family residential lending, but involves a greater degree of risk than one-to-four family residential mortgage loans because of the typically larger loan amount. In addition, payments on loans are dependent on the successful operation

or management of the farm property securing the loan or for which an operating loan is utilized. The success of the loan may also be affected by many factors outside the control of the borrower.

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Weather presents one of the greatest risks as hail, drought, floods, or other conditions can severely limit crop yields and thus impair loan repayments and the value of the underlying collateral. This risk can be reduced by the farmer with a variety of insurance coverages which can help to ensure loan repayment. Government support programs and the Company generally require that farmers procure crop insurance coverage. Grain and livestock prices also present a risk as prices may decline prior to sale, resulting in a failure to cover production costs. These risks may be reduced by the farmer with the use of futures contracts or options to mitigate price risk. The Company frequently requires borrowers to use futures contracts or options to reduce price risk and help ensure loan repayment. Another risk is the uncertainty of government programs and other regulations. During periods of low commodity prices, the income from government programs can be a significant source of cash for the borrower to make loan payments, and if these programs are discontinued or significantly changed, cash flow problems or defaults could result. Finally, many farms are dependent on a limited number of key individuals whose injury or death may result in an inability to successfully operate the farm.

Consumer Lending. The Bank originates a variety of secured consumer loans, including home equity, home improvement, automobile and boat loans and loans secured by savings deposits. In addition, the Bank offers other secured and unsecured consumer loans and currently originates most of its community banking consumer loans in its primary market areas and surrounding areas. In addition, the Bank's consumer lending portfolio includes two purchased student loan portfolios, the most recent purchased on October 11, 2017, along with consumer lending products offered through its payments segment.

The Bank's community banking consumer loan portfolio consists primarily of home equity loans and lines of credit. Substantially all of the Bank's home equity loans and lines of credit are secured by second mortgages on principal residences. The Bank will lend amounts which, together with all prior liens, may be up to 90% of the appraised value of the property securing the loan. Home equity loans and lines of credit generally have maximum terms of five years.

The Bank primarily originates automobile loans on a direct basis to the borrower, as opposed to indirect loans, which are made when the Bank purchases loan contracts, often at a discount, from automobile dealers which have extended credit to their customers. The Bank's automobile loans typically are originated at fixed interest rates with terms of up to 60 months for new and used vehicles. Loans secured by automobiles are generally originated for up to 80% of the N.A.D.A. book value of the automobile securing the loan.

Consumer loan terms vary according to the type and value of collateral, length of contract and creditworthiness of the borrower. The underwriting standards employed by the Bank for consumer loans include an application, a determination of the applicant's payment history on other debts and an assessment of ability to meet existing obligations and payments on the proposed loan. Although creditworthiness of the applicant is a primary consideration, the underwriting process also may include a comparison of the value of the security, if any, in relation to the proposed loan amount.

Consumer loans may entail greater credit risk than residential mortgage loans, particularly in the case of consumer loans which are unsecured or are secured by rapidly depreciable assets, such as automobiles or recreational equipment. In such cases, any repossessed collateral for a defaulted consumer loan may not provide an adequate source of repayment of the outstanding loan balance as a result of the greater likelihood of damage, loss or depreciation. In addition, consumer loan collections are dependent on the borrower's continuing financial stability, and thus more likely to be affected by adverse personal circumstances. Furthermore, the application of various federal and state laws, including bankruptcy and insolvency laws, may limit the amount which can be recovered on such loans.

On October 11, 2017, the Company completed the purchase of a \$73.0 million, seasoned, floating rate, private student loan portfolio. All loans are indexed to one-month LIBOR. The portfolio is serviced by ReliaMax Lending Services

LLC and insured by ReliaMax Surety Company. This portfolio purchase builds on the Company's existing student loan platform.

The Bank's student loan portfolio that was purchased during the first quarter of fiscal year 2017 is a seasoned portfolio that is also serviced by ReliaMax Lending Services, LLC and insured by ReliaMax Surety Company. All loans in this portfolio are floating rate and indexed to the three-month LIBOR plus various margins.

Through its Payments segment, the Bank strives to offer consumers innovative payment products, including credit products. Most credit products have fallen into the category of portfolio lending. The Payments segment, including Specialty Consumer Services ("SCS"), continues its development of new alternative portfolio lending products primarily to serve its customer base and to provide innovative lending solutions to the unbanked and under-banked segment.

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The Payments segment also provides short-term consumer refund advance loans. Taxpayers are underwritten to determine eligibility for the unsecured loans, which are, by design, interest and fee-free to the consumer. Due to the nature of consumer advance loans, it typically takes no more than three e-file cycles (the period of time between scheduled IRS payments) from when the return is accepted by the IRS to collect from the borrower. In the event of default, the Bank has no recourse against the tax consumer. Generally, when the refund advance loan becomes delinquent for 180 days or more, or when collection of principal becomes doubtful, the Company will charge off the loan balance.

Commercial Operating Lending. The Company also originates commercial operating loans. Most of the Company's commercial operating loans have been extended to finance local and regional businesses and include short-term loans to finance machinery and equipment purchases, inventory and accounts receivable. Commercial loans also may involve the extension of revolving credit for a combination of equipment acquisitions and working capital in expanding companies. The Company also extends short-term commercial Electronic Return Originator ("ERO") advance loans through its Payments segment as described in more detail below.

The maximum term for loans extended on machinery and equipment is based on the projected useful life of such machinery and equipment. Generally, the maximum term on non-mortgage lines of credit is one year. The loan-to-value ratio on such loans and lines of credit generally may not exceed 80% of the value of the collateral securing the loan. ERO loans are not collateralized. The Company's commercial operating lending policy includes credit file documentation and analysis of the borrower's character, capacity to repay the loan, the adequacy of the borrower's capital and collateral as well as an evaluation of conditions affecting the borrower. Analysis of the borrower's past, present and future cash flows is also an important aspect of the Company's credit analysis. As described further below, such loans are believed to carry higher credit risk than more traditional lending activities.

Unlike residential mortgage loans, which generally are made on the basis of the borrower's ability to make repayment from his or her employment and other income and which are secured by real property whose value tends to be more easily ascertainable, commercial operating loans typically are made on the basis of the borrower's ability to make repayment from the cash flow of the borrower's business. As a result, the availability of funds for the repayment of commercial operating loans may be substantially dependent on the success of the business itself (which, in turn, is likely to be dependent upon the general economic environment). The Company's commercial operating loans are usually, but not always, secured by business assets and personal guarantees. However, the collateral securing the loans may depreciate over time, may be difficult to appraise and may fluctuate in value based on the success of the business.

Through its Payments segment, the Company also provides short-term ERO advance loans on a nation-wide basis. These loans are typically utilized to purchase tax preparation software and to prepare tax offices for the upcoming tax season. EROs go through an underwriting process to determine eligibility for the unsecured advances. Collection on ERO advances begins once the ERO begins to process refund transfers. Generally, when the ERO advance loan becomes delinquent for 120 days or more, or when collection of principal becomes doubtful, the Company will charge off the loan balance.

Commercial Insurance Premium Finance Lending. Through its AFS/IBEX division, the Bank provides short-term and primarily collateralized financing to facilitate the commercial customers' purchase of insurance for various forms of risk otherwise known as commercial insurance premium financing. This includes, but is not limited to, policies for commercial property, casualty and liability risk. The AFS/IBEX division markets itself to the insurance community as a competitive option based on service, reputation, competitive terms, cost and ease of operation.

Commercial insurance premium financing is the business of extending credit to a policyholder to pay for insurance premiums when the insurance carrier requires payment in full at inception of coverage. Premiums are advanced either

directly to the insurance carrier or through an intermediary/broker and repaid by the policyholder with interest during the policy term. The policyholder generally makes a 20% to 25% down payment to the insurance broker and finances the remainder over nine to ten months on average. The down payment is set such that if the policy is canceled, the unearned premium is typically sufficient to cover the loan balance and accrued interest.

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Due to the nature of collateral for commercial insurance premium finance receivables, it customarily takes 60-210 days to convert the collateral into cash. In the event of default, AFS/IBEX, by statute and contract, has the power to cancel the insurance policy and establish a first position lien on the unearned portion of the premium from the insurance carrier. In the event of cancellation, the cash returned in payment of the unearned premium by the insurer has typically been sufficient to cover the receivable balance, the interest and other charges due. Due to notification requirements and processing time by most insurance carriers, many receivables will become delinquent beyond 90 days while the insurer is processing the return of the unearned premium. Generally, when a loan becomes delinquent for 210 days or more, or when collection of principal or interest becomes doubtful, the Company will charge off the loan balance and any remaining interest and fees after applying any collection from the insurance company.

Past due loans at December 31, 2017 and September 30, 2017 were as follows:

	Accruing and Non-accruing Loans					Current	Total Loans Receivable	Nonperforming Loans > 89 Days Past Due and Accruing		Total
	30-59 Days Past Due	60-89 Days Past Due	> 89 Days Past Due	Total Past Due	Non-accrual balance					
December 31, 2017										
	(Dollars in Thousands)									
1-4 Family Real Estate	\$106	\$—	\$234	\$340	\$203,627	203,967	234	\$ —	\$234	
Commercial and Multi-Family Real Estate	—	284	—	284	653,745	654,029	—	284	284	
Agricultural Real Estate	—	—	27,818	27,818	33,485	61,303	27,818	—	27,818	
Consumer	4,192	2,015	1,624	7,831	267,150	274,981	1,624	—	1,624	
Commercial Operating	—	—	—	—	56,516	56,516	—	—	—	
Agricultural Operating	—	—	—	—	24,696	24,696	—	—	—	
CML Insurance Premium Finance	1,594	592	3,194	5,380	230,291	235,671	3,194	—	3,194	
Total	\$5,892	\$2,891	\$32,870	\$41,653	\$1,469,510	1,511,163	32,870	\$ 284	\$33,154	
September 30, 2017										
	(Dollars in Thousands)									
1-4 Family Real Estate	\$370	\$79	\$—	\$449	\$196,257	\$196,706	—	\$ —	\$—	
Commercial and Multi-Family Real Estate	295	—	390	685	584,825	585,510	—	685	685	
Agricultural Real Estate	—	—	34,198	34,198	27,602	61,800	34,198	—	34,198	
Consumer	2,512	558	1,406	4,476	158,528	163,004	1,406	—	1,406	
Commercial Operating	—	—	—	—	35,759	35,759	—	—	—	
Agricultural Operating	—	—	97	97	33,497	33,594	97	—	97	
CML Insurance Premium Finance	1,509	2,442	1,205	5,156	245,303	250,459	1,205	—	1,205	
Total	\$4,686	\$3,079	\$37,296	\$45,061	\$1,281,771	\$1,326,832	36,906	\$ 685	\$37,591	

When analysis of borrower operating results and financial condition indicates that underlying cash flows of the borrower's business are not adequate to meet its debt service requirements, the loan is evaluated for impairment. Often this is associated with a delay or shortfall in payments of 210 days or more for commercial insurance premium finance loans, 180 days or more for refund advance loans, 120 days or more for ERO advance loans and 90 days or more for other loan categories. As of December 31, 2017, there were no commercial insurance premium finance loans greater than 210 days past due.

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Total loans past due decreased \$3.4 million to \$41.7 million at December 31, 2017 from \$45.1 million at September 30, 2017. This decrease was due to a \$4.4 million decrease in loans greater than 90 days past due. The primary driver of the decrease in loans greater than 90 days past due included the payoff of a large nonperforming agricultural loan relationship during the first quarter of fiscal 2018.

Impaired loans at December 31, 2017 and September 30, 2017 were as follows:

	Recorded Balance	Unpaid Principal Balance	Specific Allowance	
December 31, 2017	(Dollars in Thousands)			
Loans without a specific valuation allowance				
1-4 Family Real Estate	\$95	\$ 95	\$	—
Commercial and Multi-Family Real Estate	707	707	—	
Consumer	61	61	—	
Agricultural Operating	1,052	1,052	—	
Total	\$1,915	\$ 1,915	\$	—
	Recorded Balance	Unpaid Principal Balance	Specific Allowance	
September 30, 2017	(Dollars in Thousands)			
Loans without a specific valuation allowance				
1-4 Family Real Estate	\$72	\$ 72	\$	—
Commercial and Multi-Family Real Estate	1,109	1,109	—	
Total	\$1,181	\$ 1,181	\$	—

The following table provides the average recorded investment in impaired loans for the three month periods ended December 31, 2017 and 2016.

	Three Months Ended December 31, 2017 2016	
	Average Recorded Investment	Average Recorded Investment
	(Dollars in Thousands)	
1-4 Family Real Estate	\$80	\$ 172
Commercial and Multi-Family Real Estate	975	432
Consumer	20	—
Commercial Operating	—	168
Agricultural Operating	351	—
Total	\$1,426	\$ 772

The Company's troubled debt restructurings ("TDR") typically involve forgiving a portion of interest or principal on existing loans or making loans at a rate materially less than current market rates. There were \$1.1 million of loans modified in a TDR during the three month period ended December 31, 2017 and no loans modified in a TDR during the three month period ended December 31, 2016. Additionally, there were no TDR loans for which there was a payment default during the three month periods ended December 31, 2017 or 2016 that had been modified during the 12-month period prior to the default.

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NOTE 3. ALLOWANCE FOR LOAN LOSSES

At December 31, 2017, the Company's allowance for loan losses increased to \$8.9 million from \$7.5 million at September 30, 2017. This increase was primarily due to the additional provision expense related to tax advance loans. During the three months ended December 31, 2017, the Company recorded a provision for loan losses of \$1.1 million compared to \$0.8 million for the same period of the prior year. The Company had \$0.3 million of net recoveries for the three months ended December 31, 2017, compared to \$0.1 million of net charge-offs for the three months ended December 31, 2016.

The allowance for loan losses is established through the provision for loan losses based on management's evaluation of the risk inherent in its loan portfolio and changes in the nature and volume of its loan activity, including those loans which are being specifically monitored by management. Such evaluation, which includes a review of loans for which full collectability may not be reasonably assured, considers, among other matters, the estimated fair value of the underlying collateral, economic conditions, historical loan loss experience and other factors that warrant recognition in providing for an appropriate loan loss allowance.

Management closely monitors economic developments both regionally and nationwide, and considers these factors when assessing the appropriateness of its allowance for loan losses. The current economic environment continues to show signs of improvement in the Bank's markets. The Bank's average loss rates over the past three years for community banking loans were relatively low compared to peers, but was offset with a higher agricultural loss rate in fiscal year 2016 driven by the charge off of one relationship. Although the Bank's four market areas have indirectly benefited from a stable agricultural market, the market has become slightly stressed as commodity prices have generally remained lower than a few years ago. Management believes the low commodity prices and adverse weather conditions have the potential to negatively impact the economies of our agricultural markets. The improving economic conditions have also kept the loss rates on the national lending loans as well as the tax service loans relatively low.

Management believes that, based on a detailed review of the loan portfolio, historic loan losses, current economic conditions, the size of the loan portfolio and other factors, the current level of the allowance for loan losses at December 31, 2017, reflects an appropriate allowance against probable losses from the loan portfolio. Although the Company maintains its allowance for loan losses at a level it considers to be appropriate, investors and others are cautioned that there can be no assurance that future losses will not exceed estimated amounts, or that additional provisions for loan losses will not be required in future periods. In addition, the Company's determination of the allowance for loan losses is subject to review by the OCC, which can require the establishment of additional general or specific allowances.

Real estate properties acquired through foreclosure are recorded at the lesser of fair value or the recorded investment. If fair value at the date of foreclosure is lower than the balance of the related loan, the difference will be charged to the allowance for loan losses at the time of transfer. Valuations are periodically updated by management and, if the value declines, a specific provision for losses on such property is established by a charge to operations.

NOTE 4. EARNINGS PER COMMON SHARE

Earnings per share is computed after deducting dividends. The Company has granted restricted share awards with dividend rights that are considered to be participating securities. Accordingly, a portion of the Company's earnings is allocated to those participating securities in the earnings per share calculation. Basic earnings per share is computed by dividing income available to common stockholders after the allocation of dividends and undistributed earnings to the participating securities by the weighted average number of common shares outstanding for the period. Diluted earnings per share reflects the potential dilution that could occur if securities or other contracts to issue common stock were exercised, and is computed after giving consideration to the weighted average dilutive effect of the Company's

stock options and after the allocation of earnings to the participating securities. Antidilutive options are disregarded in the earnings per share calculations.

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A reconciliation of net income and common stock share amounts used in the computation of basic and diluted earnings per share for the three months ended December 31, 2017 and 2016 is presented below.

Three Months Ended December 31,	2017	2016
(Dollars in Thousands, Except Share and Per Share Data)		
Basic income per common share:		
Net income attributable to Meta Financial Group, Inc.	\$ 4,670	\$ 1,244
Weighted average common shares outstanding	9,656,778	8,938,339
Basic income per common share	0.48	0.14

Diluted income per common share:

Net income attributable to Meta Financial Group, Inc.	\$ 4,670	\$ 1,244
Weighted average common shares outstanding	9,656,778	8,938,339
Outstanding options - based upon the two-class method	56,063	63,061
Weighted average diluted common shares outstanding	9,712,841	9,001,400
Diluted income per common share	0.48	0.14

NOTE 5. SECURITIES

During the first quarter of fiscal 2018, the Company early adopted Accounting Standard Update ("ASU") 2017-12, "Derivatives and Hedging (Topic 815): Targeted Improvements to Accounting for Hedging Activities." Due to the early adoption of the ASU, the Company transferred \$204.7 million of investment securities and \$101.3 million of MBS from HTM to AFS during the first quarter of fiscal 2018. This change allows for enhanced balance sheet management and provides the opportunity for more liquidity, should it be needed.

The amortized cost, gross unrealized gains and losses and estimated fair values of available for sale and held to maturity securities at December 31, 2017 and September 30, 2017 are presented below.

Available For Sale

At December 31, 2017	AMORTIZED COST	GROSS UNREALIZED GAINS	GROSS UNREALIZED (LOSSES)	FAIR VALUE
(Dollars in Thousands)				
Debt securities				
Small business administration securities	56,602	349	(3	) 56,948
Obligations of states and political subdivisions	14,513	123	(26	) 14,610
Non-bank qualified obligations of states and political subdivisions	1,212,661	16,079	(5,710	) 1,223,030
Asset-backed securities	93,486	2,337	—	95,823
Mortgage-backed securities	606,338	198	(6,424	) 600,112
Total debt securities	1,983,600	19,086	(12,163	) 1,990,523
Common equities and mutual funds	1,298	532	(1) 1,829
Total available for sale securities	\$1,984,898	\$ 19,618	\$ (12,164) \$1,992,352

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At September 30, 2017	AMORTIZED COST	GROSS UNREALIZED GAINS	GROSS UNREALIZED (LOSSES)	FAIR VALUE
	(Dollars in Thousands)			
Debt securities				
Small business administration securities	57,046	825	—	57,871
Non-bank qualified obligations of states and political subdivisions	938,883	14,983	(3,037)	950,829
Asset-backed securities	94,451	2,381	—	96,832
Mortgage-backed securities	588,918	1,259	(3,723)	586,454
Total debt securities	1,679,298	19,448	(6,760)	1,691,986
Common equities and mutual funds	1,009	436	—	1,445
Total available for sale securities	\$1,680,307	\$ 19,884	\$ (6,760)	\$1,693,431

Held to Maturity

At December 31, 2017	AMORTIZED COST	GROSS UNREALIZED GAINS	GROSS UNREALIZED (LOSSES)	FAIR VALUE
	(Dollars in Thousands)			
Debt securities				
Obligations of states and political subdivisions	\$4,341	\$ 26	\$ (25)	\$4,342
Non-bank qualified obligations of states and political subdivisions	230,683	336	(3,537)	227,482
Mortgage-backed securities	8,468	—	(148)	8,320
Total held to maturity securities	\$243,492	\$ 362	\$ (3,710)	\$240,144

At September 30, 2017	AMORTIZED COST	GROSS UNREALIZED GAINS	GROSS UNREALIZED (LOSSES)	FAIR VALUE
	(Dollars in Thousands)			
Debt securities				
Obligations of states and political subdivisions	\$19,247	\$ 157	\$ (36)	\$19,368
Non-bank qualified obligations of states and political subdivisions	430,593	4,744	(2,976)	432,361
Mortgage-backed securities	113,689	—	(1,233)	112,456
Total held to maturity securities	\$563,529	\$ 4,901	\$ (4,245)	\$564,185

Management has implemented a process to identify securities with potential credit impairment that are other-than-temporary. This process involves evaluation of the length of time and extent to which the fair value has been less than the amortized cost basis, review of available information regarding the financial position of the issuer, monitoring the rating, watch, and outlook of the security, monitoring changes in value, cash flow projections, and the Company's intent to sell a security or whether it is more likely than not the Company will be required to sell the security before the recovery of its amortized cost which, in some cases, may extend to maturity. To the extent the Company determines that a security is deemed to be other-than-temporarily impaired, an impairment loss is recognized.

For all securities considered temporarily impaired, the Company does not intend to sell these securities and it is not more likely than not that the Company will be required to sell the security before recovery of its amortized cost, which may occur at maturity. The Company believes it will collect all principal and interest due on all investments with

amortized cost in excess of fair value and considered only temporarily impaired.

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GAAP requires that, at acquisition, an enterprise classify debt securities into one of three categories: Available for Sale (“AFS”), Held to Maturity (“HTM”) or trading. AFS securities are carried at fair value on the consolidated statements of financial condition, and unrealized holding gains and losses are excluded from earnings and recognized as a separate component of equity in accumulated other comprehensive income (“AOCI”). HTM debt securities are measured at amortized cost. Both AFS and HTM are subject to review for other-than-temporary impairment. The Company did not have any trading securities at December 31, 2017 or September 30, 2017.

Gross unrealized losses and fair value, aggregated by investment category and length of time that individual securities have been in a continuous unrealized loss position at December 31, 2017 and September 30, 2017, were as follows:

Available For Sale	LESS THAN 12 MONTHS		OVER 12 MONTHS		TOTAL	
	Fair Value	Unrealized (Losses)	Fair Value	Unrealized (Losses)	Fair Value	Unrealized (Losses)
At December 31, 2017	(Dollars in Thousands)					
Debt securities						
Small business administration securities	\$14,236	\$(3)	\$—	\$—	\$14,236	\$(3)
Obligations of states and political subdivisions	3,139	(26)	—	—	3,139	(26)
Non-bank qualified obligations of states and political subdivisions	553,626	(4,945)	16,045	(765)	569,671	(5,710)
Mortgage-backed securities	234,672	(1,275)	296,252	(5,149)	530,924	(6,424)
Total debt securities	805,673	(6,249)	312,297	(5,914)	1,117,970	(12,163)
Common equities and mutual funds	1,829	(1)	—	—	1,829	(1)
Total available for sale securities	\$807,502	\$(6,250)	\$312,297	\$(5,914)	\$1,119,799	\$(12,164)

At September 30, 2017	LESS THAN 12 MONTHS		OVER 12 MONTHS		TOTAL	
	Fair Value	Unrealized (Losses)	Fair Value	Unrealized (Losses)	Fair Value	Unrealized (Losses)
At September 30, 2017	(Dollars in Thousands)					
Debt securities						
Non-bank qualified obligations of states and political subdivisions	280,900	(2,887)	5,853	(150)	286,753	(3,037)
Mortgage-backed securities	237,897	(1,625)	100,287	(2,098)	338,184	(3,723)
Total debt securities	518,797	(4,512)	106,140	(2,248)	624,937	(6,760)
Total available for sale securities	\$518,797	\$(4,512)	\$106,140	\$(2,248)	\$624,937	\$(6,760)

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Held To Maturity	LESS THAN 12 MONTHS		OVER 12 MONTHS		TOTAL	
	Fair Value	Unrealized (Losses)	Fair Value	Unrealized (Losses)	Fair Value	Unrealized (Losses)
At December 31, 2017	(Dollars in Thousands)					
Debt securities						
Obligations of states and political subdivisions	\$ 1,261	\$ (3)	\$ 2,147	\$ (22)	\$ 3,408	\$ (25)
Non-bank qualified obligations of states and political subdivisions	114,999	(1,789)	80,813	(1,748)	195,812	(3,537)
Mortgage-backed securities	—	—	8,320	(148)	8,320	(148)
Total held to maturity securities	\$ 116,260	\$ (1,792)	\$ 91,280	\$ (1,918)	\$ 207,540	\$ (3,710)
	LESS THAN 12 MONTHS		OVER 12 MONTHS		TOTAL	
At September 30, 2017	Fair Value	Unrealized (Losses)	Fair Value	Unrealized (Losses)	Fair Value	Unrealized (Losses)
	(Dollars in Thousands)					
Debt securities						
Obligations of states and political subdivisions	\$ 1,364	\$ (6)	\$ 4,089	\$ (30)	\$ 5,453	\$ (36)
Non-bank qualified obligations of states and political subdivisions	202,018	(2,783)	6,206	(193)	208,224	(2,976)
Mortgage-backed securities	112,456	(1,233)	—	—	112,456	(1,233)
Total held to maturity securities	\$ 315,838	\$ (4,022)	\$ 10,295	\$ (223)	\$ 326,133	\$ (4,245)

At December 31, 2017, the investment portfolio included securities with current unrealized losses which have existed for longer than one year. All of these securities are considered to be acceptable credit risks. Because the declines in fair value were due to changes in market interest rates, not in estimated cash flows, and because the Company does not intend to sell these securities (has not made a decision to sell) and it is not more likely than not that the Company will be required to sell the securities before recovery of their amortized cost basis, which may occur at maturity, no other-than-temporary impairment was recorded at December 31, 2017.

The amortized cost and fair value of debt securities by contractual maturity as of the dates set forth below are shown below. Certain securities have call features which allow the issuer to call the security prior to maturity. Expected maturities may differ from contractual maturities in mortgage-backed securities because borrowers may have the right to call or prepay obligations with or without call or prepayment penalties. Therefore, mortgage-backed securities are not included in the maturity categories in the following maturity summary. The expected maturities of certain housing related municipal securities, Small Business Administration and asset-backed securities may differ from contractual maturities because the borrowers may have the right to prepay the obligation. However, certain prepayment penalties may apply.

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Available For Sale	AMORTIZED FAIR COST VALUE	
At December 31, 2017	(Dollars in Thousands)	
Due in one year or less	\$ 100	\$ 100
Due after one year through five years	55,485	56,375
Due after five years through ten years	452,422	462,903
Due after ten years	869,255	871,033
	1,377,262	1,390,411
Mortgage-backed securities	606,338	600,112
Common equities and mutual funds	1,298	1,829
Total available for sale securities	\$ 1,984,898	\$ 1,992,352
	AMORTIZED FAIR COST VALUE	
At September 30, 2017	(Dollars in Thousands)	
Due in one year or less	\$—	\$—
Due after one year through five years	36,586	37,674
Due after five years through ten years	347,831	358,198
Due after ten years	705,963	709,660
	1,090,380	1,105,532
Mortgage-backed securities	588,918	586,454
Common equities and mutual funds	1,009	1,445
Total available for sale securities	\$ 1,680,307	\$ 1,693,431
Held To Maturity	AMORTIZED FAIR COST VALUE	
At December 31, 2017	(Dollars in Thousands)	
Due in one year or less	\$ 2,674	\$ 2,662
Due after one year through five years	11,864	11,895
Due after five years through ten years	27,919	28,206
Due after ten years	192,567	189,061
	235,024	231,824
Mortgage-backed securities	8,468	8,320
Total held to maturity securities	\$ 243,492	\$ 240,144
	AMORTIZED FAIR COST VALUE	
At September 30, 2017	(Dollars in Thousands)	
Due in one year or less	\$ 1,483	\$ 1,480
Due after one year through five years	17,926	18,160
Due after five years through ten years	144,996	147,832
Due after ten years	285,435	284,257
	449,840	451,729
Mortgage-backed securities	113,689	112,456
Total held to maturity securities	\$ 563,529	\$ 564,185

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NOTE 6. COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES

In the normal course of business, the Bank makes various commitments to extend credit which are not reflected in the accompanying consolidated financial statements.

At December 31, 2017 and September 30, 2017, unfunded loan commitments approximated \$349.5 million and \$233.2 million, respectively, excluding undisbursed portions of loans in process. Commitments, which are disbursed subject to certain limitations, extend over various periods of time. Generally, unused commitments are canceled upon expiration of the commitment term as outlined in each individual contract.

The Company had no commitments to purchase or sell securities at December 31, 2017 or September 30, 2017.

The exposure to credit loss in the event of non-performance by other parties to financial instruments for commitments to extend credit is represented by the contractual amount of those instruments. The same credit policies and collateral requirements are used in making commitments and conditional obligations as are used for on-balance-sheet instruments.

Since certain commitments to make loans and to fund lines of credit and loans in process expire without being used, the amount does not necessarily represent future cash commitments. In addition, commitments used to extend credit are agreements to lend to a customer as long as there is no violation of any condition established in the contract.

Legal Proceedings

The Bank was served on April 15, 2013, with a lawsuit captioned Inter National Bank v. NetSpend Corporation, MetaBank, BDO USA, LLP d/b/a BDO Seidman, Cause No. C-2084-12-I filed in the District Court of Hidalgo County, Texas. The Plaintiff's Second Amended Original Petition and Application for Temporary Restraining Order and Temporary Injunction adds both MetaBank and BDO Seidman to the original causes of action against NetSpend. NetSpend acts as a prepaid card program manager and processor for both Inter National Bank ("INB") and MetaBank. According to the Petition, NetSpend has informed INB that the depository accounts at INB for the NetSpend program supposedly contained \$10.5 million less than they should. INB alleges that NetSpend has breached its fiduciary duty by making affirmative misrepresentations to INB about the safety and stability of the program, and by failing to timely disclose the nature and extent of any alleged shortfall in settlement of funds related to cardholder activity and the nature and extent of NetSpend's systemic deficiencies in its accounting and settlement processing procedures. To the extent that an accounting reveals that there is an actual shortfall, INB alleges that MetaBank may be liable for portions or all of said sum due to the fact that funds have been transferred from INB to MetaBank, and thus MetaBank would have been unjustly enriched. The Bank is vigorously contesting this matter. In January 2014, NetSpend was granted summary judgment in this matter which is under appeal. Because the theory of liability against both NetSpend and the Bank is the same, the Bank views the NetSpend summary judgment as a positive in support of our position. An estimate of a range of reasonably possible loss cannot be made at this stage of the litigation because discovery is still being conducted.

The Bank was served, on October 14, 2016, with a lawsuit captioned Card Limited, LLC v. MetaBank dba Meta Payment Systems, Civil No. 2:16-cv-00980 in the United States District Court for the District of Utah. This action was initiated by a former prepaid program manager of the Bank, which was terminated by the Bank in fiscal year 2016. Card Limited alleges that after all of the programs were wound down, there were two accounts with a positive balance to which they are entitled. The Bank's position is that Card Limited is not entitled to the funds contained in said accounts. The total amount to which Card Limited claims it is entitled is \$4,001,025. The Bank intends to vigorously defend this claim. An estimate of a range of reasonably possible loss cannot be made at this stage of the litigation because discovery is still being conducted.

From time to time, the Company or its subsidiaries are subject to certain legal proceedings and claims in the ordinary course of business. Accruals have been recorded when the outcome is probable and can be reasonably estimated.

While management currently believes that the ultimate outcome of these proceedings will not have a material adverse effect on the Company's financial position or its results of operations, legal proceedings are inherently uncertain and unfavorable resolution of some or all of these matters could, individually or in the aggregate, have a material adverse effect on the Company's and its subsidiaries' respective businesses, financial condition or results of operations.

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NOTE 7. STOCK COMPENSATION

The Company maintains the amended and restated Meta Financial Group, Inc. 2002 Omnibus Incentive Plan, as amended (the "2002 Omnibus Incentive Plan"), which, among other things, provides for the awarding of stock options and nonvested (restricted) shares to certain officers and directors of the Company. Awards are granted by the Compensation Committee of the Board of Directors based on the performance of the award recipients or other relevant factors.

Compensation expense for share-based awards is recorded over the vesting period at the fair value of the award at the time of the grant. The exercise price of options or fair value of non-vested (restricted) shares granted under the Company's incentive plan is equal to the fair market value of the underlying stock at the grant date. The Company has elected, with the adoption of ASU 2016-09, to record forfeitures as they occur.

The following tables show the activity of options and nonvested (restricted) shares granted, exercised, or forfeited under the 2002 Omnibus Incentive Plan for the three months ended December 31, 2017:

	Number of Shares	Weighted Average Exercise Price	Weighted Average Remaining Contractual Term (Yrs)	Aggregate Intrinsic Value
(Dollars in Thousands, Except Per Share Data)				
Options outstanding, September 30, 2017	75,757	\$ 22.62	2.28	\$ 4,225
Granted	—	—	—	—
Exercised	—	—	—	—
Forfeited or expired	—	—	—	—
Options outstanding, December 31, 2017	75,757	\$ 22.62	2.03	\$ 5,305
Options exercisable, December 31, 2017	75,757	\$ 22.62	2.03	\$ 5,305

	Number of Shares	Weighted Average Fair Value at Grant
(Dollars in Thousands, Except Per Share Data)		
Nonvested (restricted) shares outstanding, September 30, 2017	304,526	\$ 86.96
Granted	42,181	85.03
Vested	(61,161)	83.55
Forfeited or expired	—	—
Nonvested (restricted) shares outstanding, December 31, 2017	285,546	\$ 87.40

During the first and second quarters of fiscal 2017, stock awards were granted to the Company's three highest paid executive officers in connection with their signing of employment agreements with the Company. These stock awards vest over eight years.

At December 31, 2017, stock-based compensation expense not yet recognized in income totaled \$17.2 million, which is expected to be recognized over a weighted average remaining period of 3.68 years.

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NOTE 8. SEGMENT INFORMATION

An operating segment is generally defined as a component of a business for which discrete financial information is available and whose results are reviewed by the chief operating decision-maker. Operating segments are aggregated into reportable segments if certain criteria are met.

The Company reports its results of operations through the following three business segments: Payments, Banking, and Corporate Services/Other. Certain shared services, including the investment portfolio, wholesale deposits and borrowings, are included in Corporate Services/Other. National Lending and Community Banking are reported in the Banking segment. MPS, Refund Advantage, EPS Financial ("EPS"), SCS, and other tax businesses are reported in the Payments segment.

The Company reclassified goodwill, intangibles, and related amortization expenses during fiscal year 2017 from the Corporate Services / Other segment to Payments and Banking based on how annual impairment testing is performed. Prior period amounts have also been reclassified to conform to the current year presentation.

The following tables present segment data for the Company for the three months ended December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively.

	Payments	Banking	Corporate Services/Other	Total
Three Months Ended December 31, 2017				
Interest income	\$ 4,669	\$ 16,478	\$ 9,710	\$ 30,857
Interest expense	—	881	3,780	4,661
Net interest income	4,669	15,597	5,930	26,196
Provision for loan losses	1,017	51	—	1,068
Non-interest income	28,101	1,485	(318	) 29,268
Non-interest expense	26,934	6,568	10,540	44,042
Income (loss) before income tax expense (benefit)	4,819	10,463	(4,928	) 10,354
Total goodwill	87,145	11,578	—	98,723
Total assets	380,442	1,478,693	3,558,828	5,417,963
Total deposits	2,768,736	236,494	508,415	3,513,645

	Payments	Banking	Corporate Services/Other	Total
Three Months Ended December 31, 2016				
Interest income	\$ 2,912	\$ 10,754	\$ 8,909	\$ 22,575
Interest expense	—	544	2,198	2,742
Net interest income	2,912	10,210	6,711	19,833
Provision for loan losses	331	512	—	843
Non-interest income	19,024	1,072	(747	) 19,349
Non-interest expense	22,080	5,845	8,828	36,753
Income (loss) before income tax expense (benefit)	(475	) 4,925	(2,864	) 1,586
Total goodwill	87,320	11,578	—	98,898
Total assets	239,804	1,118,429	2,855,096	4,213,329
Total deposits	2,435,530	225,182	1,002,425	3,663,137

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NOTE 9. NEW ACCOUNTING PRONOUNCEMENTS

Accounting Standards Update (“ASU”) No. 2016-13, Financial Instruments - Credit Losses (Topic 326): Measurement of Credit Losses on Financial Instruments

This ASU requires organizations to replace the incurred loss impairment methodology with a methodology reflecting expected credit losses with considerations for a broader range of reasonable and supportable information to substantiate credit loss estimates. This ASU is effective for annual reporting periods beginning after December 15, 2019. The Company is currently undertaking a data analysis and is taking measures so that its systems capture data applicable to the standard. In addition, the Company is undergoing a readiness assessment with an external consultant that began in the first quarter of fiscal 2018.

ASU No. 2016-04, Extinguishment of Liabilities (Subtopic 405-20): Recognition of Breakage for Certain Prepaid Stored-Value Products

This ASU requires organizations to derecognize the deposit liabilities for unredeemed prepaid stored-value products (i.e. – breakage) consistent with breakage guidance in Topic 606, Revenue from Contracts with Customers. This ASU is effective for annual reporting periods beginning after December 15, 2017, and the Company expects the impact to the consolidated financial statements to be minimal.

ASU No. 2016-02, Leases (Topic 842): Amendments to the Leases Analysis

This ASU requires organizations to recognize lease assets and lease liabilities on the balance sheet, along with disclosing key information about leasing arrangements. This update is effective for annual reporting periods beginning after December 15, 2018, including interim periods within that reporting period, and the Company has finalized its initial assessment of the ASU and expects that the standard will be immaterial to the consolidated financial statements with the Company's current leases.

ASU No. 2014-09, Revenue Recognition – Revenue from Contracts with Customers (Topic 606)

This ASU provides guidance on when to recognize revenue from contracts with customers. The objective of this ASU is to eliminate diversity in practice related to this topic and to provide guidance that would streamline and enhance revenue recognition requirements. The ASU defines five steps to recognize revenue, including identify the contract with a customer, identify the performance obligations in the contract, determine a transaction price, allocate the transaction price to the performance obligations and then recognize the revenue when or as the entity satisfies a performance obligation. This update is effective for annual reporting periods beginning after December 15, 2017, including interim periods within that reporting period, and the Company is currently assessing all income streams, including different prepaid card programs so as to ascertain how breakage will be recognized under the standard.

ASU 2015-17, Income Taxes (Topic 740): Balance Sheet Classification of Deferred Taxes

This ASU requires entities with a classified balance sheet to present all deferred tax assets and liabilities as noncurrent. This update was effective for annual and interim periods in fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2016, and did not have an impact on the consolidated financial statements.

ASU 2016-15, Statement of Cash Flows (Topic 230): Classification of Certain Cash Receipts and Cash Payments

This ASU addresses eight classification issues related to the statement of cash flows including: debt prepayment or debt extinguishment costs, settlement of zero-coupon bonds, contingent consideration payments made after a business

combination, proceeds from the settlement of insurance claims, proceeds from the settlement of corporate-owned life insurance policies, including bank-owned life insurance policies, distributions received from equity method investees, beneficial interests in securitization transactions, and separately identifiable cash flows and application of the predominance principle. This update is effective for annual and interim periods in fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2017, and the Company expects the impact to the consolidated financial statements to be minimal.

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ASU 2017-08, Receivables - Nonrefundable Fees and Other Costs (Subtopic 310-20): Premium Amortization on Purchased Callable Debt Securities

This ASU requires entities to shorten the amortization period for certain callable debt securities held at a premium. Specifically, the amendments in this update require the premium to be amortized to the earliest call date. The amendments do not require an accounting change for securities held at a discount; the discount continues to be amortized to maturity. The amendments in this update are effective for fiscal years, and interim periods within those fiscal years, beginning after December 15, 2018, and is not expected to have a material impact on the consolidated financial statements.

ASU 2017-12, Receivables - Derivatives and Hedging (Topic 815): Targeted Improvements to Accounting for Hedging Activities

This ASU targets improving the accounting treatment for hedging activities and provides more flexibility in defining what can be hedged, while reducing earnings volatility due to ineffective hedges, and minimizing documentation requirements. The ASU also offers the ability to reclassify prepayable debt securities from HTM to AFS and subsequently sell the securities, as long as the securities are eligible to be hedged. This update is effective for annual periods and interim periods in fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2018, with early adoption permitted in any interim period or fiscal year before the effective date. The Company early adopted ASU 2017-12 as of October 1, 2017. The Company reclassified certain prepayable debt securities from HTM to AFS during the first quarter of fiscal 2018. See Note 5 to the Notes to Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements for additional information on the securities reclassified.

ASU 2016-01, Financial Instruments (Subtopic 825-10): Recognition and Measurement of Financial Assets and Financial Liabilities

This ASU allows equity investments that do not have a readily determinable fair value to be remeasured at fair value either upon the occurrence of an observable price change or upon identification of an impairment. The ASU also requires enhanced disclosure about those investments. The ASU simplifies the impairment assessment of equity investments without readily determinable fair values by requiring assessment for impairment qualitatively at each reporting period. Entities that are required to disclose the fair value of financial instruments measured at amortized cost on the balance sheet are required to use the exit price notion consistent with Topic 820, Fair Value Measurement. This update will be effective for annual and interim periods in fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2017, with early adoption permitted. The Company is currently evaluating the potential impact of ASU 2016-01 on its consolidated financial statements.

NOTE 10. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

Accounting Standards Codification (“ASC”) 820, Fair Value Measurements defines fair value, establishes a framework for measuring the fair value of assets and liabilities using a hierarchy system and requires disclosures about fair value measurement. It clarifies that fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants in the market in which the reporting entity transacts.

The fair value hierarchy is as follows:

Level 1 Inputs – Valuation is based upon quoted prices for identical instruments traded in active markets that the Company has the ability to access at measurement date.

Level 2 Inputs – Valuation is based upon quoted prices for similar instruments in active markets, quoted prices for identical or similar instruments in markets that are not active and model-based valuation techniques for which significant assumptions are observable in the market.

Level 3 Inputs – Valuation is generated from model-based techniques that use significant assumptions not observable in the market and are used only to the extent that observable inputs are not available. These unobservable assumptions reflect the Company’s own estimates of assumptions that market participants would use in pricing the asset or liability. Valuation techniques include use of option pricing models, discounted cash flow models and similar techniques.

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Securities Available for Sale and Held to Maturity. Securities available for sale are recorded at fair value on a recurring basis and securities held to maturity are carried at amortized cost. Fair value measurement is based upon quoted prices, if available. If quoted prices are not available, fair values are measured using an independent pricing service. For both Level 1 and Level 2 securities, management uses various methods and techniques to corroborate prices obtained from the pricing service, including but not limited to reference to dealer or other market quotes, and by reviewing valuations of comparable instruments. The Company's Level 1 securities include equity securities and mutual funds. Level 2 securities include U.S. Government agency and instrumentality securities, U.S. Government agency and instrumentality mortgage-backed securities, municipal bonds and corporate debt securities. The Company had no Level 3 securities at December 31, 2017 or September 30, 2017.

The fair values of securities are determined by obtaining quoted prices on nationally recognized securities exchanges (Level 1 inputs), or valuation based upon quoted prices for similar instruments in active markets, quoted prices for identical or similar instruments in markets that are not active and model based valuation techniques for which significant assumptions are observable in the market (Level 2 inputs). The Company considers these valuations supplied by a third party provider which utilizes several sources for valuing fixed-income securities. These sources include Interactive Data Corporation, Reuters, Standard and Poor's, Bloomberg Financial Markets, Street Software Technology, and the third party provider's own matrix and desk pricing. The Company, no less than annually, reviews the third party's methods and source's methodology for reasonableness and to ensure an understanding of inputs utilized in determining fair value. Sources utilized by the third party provider include but are not limited to pricing models that vary based by asset class and include available trade, bid, and other market information. This methodology includes but is not limited to broker quotes, proprietary models, descriptive terms and conditions databases, as well as extensive quality control programs. Monthly, the Company receives and compares prices provided by multiple securities dealers and pricing providers to validate the accuracy and reasonableness of prices received from the third party provider. On a monthly basis, the Investment Committee reviews mark-to-market changes in the securities portfolio for reasonableness.

The following table summarizes the fair values of securities available for sale and held to maturity at December 31, 2017 and September 30, 2017. Securities available for sale are measured at fair value on a recurring basis, while securities held to maturity are carried at amortized cost in the consolidated statements of financial condition.

(Dollars in Thousands)	Fair Value At December 31, 2017							
	Available For Sale				Held to Maturity			
	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Debt securities								
Small business administration securities	56,948	—	56,948	—	—	—	—	—
Obligations of states and political subdivisions	14,610	—	14,610	—	4,342	—	4,342	—
Non-bank qualified obligations of states and political subdivisions	1,223,030	—	1,223,030	—	227,482	—	227,482	—
Asset-backed securities	95,823	—	95,823	—	—	—	—	—
Mortgage-backed securities	600,112	—	600,112	—	8,320	—	8,320	—
Total debt securities	1,990,523	—	1,990,523	—	240,144	—	240,144	—
Common equities and mutual funds	1,829	1,829	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total securities	\$ 1,992,352	\$ 1,829	\$ 1,990,523	\$ —	\$ -240,144	\$ -240,144	\$ —	\$ —

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(Dollars in Thousands)	Fair Value At September 30, 2017							
	Available For Sale				Held to Maturity			
	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Debt securities								
Small business administration securities	57,871	—	57,871	—	—	—	—	—
Obligations of states and political subdivisions	—	—	—	—	19,368	—	19,368	—
Non-bank qualified obligations of states and political subdivisions	950,829	—	950,829	—	432,361	—	432,361	—
Asset-backed securities	96,832	—	96,832	—	—	—	—	—
Mortgage-backed securities	586,454	—	586,454	—	112,456	—	112,456	—
Total debt securities	1,691,986	—	1,691,986	—	564,185	—	564,185	—
Common equities and mutual funds	1,445	1,445	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total securities	\$1,693,431	\$1,445	\$1,691,986	\$ —	\$564,185	\$ —	\$564,185	\$ —

Loans. The Company does not record loans at fair value on a recurring basis. However, if a loan is considered impaired, an allowance for loan losses is established. Once a loan is identified as individually impaired, management measures impairment in accordance with ASC 310, Receivables.

The following table summarizes the assets of the Company that were measured at fair value in the consolidated statements of financial condition on a non-recurring basis as of December 31, 2017 and September 30, 2017.

(Dollars in Thousands)	Fair Value At December 31, 2017			
	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
	Foreclosed Assets, net	128	—	—
Total	\$128	\$ —	\$ —	\$128

(Dollars in Thousands)	Fair Value At September 30, 2017			
	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
	Foreclosed Assets, net	292	—	—	292
Total	\$292	\$ —	\$ —	\$292

(Dollars in Thousands)	Quantitative Information About Level 3 Fair Value Measurements				
	Fair Value		Valuation Technique	Unobservable Input	Range of Inputs
	at December 31, 2017	at September 30, 2017			
Foreclosed Assets, net	\$128	292	Market approach	Appraised values ⁽¹⁾	4.00 - 10.00%

(1) The Company generally relies on external appraisers to develop this information. Management reduced the appraised value by estimating selling costs in a range of 4% to 10%.

The following table discloses the Company's estimated fair value amounts of its financial instruments as of the dates set forth below. It is management's belief that the fair values presented below are reasonable based on the valuation techniques and data available to the Company as of December 31, 2017 and September 30, 2017, as more fully described below. The operations of the Company are managed from a going concern basis and not a liquidation

basis. As a result, the ultimate value realized for the financial instruments presented could be substantially different when actually recognized over time through the normal course of operations. Additionally, a substantial portion of the Company's inherent value is the Bank's capitalization and franchise value. Neither of these components have been given consideration in the presentation of fair values below.

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The following presents the carrying amount and estimated fair value of the financial instruments held by the Company at December 31, 2017 and September 30, 2017.

	December 31, 2017				
	Carrying Amount	Estimated Fair Value	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
	(Dollars in Thousands)				
Financial assets					
Cash and cash equivalents	\$1,300,409	\$1,300,409	\$1,300,409	\$ —	—
Securities available for sale	1,992,352	1,992,352	1,829	1,990,523	—
Securities held to maturity	243,492	240,144	—	240,144	—
Total securities	2,235,844	2,232,496	1,829	2,230,667	—
Loans receivable:					
One to four family residential mortgage loans	203,967	205,413	—	—	205,413
Commercial and multi-family real estate loans	654,029	655,777	—	—	655,777
Agricultural real estate loans	61,303	61,257	—	—	61,257
Consumer loans	274,981	293,832	—	—	293,832
Commercial operating loans	56,516	56,520	—	—	56,520
Agricultural operating loans	24,696	24,506	—	—	24,506
CML insurance premium finance loans	235,671	235,530	—	—	235,530
Total loans receivable	1,511,163	1,532,835	—	—	1,532,835
Federal Home Loan Bank stock	57,443	57,443	—	57,443	—
Accrued interest receivable	21,089	21,089	21,089	—	—
Financial liabilities					
Noninterest bearing demand deposits	2,779,645	2,779,645	2,779,645	—	—
Interest bearing demand deposits, savings, and money markets	185,376	185,376	185,376	—	—
Certificates of deposit	128,220	127,451	—	127,451	—
Wholesale non-maturing deposits	40,928	40,928	40,928	—	—
Wholesale certificates of deposit	379,476	379,101	—	379,101	—
Total deposits	3,513,645	3,512,501	3,005,949	506,552	—
Advances from Federal Home Loan Bank	210,000	210,002	—	210,002	—
Federal funds purchased	1,100,000	1,100,000	1,100,000	—	—
Securities sold under agreements to repurchase	3,339	3,339	—	3,339	—
Capital lease	1,922	1,922	—	1,922	—
Trust preferred securities	10,310	10,445	—	10,445	—
Subordinated debentures	73,382	75,750	—	75,750	—
Accrued interest payable	4,065	4,065	4,065	—	—

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	September 30, 2017				
	Carrying Amount	Estimated Fair Value	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
(Dollars in Thousands)					
Financial assets					
Cash and cash equivalents	\$1,267,586	\$1,267,586	\$1,267,586	\$ —	—
Securities available for sale	1,693,431	1,693,431	1,445	1,691,986	—
Securities held to maturity	563,529	564,185	—	564,185	—
Total securities	2,256,960	2,257,616	1,445	2,256,171	—
Loans receivable:					
One to four family residential mortgage loans	196,706	196,970	—	—	196,970
Commercial and multi-family real estate loans	585,510	576,330	—	—	576,330
Agricultural real estate loans	61,800	61,584	—	—	61,584
Consumer loans	163,004	163,961	—	—	163,961
Commercial operating loans	35,759	35,723	—	—	35,723
Agricultural operating loans	33,594	32,870	—	—	32,870
CML insurance premium finance loans	250,459	250,964	—	—	250,964
Total loans receivable	1,326,832	1,318,402	—	—	1,318,402
Federal Home Loan Bank stock	61,123	61,123	—	61,123	—
Accrued interest receivable	19,380	19,380	19,380	—	—
Financial liabilities					
Noninterest bearing demand deposits	2,454,057	2,454,057	2,454,057	—	—
Interest bearing demand deposits, savings, and money markets	169,557	169,557	169,557	—	—
Certificates of deposit	123,637	123,094	—	123,094	—
Wholesale non-maturing deposits	18,245	18,245	18,245	—	—
Wholesale certificates of deposits	457,928	457,509	—	457,509	—
Total deposits	3,223,424	3,222,462	2,641,859	580,603	—
Advances from Federal Home Loan Bank	415,000	415,003	—	415,003	—
Federal funds purchased	987,000	987,000	987,000	—	—
Securities sold under agreements to repurchase	2,472	2,472	—	2,472	—
Capital lease	1,938	1,938	—	1,938	—
Trust preferred securities	10,310	10,447	—	10,447	—
Subordinated debentures	73,347	76,500	—	76,500	—
Accrued interest payable	2,280	2,280	2,280	—	—

The following sets forth the methods and assumptions used in determining the fair value estimates for the Company's financial instruments at December 31, 2017 and September 30, 2017.

CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

The carrying amount of cash and short-term investments is assumed to approximate the fair value.

SECURITIES AVAILABLE FOR SALE AND HELD TO MATURITY

Securities available for sale are recorded at fair value on a recurring basis and securities held to maturity are carried at amortized cost. Fair values for investment securities are based on obtaining quoted prices on nationally recognized securities exchanges, or matrix pricing, which is a mathematical technique widely used in the industry to value 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.

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LOANS RECEIVABLE, NET

The fair value of loans is estimated using a historical or replacement cost basis concept (i.e., an entrance price concept). The fair value of loans was estimated by discounting the future cash flows using the current rates at which similar loans would be made to borrowers and for similar remaining maturities. When using the discounting method to determine fair value, homogeneous loans with similar terms and conditions were grouped together and discounted at a target rate at which similar loans would be made to borrowers at December 31, 2017 or September 30, 2017. In addition, when computing the estimated fair value for all loans, allowances for loan losses have been subtracted from the calculated fair value as a result of the discounted cash flow which approximates the fair value adjustment for the credit quality component.

FEDERAL HOME LOAN BANK (“FHLB”) STOCK

The fair value of FHLB stock is assumed to approximate book value since the Company is only able to redeem this stock at par value.

ACCRUED INTEREST RECEIVABLE

The carrying amount of accrued interest receivable is assumed to approximate the fair value.

DEPOSITS

The carrying values of non-interest bearing checking deposits, interest bearing checking deposits, savings, money markets, and wholesale non-maturing deposits are assumed to approximate fair value, since such deposits are immediately withdrawable without penalty. The fair value of time certificates of deposit and wholesale certificates of deposit were estimated by discounting expected future cash flows by the current rates offered on certificates of deposit with similar remaining maturities.

In accordance with ASC 825, Financial Instruments, no value has been assigned to the Company’s long-term relationships with its deposit customers (core value of deposits intangible) since such intangibles are not financial instruments as defined under ASC 825.

ADVANCES FROM FHLB

The fair value of such advances was estimated by discounting the expected future cash flows using current interest rates for advances with similar terms and remaining maturities.

FEDERAL FUNDS PURCHASED

The carrying amount of federal funds purchased is assumed to approximate the fair value.

SECURITIES SOLD UNDER AGREEMENTS TO REPURCHASE AND SUBORDINATED DEBENTURES

The fair value of these instruments was estimated by discounting the expected future cash flows using derived interest rates approximating market over the contractual maturity of such borrowings.

ACCRUED INTEREST PAYABLE

The carrying amount of accrued interest payable is assumed to approximate the fair value.

LIMITATIONS

Fair value estimates are made at a specific point in time and are based on relevant market information about the financial instrument. Additionally, fair value estimates are based on existing on- and off-balance sheet financial instruments without attempting to estimate the value of anticipated future business, customer relationships and the value of assets and liabilities that are not considered financial instruments. These estimates do not reflect any premium or discount that could result from offering the Company’s entire holdings of a particular financial instrument for sale at one time. Furthermore, since no market exists for certain of the Company’s financial instruments, fair value

estimates may be based on judgments regarding future expected loss experience, current economic conditions, risk characteristics of various financial instruments and other factors. These estimates are subjective in nature and involve uncertainties and matters of significant judgment and therefore cannot be determined with a high level of precision. Changes in assumptions as well as tax considerations could significantly affect the estimates. Accordingly, based on the limitations described above, the aggregate fair value estimates are not intended to represent the underlying value of the Company, on either a going concern or a liquidation basis.

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NOTE 11. GOODWILL AND INTANGIBLE ASSETS

The Company held a total of \$98.7 million of goodwill as of December 31, 2017. The recorded goodwill was due to two separate business combinations during fiscal 2015 and two separate business combinations during the first quarter of fiscal 2017. The fiscal 2015 business combinations included \$11.6 million of goodwill in connection with the purchase of substantially all of the commercial loan portfolio and related assets of AFS/IBEX on December 2, 2014 and \$25.4 million of goodwill in connection with the purchase of substantially all of the assets and liabilities of Refund Advantage on September 8, 2015. The fiscal 2017 business combinations included \$30.4 million of goodwill in connection with the purchase of substantially all of the assets of EPS Financial, LLC on November 1, 2016; and \$31.4 million of goodwill in connection with the purchase of substantially all of the assets and specified liabilities of Specialty Consumer Services LP on December 14, 2016. The goodwill associated with these transactions is deductible for tax purposes.

The changes in the carrying amount of the Company's goodwill and intangible assets for the three months ended December 31, 2017 and 2016 were as follows:

	2017	2016			
	(Dollars in Thousands)				
Goodwill					
Balance as of September 30,	\$98,723	\$36,928			
Acquisitions during the period	—	61,970			
Write-offs during the period	—	—			
Balance as of December 31,	\$98,723	\$98,898			
	Trademark ⁽¹⁾	Non-Compete ⁽²⁾	Customer Relationships ⁽³⁾	All Others ⁽⁴⁾	Total
Intangibles					
Balance as of September 30, 2017	\$10,051	\$ 1,782	\$ 31,707	\$8,638	\$52,178
Acquisitions during the period	—	—	—	38	38
Amortization during the period	(159)	(132)	(1,160)	(230)	(1,681)
Write-offs during the period	—	—	—	(14)	(14)
Balance as of December 31, 2017	\$9,892	\$ 1,650	\$ 30,547	\$8,432	\$50,521
Gross carrying amount	\$10,990	\$ 2,480	\$ 57,810	\$10,540	\$81,820
Accumulated amortization	(1,098)	(830)	(17,015)	(1,565)	(20,508)
Accumulated impairment	—	—	(10,248)	(543)	(10,791)
Balance as of December 31, 2017	\$9,892	\$ 1,650	\$ 30,547	\$8,432	\$50,521

(1) Book amortization period of 5-15 years. Amortized using the straight line and accelerated methods.

(2) Book amortization period of 3-5 years. Amortized using the straight line method.

(3) Book amortization period of 10-30 years. Amortized using the accelerated method.

(4) Book amortization period of 3-20 years. Amortized using the straight line method.

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	Trademark ⁽¹⁾	Non-Compete ⁽²⁾	Customer Relationships ⁽³⁾	All Others ⁽⁴⁾	Total
Intangibles					
Balance as of September 30, 2016	\$5,149	\$ 127	\$ 20,590	\$ 3,055	\$28,921
Acquisitions during the period	5,480	2,210	32,230	6,156	46,076
Amortization during the period	(120)	(86)	(1,193)	(126)	(1,525)
Write-offs during the period	—	—	—	—	—
Balance as of December 31, 2016	\$10,509	\$ 2,251	\$ 51,627	\$ 9,085	\$73,472
Gross carrying amount	\$10,970	\$ 2,510	\$ 58,270	\$ 9,711	\$81,461
Accumulated amortization	(461)	(259)	(6,643)	(626)	(7,989)
Balance as of December 31, 2016	\$10,509	\$ 2,251	\$ 51,627	\$ 9,085	\$73,472

(1) Book amortization period of 15 years. Amortized using the straight line and accelerated methods.

(2) Book amortization period of 3 years. Amortized using the straight line method.

(3) Book amortization period of 10-30 years. Amortized using the accelerated method.

(4) Book amortization period of 3-20 years. Amortized using the straight line method.

The estimated amortization expense of intangible assets assumes no activities, such as acquisitions, which would result in additional amortizable intangible assets. Estimated amortization expense of intangible assets in the remaining nine months of fiscal 2018 and subsequent fiscal years is as follows:

	(Dollars in Thousands)
Remaining in 2018	\$ 6,028
2019	7,151
2020	5,753
2021	5,184
2022	4,262
2023	3,625
Thereafter	18,518
Total anticipated intangible amortization	\$ 50,521

The Company tests intangible assets for impairment at least annually or more often if conditions indicate a possible impairment. There were no impairments to intangible assets during the three months ended December 31, 2017 or 2016. The annual goodwill impairment test for fiscal 2018 will be conducted at September 30, 2018.

NOTE 12. INCOME TAXES

Income tax expense for the fiscal 2018 first quarter was \$5.7 million, resulting in an effective tax rate of 54.9%, compared to \$0.3 million, or an effective tax rate of 21.6%, for the fiscal 2017 first quarter.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (the "Tax Act") was signed into law on December 22, 2017. The Tax Act has a significant impact on the U.S. corporate income tax regime by lowering the U.S. corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 21 percent effective for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2018 in addition to implementing numerous other changes. U.S. GAAP requires that the impact of tax legislation be recognized in the period in which the law was enacted.

As a result of the Tax Act, the Company remeasured its deferred tax assets and deferred tax liabilities during its fiscal 2018 first quarter, resulting in additional income tax expense of \$3.6 million. As the Company's fiscal year end ends on September 30, the statutory corporate rate for fiscal 2018 will be prorated to 24.53 percent.

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In December 2017, the Securities and Exchange Commission staff issued Staff Accounting Bulletin No. 118 (SAB 118), which provides guidance regarding how a company is to reflect provisional amounts when necessary information is not yet available, prepared or analyzed sufficiently to complete its accounting for the effect of the changes in the Tax Act. The income tax expense of \$3.6 million recorded during the fiscal 2018 first quarter represents all known and estimable impacts of the Tax Act and is a provisional amount based on the Company's current best estimate. This provisional amount incorporates assumptions made based upon the Company's current interpretations of the Tax Act and may change as the Company receives additional clarification and implementation guidance, and as data becomes available allowing for a more accurate scheduling of the deferred tax assets and liabilities, including those related to items potentially impacted by the Tax Act such as fixed assets and employee compensation. Adjustments to this provisional amount through December 22, 2018 will be included in income from operations as an adjustment to tax expense in future periods.

NOTE 13. REGULATORY MATTERS

On January 5, 2015, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation ("FDIC") published industry guidance in the form of Frequently Asked Questions ("FAQs") with respect to the categorization of deposit liabilities as "brokered" deposits. On November 13, 2015, the FDIC issued for comment updated and annotated FAQs, and on June 30, 2016, the FDIC finalized the FAQs. The Company believes that the final FAQs do not materially impact the processes that it uses to identify, accept and report brokered deposits. On April 26, 2016, the FDIC issued a final rule to amend how small banks (less than \$10 billion in assets that have been FDIC insured for at least five years) are assessed for deposit insurance (the "Final Rule"). The Final Rule imposes higher assessments for banks that the FDIC believes present higher risk profiles. The Final Rule became effective with the Bank's December 2016 assessment invoice, which the Company received in March 2017.

Due to the Bank's status as a "well-capitalized" institution under the FDIC's prompt corrective action regulations, and further with respect to the Bank's financial condition in general, the Company does not at this time anticipate that either the FAQs or the Final Rule will have a material adverse impact on the Company's business operations. However, should the Bank ever fail to be well-capitalized in the future, as a result of failing to meet the well-capitalized requirements, or the imposition of an individual minimum capital requirement or similar formal requirements, then, notwithstanding that the Bank has capital in excess of the well-capitalized minimum requirements, the Bank would be prohibited, absent waiver from the FDIC, from utilizing brokered deposits (i.e., may not accept, renew or rollover brokered deposits), which could produce serious adverse effects on the Company's liquidity, and financial condition and results of operations. Similarly, should the Bank's financial condition in general deteriorate, future FDIC assessments could have a material adverse effect on the Company.

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NOTE 14. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

On January 2, 2018, a deed in lieu of foreclosure was executed on the collateral for a large, well-collateralized loan relationship. Upon execution of the deed in lieu, the Company took ownership of the properties serving as collateral and transferred the loans to foreclosed real estate and repossessed assets. If, as expected, the properties are sold prior to the end of the agreed-upon receivership period set forth in the settlement agreement, the Company will be entitled to all principal, note interest, legal and other fees and expenses. After the receivership period ends, if the properties are not sold, the Company will be entitled to the fair value of the properties.

On January 9, 2018, the Company announced that it entered into a definitive merger agreement with Crestmark Bancorp, Inc. ("Crestmark"), the holding company of Crestmark Bank, whereby the Company will acquire Crestmark in an all-stock transaction.

Pursuant to the terms of the merger agreement, at the effective time of the merger, Crestmark will merge with and into the Company, and Crestmark Bank will merge with and into MetaBank (the "Bank").

Under the terms of the merger agreement, Crestmark shareholders will receive 2.65 shares of the Company's common stock for each share of Crestmark common stock. The aggregate value of the acquisition consideration, based on the closing price of Meta Financial shares on January 8, 2018 of \$91.35, would have been \$320.6 million. Giving effect to the transaction, existing shareholders of the Company are expected to own approximately 75%, and Crestmark shareholders are expected to own approximately 25%, of the outstanding shares of the Company.

On January 25, 2018, the Company announced that the Bank entered into a three-year program agreement with Liberty Lending, LCC ("Liberty"), whereby the Bank will provide personal loans to Liberty customers. Under the agreement, the Bank expects to originate between \$500 million and \$1 billion in personal loans during the term of the program. The loan products contemplated under this agreement will be closed-end installment loans ranging from \$3,500 to \$45,000 in principal amount with lengths of between 13 and 60 months. The Bank expects to begin providing such loans as early as the third quarter of fiscal 2018. The Bank has the contractual right to sell these loans or interests in the loans. The agreement marks the entry point for the Company into a direct-to-consumer credit business.

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Item 2. Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations.

META FINANCIAL GROUP, INC®.
AND SUBSIDIARIES

FORWARD LOOKING STATEMENTS

Meta Financial Group, Inc.®, ("Meta Financial" or "the Company" or "us") and its wholly-owned subsidiary, MetaBank® (the "Bank" or "MetaBank"), may from time to time make written or oral "forward-looking statements," including statements contained in this Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q, in its other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC"), in its reports to stockholders, and in other communications by the Company and the Bank, which are made in good faith by the Company pursuant to the "safe harbor" provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995.

You can identify forward-looking statements by words such as "may," "hope," "will," "should," "expect," "plan," "anticipate," "intend," "believe," "estimate," "predict," "potential," "continue," "could," "future," or the negative of those terms, or other words or phrases having similar meaning or similar expressions. You should carefully read statements that contain these words because they discuss our future expectations or state other "forward-looking" information. These forward-looking statements are based on information currently available to us and assumptions about future events, and include statements with respect to the Company's beliefs, expectations, estimates, and intentions, which are subject to significant risks and uncertainties, and are subject to change based on various factors, some of which are beyond the Company's control. Such risks, uncertainties and other factors may cause our actual growth, results of operations, financial condition, cash flows, performance and business prospects and opportunities to differ materially from those expressed in, or implied by, these forward-looking statements. Such statements address, among others, the following subjects: future operating results; customer retention; loan and other product demand; important components of the Company's statements of financial condition and operations; growth and expansion; new products and services, such as those offered by the Bank or the Company's Payments divisions (which includes Meta Payments Systems ("MPS") and its tax-related financial solutions divisions: Refund Advantage, EPS Financial ("EPS") and Specialty Consumer Services ("SCS")); credit quality and adequacy of reserves; technology; and the Company's employees. The following factors, among others, could cause the Company's financial performance and results of operations to differ materially from the expectations, estimates, and intentions expressed in such forward-looking statements: the risk that the transaction with Crestmark may not occur on a timely basis or at all; the parties' ability to obtain regulatory approvals and approval of their respective shareholders, and otherwise satisfy the other conditions to closing, on a timely basis or at all; the risk that the businesses of the Company and MetaBank, on the one hand, and Crestmark and Crestmark Bank, on the other hand, may not be combined successfully, or such combination may take longer, be more difficult, time-consuming or costly to accomplish than expected; the expected growth opportunities, beneficial synergies and/or operating efficiencies from the proposed transaction with Crestmark may not be fully realized or may take longer to realize than expected; customer losses and business disruption following the announcement or consummation of the proposed transaction; potential litigation relating to the proposed merger transaction; the risk that the Company may incur unanticipated or unknown losses or liabilities if it completes the proposed transaction with Crestmark and Crestmark Bank; the risk that the Company's preliminary analysis of the impact of the Tax Act may be incorrect; additional changes in tax laws; the risk that the Bank may be unable to originate between \$500 million and \$1 billion in personal loans during the three-year term of the program agreement with Liberty Lending, LLC; the risk that we are unable to recoup a significant portion of the lost earnings associated with the non-renewal of the agreement with H&R Block through agreements with new tax partners and expanded relationships with existing tax partners; the risk that loan production levels and other anticipated benefits related to the agreement with Jackson Hewitt Tax Service®, as extended, may not be as much as anticipated; maintaining our executive management team; the strength of the United States' economy, in general, and the strength of the local economies in which the Company conducts operations; the effects of, and changes in, trade, monetary, and fiscal policies and laws, including interest rate policies of the Board of

Governors of the Federal Reserve System (the “Federal Reserve”), as well as efforts of the United States Treasury in conjunction with bank regulatory agencies to stimulate the economy and protect the financial system; inflation, interest rate, market, and monetary fluctuations; the timely development of, and acceptance of new products and services offered by the Company or its strategic partners, as well as risks (including reputational and litigation) attendant thereto, and the perceived overall value of these products and services by users; the risks of dealing with or utilizing third parties, including in connection with the Company’s refund advance business, the risk of reduced volume of refund advance loans as a result of reduced customer demand for or acceptance of usage of the Company’s strategic partners’ refund advance products; any actions which may be initiated by our regulators in the future; the impact of changes in financial services laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, laws and regulations relating to the tax refund industry and the insurance premium finance industry; our relationship with our primary regulators, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (“OCC”) and the Federal Reserve, as well as the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (“FDIC”), which insures the Bank’s deposit accounts up to applicable limits; technological changes, including, but not limited to, the protection of electronic files or databases; acquisitions; litigation risk, in general, including, but not limited to, those risks involving the Bank’s divisions; the growth of the Company’s business, as well as expenses related thereto; continued maintenance by the Bank of its status as a well-capitalized institution, particularly in light of our growing deposit base, a portion of which has been characterized as “brokered”; changes in consumer spending and saving habits; and the success of the Company at maintaining its high quality asset level and managing and collecting assets of borrowers in default should problem assets increase.

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The foregoing list of factors is not exclusive. We caution you not to place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements. The forward-looking statements included in this Quarterly Report speak only as of the date hereof. All subsequent written and oral forward-looking statements attributable to us or any person acting on our behalf are expressly qualified in their entirety by the cautionary statements contained or referred to in this section. Additional discussions of factors affecting the Company's business and prospects are included under the caption "Risk Factors" and in other sections of the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2017 and in other filings made with the SEC. The Company expressly disclaims any intent or obligation to update any forward-looking statements, whether written or oral, that may be made from time to time by or on behalf of the Company or its subsidiaries, whether as a result of new information, changed circumstances or future events or for any other reason.

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GENERAL

The Company, a registered unitary savings and loan holding company, is a Delaware corporation, the principal assets of which are all the issued and outstanding shares of the Bank, a federal savings bank. Unless the context otherwise requires, references herein to the Company include Meta Financial and the Bank, and all direct or indirect subsidiaries of Meta Financial on a consolidated basis.

The Company's common stock trades on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol "CASH."

The following discussion focuses on the consolidated financial condition of the Company at December 31, 2017, compared to September 30, 2017, and the consolidated results of operations for the three months ended December 31, 2017 and 2016. This discussion should be read in conjunction with the Company's consolidated financial statements, and notes thereto, for the year ended September 30, 2017 and the related management's discussion and analysis of financial condition and results of operations contained in the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2017.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENTS

On January 9, 2018, the Company announced that it entered into a definitive merger agreement with Crestmark Bancorp, Inc. ("Crestmark"), the holding company of Crestmark Bank, whereby the Company will acquire Crestmark in an all-stock transaction.

Pursuant to the terms of the merger agreement, at the effective time of the merger, Crestmark will merge with and into the Company, and Crestmark Bank will merge with and into MetaBank. As of September 30, 2017, the Bank had \$5.2 billion in assets and \$1.3 billion in total loans and, on a pro forma consolidated basis, the combined company would have had approximately \$6.4 billion in assets and \$2.2 billion in loans and leases, or 34% of total assets, with lending operations throughout the U.S.

Under the terms of the merger agreement, Crestmark shareholders will receive 2.65 shares of the Company's common stock for each share of Crestmark common stock. The aggregate value of the acquisition consideration, based on the closing price of Meta Financial shares on January 8, 2018, of \$91.35, would have been \$320.6 million. Giving effect to the transaction, existing shareholders of the Company are expected to own approximately 75%, and Crestmark shareholders are expected to own approximately 25%, of the outstanding shares of the Company.

Crestmark, through Crestmark Bank, is a commercial lender offering asset-based loans, equipment finance leases and government guaranteed loans to small and mid-sized businesses across the US. Crestmark focuses on working with a broad range of industries, including manufacturing, transportation and health care. Crestmark will operate as a division of MetaBank and will continue to operate from its offices in Troy, Michigan.

On January 25, 2018, the Company announced that MetaBank entered into a three year program agreement with Liberty Lending, LLC ("Liberty"), whereby MetaBank will provide personal loans to Liberty customers. Under the agreement, the Bank expects to originate between \$500 million and \$1 billion in personal loans during the term of the program. The loan products contemplated under this agreement will be closed-end installment loans ranging from \$3,500 to \$45,000 in principal amount with lengths of between 13 and 60 months. The Bank expects to begin providing such loans as early as the third quarter of fiscal 2018. The Bank has the contractual right to sell these loans or interests in the loans. The agreement marks the entry point for the Company into a direct-to-consumer credit business.

As previously disclosed, on October 11, 2017, the Company completed the purchase of a \$73.0 million, seasoned, floating rate, private student loan portfolio. All loans are indexed to one-month LIBOR. The portfolio is serviced by ReliaMax Lending Services LLC and insured by ReliaMax Surety Company. This portfolio purchase builds on the Company's existing student loan platform.

OVERVIEW OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The Company recorded net income of \$4.7 million, or \$0.48 per diluted share, for the three months ended December 31, 2017, compared to net income of \$1.2 million, or \$0.14 per diluted share, for the three months ended December 31, 2016, an increase of 275%. Included in the 2018 fiscal first quarter net income was an additional, non-recurring income tax expense of \$3.6 million from a reduction in the value of certain deferred tax assets as a result of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (the "Tax Act") signed into law on December 22, 2017. The 2018 fiscal first quarter pre-tax results included a \$1.0 million loss on sale of investments and \$1.3 million of acquisition expenses. The 2018 fiscal first quarter pre-tax results also included \$1.7 million in amortization of intangible assets and \$1.3 million in non-cash stock-related compensation associated with executive officer employment agreements.

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Net interest income was \$26.2 million in the 2018 fiscal first quarter, an increase of \$6.4 million, or 32%, compared to the first quarter of fiscal 2017. This increase was primarily a result of high credit quality loan growth in both the commercial insurance premium finance loan portfolio and community banking loan portfolio, as well as the purchased floating rate student loans. Also contributing to the improvement were increases in higher yielding securities balances, primarily due to highly-rated tax-exempt municipal securities at relatively high tax equivalent yields and a continuing improvement in the overall interest-earning asset mix.

Card fee income increased \$6.8 million, or 37%, for the 2018 fiscal first quarter when compared to the same quarter in 2017. This increase was due to residual fees related to a wind down of two of our non-strategic programs. The Company expects fiscal year 2018 total card fee income to be between \$95.0 million and \$101.0 million and expects total card processing expense to be between \$23.0 million and \$27.0 million.

Total tax product fee income increased \$1.5 million, or 242%, from \$0.6 million for the three months ended December 31, 2016 to \$2.1 million for the three months ended December 31, 2017. This increase was primarily due to the volume of pre-season tax advance loans originated during the first quarter of fiscal 2018 compared to the first quarter of fiscal 2017. All of these loans are being held during fiscal 2018, as opposed to the previous year when many of these loans were sold, which also contributed to the increase.

The Company's 2018 fiscal first quarter average assets grew to \$4.12 billion, compared to \$3.49 billion in the 2017 first quarter, an increase of 18%, primarily driven by growth in loan and securities balances.

Total loans receivable, net of allowance for loan losses, increased \$393.2 million, or 36%, at December 31, 2017, compared to December 31, 2016. This increase was primarily related to growth in commercial real estate loans of \$213.5 million, or 48%, growth in consumer loans of \$101.8 million, or an increase of 59%, of which \$56.7 million was attributable to the Company's purchased student loan portfolios and \$44.0 million was related to refund advance loans, growth in commercial insurance premium finance loans of \$56.2 million, or an increase of 31%, and growth in residential mortgage loans of \$31.1 million, or an increase of 18%. The growth in net loans receivable from December 31, 2016 to December 31, 2017 was partially offset by an \$11.6 million decrease, or a 12% decrease, in total agricultural loans. Excluding all purchased student loan portfolios and refund advance loans, total loans receivable, net of allowance for loan losses, at December 31, 2017 were up \$293.1 million, or 30%, compared to the same period of the prior year. At December 31, 2017, community banking loans increased \$223.3 million, or 29%, compared to December 31, 2016.

Payments division average deposits increased \$295.2 million, or 15%, for the 2018 fiscal first quarter when compared to the same quarter of 2017.

Non-performing assets ("NPAs") were 0.61% of total assets at December 31, 2017, compared to 0.05% at December 31, 2016. The increase in NPAs was primarily related to a large, well-collateralized agricultural loan relationship being more than 90 days past due, which was still accruing at December 31, 2017. On January 2, 2018, a deed in lieu of foreclosure was executed on the collateral for this relationship upon which the Company took ownership of the properties serving as collateral and transferred the loans to foreclosed real estate and repossessed assets. If, as expected, the properties are sold prior to the end of the agreed-upon receivership period set forth in the settlement agreement, the Company will be entitled to all principal, note interest, legal and other fees and expenses. After the receivership period ends, if the properties are not sold, the Company will be entitled to the fair value of the properties, which the Company believes to be significantly in excess of all principal, note interest, legal and other fees and expenses. At September 30, 2017, NPAs were 0.72% of total assets. The decrease in NPAs from September 30, 2017 to December 30, 2017 was primarily due to the payoff of a \$7.0 million nonperforming agricultural loan relationship during the first quarter of fiscal 2018.

FINANCIAL CONDITION

At December 31, 2017, the Company's assets increased by \$189.6 million, or 4%, to \$5.42 billion compared to \$5.23 billion at September 30, 2017. The increase in assets was primarily due to an increase in loans receivable.

Total cash and cash equivalents were \$1.30 billion at December 31, 2017, an increase of \$32.8 million, or 3%, from \$1.27 billion at September 30, 2017. Similar to September 30, 2017, the Company also temporarily repositioned the balance sheet at the end of the 2018 fiscal first quarter to prepare for the upcoming seasonal tax lending activity.

The Company maintains its cash investments primarily in interest-bearing overnight deposits with the FHLB of Des Moines and the Federal Reserve Bank.

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The total of mortgage-backed securities ("MBS") and investment securities decreased \$21.1 million, or 1%, to \$2.24 billion at December 31, 2017, compared to \$2.26 billion at September 30, 2017, as maturities, sales, and principal pay downs exceeded purchases. The Company's portfolio of investment securities and MBS securities consists primarily of U.S. Government agency and instrumentality MBS, which have relatively short expected lives, U.S. Government related asset backed securities, U.S. Government agency or instrumentality collateralized housing related municipal securities, and high quality non-bank qualified obligations of states and political subdivisions ("NBQ"), which mature in approximately 15 years or less. Of the total MBS, \$600.1 million were classified as available for sale, and \$8.5 million were classified as held to maturity. Of the total investment securities, \$1.39 billion were classified as available for sale and \$235.0 million were classified as held to maturity. During the three month period ended December 31, 2017, the Company purchased \$105.3 million of investment securities available for sale, no MBS securities, and no investment securities held to maturity, with the available for sale investment security purchases consisting primarily of Ginnie Mae ("GNMA") convertible and collateralized municipal housing securities and other municipal housing securities fully collateralized by U.S. agency and instrumentality securities.

During the first quarter of fiscal 2018, the Company early adopted Accounting Standard Update ("ASU") 2017-12, "Derivatives and Hedging (Topic 815): Targeted Improvements to Accounting for Hedging Activities." Due to the early adoption of the ASU, the Company transferred \$204.7 million of investment securities and \$101.3 million of MBS from HTM to AFS during the first quarter of fiscal 2018. This change allows for enhanced balance sheet management and provides the opportunity for more liquidity, should it be needed.

The Company's portfolio of net loans receivable increased \$182.4 million, or 14%, to \$1.50 billion at December 31, 2017, from \$1.32 billion at September 30, 2017. This increase was primarily attributable to a \$112.0 million increase in consumer loans, largely due to the student loan portfolio purchases and refund advance loans, a \$68.5 million, or 12%, increase in commercial real estate loans, a \$20.8 million, or 58%, increase in commercial operating loans, and a \$7.3 million, or 4%, increase in residential mortgage loans, offset in part by a \$14.8 million, or 6%, decrease in commercial insurance premium finance loans and a \$9.4 million, or 10%, decrease in total agricultural loans, during the three months ended December 31, 2017. Excluding the purchased student loan portfolios and refund advances, total loans receivable, net of allowance for loan losses, would have increased \$72.2 million, or 6%, from September 30, 2017 to December 31, 2017. Community banking loans increased \$61.5 million, or 7%, during this period. Of the \$654.0 million in commercial and multi-family real estate loans at December 31, 2017, \$129.9 million were considered high-volatility commercial real estate ("HVCRE") loans. While such HVCRE loans are risk-weighted at 150% rather than 100%, as is customary for non-HVCRE commercial loans, the increase to the Company's risk-weighted assets continues to be inconsequential in terms of the Company's capital ratios.

Total deposits increased \$290.2 million, or 9%, at December 31, 2017, to \$3.51 billion from \$3.22 billion at September 30, 2017, primarily related to an increase of \$325.6 million in non-interest bearing deposits, an increase of \$17.1 million in interest-bearing checking deposits and a \$4.6 million increase in certificates of deposit. The increase in total deposits was partially offset by a decrease of \$55.8 million in wholesale deposits. Deposits attributable to the Payments segment increased by \$331.8 million, or 14%, to \$2.77 billion at December 31, 2017, compared to \$2.44 billion at September 30, 2017. The average balance of total deposits and interest-bearing liabilities was \$3.62 billion for the three month period ended December 31, 2017, compared to \$3.06 billion for the same period in the prior year. The average balance of non-interest bearing deposits for the three month period ended December 31, 2017 increased by \$272.3 million, or 13%, to \$2.33 billion, compared to the same period in the prior year.

Total borrowings decreased \$91.1 million, or 6%, from \$1.49 billion at September 30, 2017 to \$1.40 billion at December 31, 2017, primarily due to a decrease of federal funds purchased. At September 30, 2017 and December 31, 2017, the Company's cash balances were much higher than normal due to a temporary repositioning of the balance sheet at those dates as part of its preparations for the 2018 tax season. The Company's overnight federal funds purchased fluctuates on a daily basis due to the nature of a portion of its non-interest bearing deposit base, primarily

related to payroll processing timing with a higher volume of overnight federal funds purchased on Monday through Wednesday, which are typically paid down on Thursday and Friday. Secondly, a portion of certain programs are pre-funded, typically in the final week of the month and the corresponding deposits are received typically on the first day of the following month causing a temporary increased need for overnight borrowings. Accordingly, our level of borrowings may fluctuate significantly on any particular quarter end date.

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At December 31, 2017, the Company's stockholders' equity totaled \$437.7 million, an increase of \$3.2 million, from \$434.5 million at September 30, 2017. The increase was attributable to net earnings and an increase in additional paid-in capital, offset by accumulated other comprehensive income and cash dividends paid. At December 31, 2017, the Bank continued to exceed all regulatory requirements for classification as a well capitalized institution. See "Liquidity and Capital Resources" for further information.

Non-performing Assets and Allowance for Loan Losses

Generally, for the majority of loan segments, when a loan becomes delinquent 90 days or more (210 days or more for commercial insurance premium finance loans), or when the collection of principal or interest becomes doubtful, the Company will place the loan on a non-accrual status and, as a result, previously accrued interest income on the loan is reversed against current income. The loan will remain in non-accrual status until the loan becomes current and has demonstrated a sustained period of satisfactory performance, typically after six months.

Consumer tax advance loans, originated through the Company's tax divisions, are interest and fee free to the consumer. Due to the nature of consumer advance loans, it typically takes no more than three e-file cycles, the period of time between scheduled IRS payments, from when the return is accepted to collect. In the event of default, MetaBank has no recourse with the tax consumer. Generally, when the refund advance loan becomes delinquent for 180 days or more, or when collection of principal becomes doubtful, the Company will charge off the loan balance.

The Company believes that the level of allowance for loan losses at December 31, 2017 was appropriate and reflected probable losses related to these loans; however, there can be no assurance that all loans will be fully collectible or that the present level of the allowance will be adequate in the future. See "Allowance for Loan Losses" below.

The table below sets forth the amounts and categories of non-performing assets in the Company's portfolio as of the dates set forth below. Foreclosed assets include assets acquired in settlement of loans.

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	Non-Performing Assets As Of		
	December 31, 2017	September 30, 2017	
	(Dollars in Thousands)		
Non-Performing Loans			
Non-Accruing Loans:			
Commercial and Multi-Family Real Estate	284	685	
Total ⁽¹⁾	284	685	
Accruing Loans Delinquent 90 Days or More			
1-4 Family Real Estate	234	—	
Agricultural Real Estate	27,818	34,198	
Consumer	1,624	1,406	
Agricultural Operating	—	97	
CML Insurance Premium Finance	3,194	1,205	
Total	32,870	36,906	
Total Non-Performing Loans	33,154	37,591	
Other Assets			
Foreclosed Assets:			
1-4 Family Real Estate	—	62	
Commercial and Multi-Family Real Estate	128	230	
Total	128	292	
Total Other Assets	\$128	\$292	
Total Non-Performing Assets	\$33,282	\$37,883	
Total as a Percentage of Total Assets	0.61	% 0.72	%
Total Non-Performing Assets as a Percentage of Total Assets - excluding insured loans ⁽²⁾	0.58	% 0.70	%

⁽¹⁾ During the three-month period ended December 31, 2017, the Company had \$1.1 million of loans modified as troubled debt restructurings ("TDRs") and no loans modified as TDRs during the three-month period ended September 30, 2017. In addition, the Company had \$1.6 million and \$0.5 million of TDRs performing in accordance with their terms at each of the periods ended December 31, 2017 and September 30, 2017.

⁽²⁾ Excludes from non-performing assets the student loans that are insured by ReliaMax Surety Company.

At December 31, 2017, non-performing loans totaled \$33.2 million, representing 2.19% of total loans, compared to \$37.6 million, or 2.83% of total loans at September 30, 2017. This decrease in non-performing loans was primarily due to the payoff of a \$7.0 million nonperforming agricultural loan relationship during the first quarter of fiscal 2018.

Classified Assets. Federal regulations provide for the classification of loans and other assets such as debt and equity securities considered by our regulator, the OCC, to be of lesser quality as "substandard," "doubtful" or "loss." An asset is considered "substandard" if it is inadequately protected by the current net worth and paying capacity of the obligor or of the collateral pledged, if any. "Substandard" assets include those characterized by the "distinct possibility" that the Bank will sustain "some loss" if the deficiencies are not corrected. Assets classified as "doubtful" have all of the weaknesses inherent in those classified "substandard," with the added characteristic that the weaknesses present make "collection or liquidation in full," on the basis of currently existing facts, conditions, and values, "highly questionable and improbable."

Assets classified as “loss” are those considered “uncollectible” and of such minimal value that their continuance as assets without the establishment of a specific loss reserve is not warranted.

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General allowances represent loss allowances which have been established to recognize the inherent risk associated with lending activities, but which, unlike specific allowances, have not been allocated to particular problem assets. When assets are classified as “loss,” the Bank is required either to establish a specific allowance for losses equal to 100% of that portion of the asset so classified or to charge-off such amount. The Bank’s determinations as to the classification of its assets and the amount of its valuation allowances are subject to review by its regulatory authorities, which may order the establishment of additional general or specific loss allowances.

On the basis of management’s review of its loans and other assets, at December 31, 2017, the Company had classified \$40.4 million of its assets as substandard and did not classify any assets as doubtful or loss. At September 30, 2017, the Company classified \$40.6 million of its assets as substandard and did not classify any assets as doubtful or loss.

Allowance for Loan Losses. The allowance for loan losses is established through a provision for loan losses based on management’s evaluation of the risk inherent in its loan portfolio and changes in the nature and volume of its loan activity, including those loans which are being specifically monitored by management. Such evaluation, which includes a review of loans for which full collectability may not be reasonably assured, involves consideration of, among other matters, the estimated fair value of the underlying collateral, economic conditions, historical loan loss experience and other factors that warrant recognition in providing for an appropriate loan loss allowance.

Management closely monitors economic developments both regionally and nationwide, and considers these factors when assessing the appropriateness of its allowance for loan losses. The current economic environment continues to show signs of improvement in the Bank’s markets. The Bank’s average loss rates over the past three years for community banking loans were relatively low compared to peers, but were offset with a higher agricultural loss rate in fiscal year 2016 driven by the charge off of one relationship. The Bank does not believe it is likely that these low loss conditions will continue indefinitely. Although the Bank’s four market areas have indirectly benefited from a stable agricultural market, the market has become slightly stressed as commodity prices have generally remained lower than a few years ago. Management believes the low commodity prices and adverse weather conditions have the potential to negatively impact the economies of our agricultural markets. The improving economic conditions have also kept the loss rates on the national lending loans as well as the tax service loans relatively low, although management realizes that these low loss conditions may not continue.

At December 31, 2017, the Company had established an allowance for loan losses totaling \$8.9 million, compared to \$7.5 million at September 30, 2017. This increase was primarily due to the additional provision expense related to loans originated by our tax services divisions. During the three months ended December 31, 2017, the Company recorded a provision for loan losses of \$1.1 million, partially offset by \$0.3 million of net recoveries, compared to \$0.1 million of net charge offs for the three months ended December 31, 2016. Management believes that, based on a detailed review of the loan portfolio, historic loan losses, current economic conditions, the size of the loan portfolio, and other factors, the level of the allowance for loan losses at December 31, 2017 reflected an appropriate allowance against probable losses from the loan portfolio. Although the Company maintains its allowance for loan losses at a level that it considers to be adequate, investors and others are cautioned that there can be no assurance that future losses will not exceed estimated amounts, or that additional provisions for loan losses will not be required in future periods.

The allowance for loan losses reflects management’s best estimate of probable losses inherent in the portfolio based on currently available information. In addition to the factors mentioned above, future additions to the allowance for loan losses may become necessary based upon changing economic conditions, increased loan balances or changes in the underlying collateral of the loan portfolio. In addition, our regulators have the ability to order us to increase our allowance.

CRITICAL ACCOUNTING ESTIMATES

The Company's financial statements are prepared in accordance with U.S. GAAP. The financial information contained within these financial statements is, to a significant extent, based on approximate measures of the financial effects of transactions and events that have already occurred. Management has identified the policies described below as Critical Accounting Policies. These policies involve complex and subjective decisions and assessments. Some of these estimates may be uncertain at the time they are made, could change from period to period, and could have a material impact on the financial statements. This discussion and analysis should be read in conjunction with the Company's financial statements and the accompanying notes presented in Part II, Item 8 "Consolidated Financial Statements and Supplementary Data" of its Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended September 30, 2017, and information contained herein.

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Allowance for Loan Losses. The Company's allowance for loan loss methodology incorporates a variety of risk considerations, both quantitative and qualitative, in establishing an allowance for loan loss that management believes is appropriate at each reporting date. Quantitative factors include the Company's historical loss experience, delinquency and charge-off trends, collateral values, changes in nonperforming loans, and other factors. Quantitative factors also incorporate known information about individual loans, including borrowers' sensitivity to interest rate movements. Qualitative factors include the general economic environment in the Company's markets, including economic conditions throughout the Midwest and, in particular, the state of certain industries. Size and complexity of individual credits in relation to loan structure, existing loan policies, and pace of portfolio growth are other qualitative factors that are considered in the methodology. Although management believes the levels of the allowance at both December 31, 2017 and September 30, 2017 were adequate to absorb probable losses inherent in the loan portfolio, a decline in local economic conditions or other factors could result in losses in excess of the applicable allowance.

Goodwill and Intangible Assets. Each quarter, the Company evaluates the estimated useful lives of its amortizable intangible assets and whether events or changes in circumstances warrant a revision to the remaining periods of amortization. In accordance with ASC 350, Intangibles – Goodwill and Other, recoverability of these assets is measured by comparison of the carrying amount of the asset to the future undiscounted cash flows the asset is expected to generate. If the asset is considered to be impaired, the amount of any impairment is measured as the difference between the carrying value and the fair value of the impaired asset.

In addition, goodwill and intangible assets are tested annually as of our fiscal year end for impairment or more often if conditions indicate a possible impairment. Determining the fair value of a reporting unit involves the use of significant estimates and assumptions. These estimates and assumptions include revenue growth rates and operating margins used to calculate future cash flows, risk-adjusted discount rates, future economic and market conditions, comparison of the Company's market value to book value and determination of appropriate market comparables. Actual future results may differ from those estimates.

Assumptions and estimates about future values and remaining useful lives of the Company's intangible and other long-lived assets are complex and subjective. They can be affected by a variety of factors, including external factors such as industry and economic trends, and internal factors such as changes in the Company's business strategy and internal forecasts. Although the Company believes the historical assumptions and estimates used are reasonable and appropriate, different assumptions and estimates could materially impact the reported financial results.

Customer relationship, trademark, and non-compete intangibles are amortized over the periods in which the asset is expected to meaningfully contribute to the business as a whole, using either the present value of excess earnings or straight line amortization, depending on the nature of the intangible asset. Patents are estimated to have a useful life of 20 years, beginning on the date the patent application is originally filed. Thus, patents are amortized based on the remaining useful life once granted. Periodically, the Company reviews the intangible assets for events or circumstances that may indicate a change in recoverability of the underlying basis.

Deferred Tax Assets. The Company accounts for income taxes according to the asset and liability method. Under this 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 basis. Deferred tax assets and liabilities are measured using the enacted tax rates applicable to income for the years in which those temporary differences are expected to be recovered or settled. Deferred tax assets are recognized subject to management's judgment that realization is more-likely-than-not. An estimate of probable income tax benefits that will not be realized in future years is required in determining the necessity for a valuation allowance.

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Security Impairment. Management monitors the investment securities portfolio for impairment on a security by security basis. Management has a process in place to identify securities that could potentially have a credit impairment that is other-than-temporary. This process involves the length of time and extent to which the fair value has been less than the amortized cost basis, review of available information regarding the financial position of the issuer, monitoring the rating of the security, monitoring changes in value, cash flow projections, and the Company's intent to sell a security or whether it is more likely than not the Company will be required to sell the security before the recovery of its amortized cost which, in some cases, may extend to maturity. To the extent we determine that a security is deemed to be other-than-temporarily impaired, an impairment loss is recognized. If the Company intends to sell a security or it is more likely than not that the Company would be required to sell a security before the recovery of its amortized cost, the Company recognizes an other-than-temporary impairment in earnings for the difference between amortized cost and fair value. If we do not expect to recover the amortized cost basis, we do not plan to sell the security and if it is not more likely than not that the Company would be required to sell a security before the recovery of its amortized cost, the recognition of the other-than-temporary impairment is bifurcated. For those securities, the Company separates the total impairment into a credit loss component recognized in earnings, and the amount of the loss related to other factors is recognized in other comprehensive income net of taxes.

The amount of the credit loss component of a debt security impairment is estimated as the difference between amortized cost and the present value of the expected cash flows of the security. The present value is determined using the best estimate of cash flows discounted at the effective interest rate implicit to the security at the date of purchase or the current yield to accrete an asset-backed or floating rate security. Cash flow estimates for trust preferred securities are derived from scenario-based outcomes of forecasted default rates, loss severity, prepayment speeds and structural support.

Level 3 Fair Value Measurement. U.S. GAAP requires the Company to measure the fair value of financial instruments under a standard which describes three levels of inputs that may be used to measure fair value. Level 3 measurement includes significant unobservable inputs that reflect the Company's own assumptions about the assumptions that market participants would use in pricing an asset or liability. Level 3 assets and liabilities include financial instruments whose value is determined using pricing models, discounted cash flow methodologies, or similar techniques, as well as instruments for which the determination of fair value requires significant management judgment or estimation. Although management believes that it uses a best estimate of information available to determine fair value, due to the uncertainty of future events, the approach includes a process that may differ significantly from other methodologies and still produce an estimate that is in accordance with U.S. GAAP.

RESULTS OF OPERATIONS

General. The Company recorded net income of \$4.7 million, or \$0.48 per diluted share, for the three months ended December 31, 2017, compared to net income of \$1.2 million, or \$0.14 per diluted share, for the three months ended December 31, 2016. Included in the 2018 fiscal first quarter net income was an income tax expense of \$3.6 million from a reduction in the value of certain deferred tax assets as a result of the Tax Act signed into law on December 22, 2017 (see non-interest expense section for further discussion). The 2018 fiscal first quarter pre-tax results included a \$1.0 million loss on sale of investments and \$1.3 million of acquisition expenses. The 2018 fiscal first quarter pre-tax results also included \$1.7 million in amortization of intangible assets and \$1.3 million in non-cash stock-related compensation associated with executive officer employment agreements. Total revenue for the fiscal 2018 first quarter was \$55.5 million, compared to \$39.2 million for the same quarter in fiscal 2017, an increase of \$16.3 million, or 42%, primarily due to an increase in interest from commercial insurance premium finance and community banking loans, card fee income, as well as the student loan purchases and income from tax-exempt securities (included in other investment securities), and growth in tax product fee income.

Seasonality. In the industries for electronic payments processing and tax refund processing, companies commonly experience seasonal fluctuations in revenue. For example, in recent years, the Company's results of operations for the first half of each fiscal year have been favorably affected by large numbers of taxpayers electing to receive their tax refunds via direct deposit on our pre-paid cards, which caused their operating revenues to be typically higher in the first half of those years than they were in the corresponding second half of those years. Meta's tax business is expected to continue to generate the vast majority of its revenues in the Company's fiscal second quarter, with some additional revenues in the third quarter, while most expenses are spread throughout the year with some elevated expenses in the December and March quarters. Management expects the Company's revenue to continue to be based on seasonal factors that affect the electronic payments processing and tax refund processing industries as a whole. The Company and its tax preparation partners rely on the Internal Revenue Service (the "IRS"), technology, and employees when processing and preparing tax refunds and tax-related products and services.

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Net Interest Income. Net interest income for the fiscal 2018 first quarter increased by \$6.4 million, or 32%, to \$26.2 million from \$19.8 million for the same quarter in 2017, primarily due to significant increases in the community banking loan portfolio, commercial insurance premium finance loan portfolio, and the purchased student loan portfolios. Growth in investment security balances also contributed to the increase in net interest income. Additionally, the overall increase was driven by a better mix and higher percentage of loans as a percentage of interest-earning assets, with loan yields driving a sizable increase due in part to the recently acquired student loan portfolios and their floating rate yields. The quarterly average outstanding balance of loans from all sources as a percentage of interest-earning assets increased from 30% as of the end of the first fiscal quarter of 2017 to 37% as of the end of the first fiscal quarter of 2018. In addition, lower-yielding agency Mortgage-Backed Securities ("MBS") decreased from 21% of interest-earning assets in the fiscal first quarter of 2017 compared to 18% of interest-earning assets for the same quarter in 2018. Net interest income for the fiscal 2018 first quarter was up \$1.7 million from the Company's fiscal 2017 fourth quarter, as anticipated, primarily due to a better mix of earning assets.

Net interest margin, tax equivalent ("NIM") increased from 2.90% in the fiscal 2017 first quarter to 3.06% in the fiscal 2018 first quarter. The reported 3.06% NIM reflects the lowered corporate prorated tax rate on the Company's tax-exempt municipal portfolio. Had corporate tax rates remained at previous rates, excluding changes resulting from the Tax Act, the reported NIM of 3.06% would have been 3.26%. The reported NIM of 3.06% was also impacted by 16 basis points due to tax service loans and wholesale deposits.

The overall reported tax equivalent yield ("TEY") on average earning asset yields increased by 31 basis points to 3.55% when comparing the fiscal 2018 first quarter to the 2017 first quarter, which was driven primarily by the Company's improved earning asset mix, with increased exposure to its high-quality commercial insurance premium finance, student, and community banking loan portfolios. The increase in TEY continues to highlight the beneficial tailwind provided by this rotation among earning assets. The reported 3.55% TEY on earning assets reflects the lowered corporate prorated tax rate on the Company's tax-exempt municipal portfolio. Had corporate tax rates remained at previous rates, excluding changes resulting from the adoption of the Tax Act, reported TEY on earning assets would have been 3.75%.

The fiscal 2018 first quarter TEY on the securities portfolio increased by one basis point compared to the prior year fiscal first quarter, primarily due to the continued shift in new investments being made in higher-yielding investment securities, primarily mortgage-related, tax-exempt municipal securities rather than traditional agency MBS securities. The TEY on the securities portfolio of 2.93% for the first fiscal quarter of 2018 reflects the lowered corporate prorated tax rate on the Company's tax-exempt municipal portfolio. Had corporate tax rates remained at previous rates, excluding changes resulting from the adoption of the Tax Act, reported securities portfolio yield would have been 3.25%.

The Company's average interest-earning assets for the fiscal 2018 first quarter increased by \$539.4 million, or 17%, to \$3.76 billion, up from \$3.22 billion during the same quarter of the last fiscal year, primarily from growth in loan portfolios and tax-exempt investments securities, of \$436.8 million and \$236.3 million, respectively.

The Company's average total deposits and interest-bearing liabilities for the 2018 first fiscal quarter increased \$556.7 million, or 18%, to \$3.62 billion from \$3.06 billion for the same quarter of the prior fiscal year. This increase was primarily due to an increase in non-interest-bearing deposits of \$272.3 million, an increase in Federal Home Loan Bank advances of \$248.9 million and an increase in wholesale deposits of \$126.7 million, offset by a decrease in federal funds purchased of \$132.1 million. Average quarterly deposits in the Payments segment increased in the fiscal 2018 first quarter by \$295.2 million, or 15%, from the same period last year.

Overall, the Company's cost of funds for all deposits and borrowings averaged 0.51% during the fiscal 2018 first quarter, compared to 0.36% for the 2017 first quarter. This increase was primarily due to increases in wholesale deposits, overnight borrowing rates and higher average overall funding balances due to the Company's utilization of more of its capital during non-tax season with higher investment balances and funding, and in preparation to hold more tax loans on the balance sheet. Notwithstanding this increase, the Company believes that its growing, low-cost deposit base gives it a distinct and significant competitive advantage over most banks, and even more so if interest rates continue to rise, because the Company anticipates that its cost of deposits will likely remain relatively low, increasing less than at many other banks. At December 31, 2017 and 2016, low-cost checking deposits represented 83% and 70% of total deposits, respectively.

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The following tables present, for the periods indicated, the Company's total dollar amount of interest income from average interest-earning assets and the resulting yields, as well as the interest expense on average interest-bearing liabilities, expressed both in dollars and rates. Tax equivalent adjustments have been made in yield on interest bearing assets and net interest margin. Non-accruing loans have been included in the table as loans carrying a zero yield.

	2017			2016		
(Dollars in Thousands)	Average Outstanding Balance	Interest Earned / Paid	Yield / Rate (1)	Average Outstanding Balance	Interest Earned / Paid	Yield / Rate(2)
Interest-earning assets:						
Cash & fed funds sold	\$100,321	\$ 607	2.40%	\$186,565	\$ 391	0.83 %
Mortgage-backed securities	673,411	3,758	2.21 %	689,617	3,320	1.91 %
Tax exempt investment securities	1,408,552	8,698	3.25 %	1,172,252	6,902	3.59 %
Asset-backed securities	93,631	765	3.24 %	117,928	695	2.34 %
Other investment securities	80,035	586	2.91 %	87,029	589	2.69 %
Total investments	2,255,629	13,807	2.93 %	2,066,826		