

## Exhibit A

### **THE OPTIONS CLEARING CORPORATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS CHARTER AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES**

The following Board of Directors Charter and Corporate Governance Principles (“Principles”) have been adopted by the Board of Directors (“Board”) of The Options Clearing Corporation (“OCC”) to assist the Board in the exercise of its responsibilities.

The Board is responsible for advising the Management Committee and overseeing the management of the business and affairs of OCC (except as may otherwise be provided in OCC’s Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation or its By-Laws and Rules). The Board discharges its responsibilities in a manner consistent with legal and regulatory requirements applicable to OCC and the expectations of all relevant stakeholders of OCC. In doing so, the Board exercises its authority to provide for governance arrangements that: are clear and transparent; clearly prioritize the safety and efficiency of OCC; support applicable public interest requirements and the objectives of owners and participants; establish that the Board and the Management Committee have appropriate experience and skills to discharge their duties and responsibilities; specify clear and direct lines of responsibility; and consider the interests of clearing members’ customers, securities issuers and holders, and other relevant stakeholders. The Board additionally seeks to: promote the safe and efficient operation of OCC; maintain a sound risk management framework for comprehensively managing the risks that arise in or are borne by OCC in light of OCC’s role as a systemically important financial market utility (“SIFMU”); and pursue objectives that are consistent with the interests of its stakeholders and support the public interest. In consideration of its responsibility to maintain a sound risk management framework for comprehensively managing the risks that arise in or are borne by OCC, the Board has explicitly delegated the oversight of specific risks to the Board committees. To the extent a specific risk is not retained by the Board or otherwise assigned to a Board committee, such risk shall be overseen by the Risk Committee. Accordingly, the Board is mindful of the public interest as it fulfills its duties by complying with the obligations imposed upon the Board by federal and state laws and regulations applicable to OCC and ensures that major decisions of OCC are appropriately disclosed to relevant stakeholders and to the public. Where the Board is authorized to approve reports or proposals provided to it by the Management Committee or a committee, the Board may or may not approve such matters in its business judgment. If the Board does not approve such a report or proposal, it shall report to the Management Committee or the relevant committee(s) that it has not approved such matter and may provide direction as to the revisions or alternative courses of action as appropriate.

These Principles set forth the shared vision of the Board and the Management Committee regarding the governance, management, and oversight practices to be followed at OCC, and reflect the Board’s commitment to monitor the effectiveness of policy and decision-making both at the Board and management level. The Board may form and delegate authority to committees and may delegate authority to one or more

of its members and to one or more designated officers of OCC. However, in all instances, the Board retains the obligation to oversee such delegated activity and to assure itself that delegation and reliance on the work of such delegates is reasonable.

These Principles are not intended to change or interpret any Federal or state law or regulation, including the Delaware General Corporation Law, or the OCC Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation, the OCC By-Laws, or the Rules of OCC. These Principles are subject to modification from time to time by the Board.

## THE MISSION OF THE BOARD

The Board performs an oversight role (either directly or indirectly through delegating certain authority to its committees) to ensure that OCC is managed and operated in a manner consistent with the discharge of OCC's regulatory responsibilities as a SIFMU in connection with providing its services to the industry, and that OCC has the critical capabilities necessary to achieve its objectives and obligations in a safe and efficient manner. The Board fulfills its oversight role by:

- Overseeing OCC's governance structures and processes to ensure that the Board is positioned to fulfill its responsibilities effectively and efficiently consistent with these Principles and regulatory requirements, including through regular assessments of Board and individual director performance;
- Ensuring that the Board and the Management Committee have appropriate experience and skills to discharge their respective responsibilities and have established clear and direct lines of responsibility between the Board and the Management Committee;
- Ensuring that risk management, compliance, and internal audit personnel have sufficient authority, resources, independence from management, and access to the Board;
- Ensuring that risk management, compliance, and internal audit personnel have a direct reporting line to, and oversight by, a risk management committee and an independent audit committee of the Board, respectively;
- Ensuring that at least a majority of the directors on the ~~Audit Committee of the~~ Board and on each Board-level committee is are independent as determined by the Board and in accordance with Securities and Exchange Commission Rule 17Ad-25(b) adopted on December 5, 2023;
- Periodically reviewing and approving the amount of compensation for Public Directors;
- Setting expectations about the tone and ethical culture of OCC, and reviewing the Management Committee's efforts to instill an appropriate tone

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<sup>1</sup> OCC is subject to comprehensive regulation and supervision by the Securities and Exchange Commission (with respect to its clearing agency registration) and by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (with respect to its derivatives clearing organization registration). As a SIFMU, OCC is also subject to supervision by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System under Title VIII of the Dodd-Frank Act. Capitalized terms used in these

Principles shall have the meanings set forth in OCC's By-Laws and Rules unless otherwise indicated.

- and culture throughout OCC;
- Overseeing the Management Committee's activities in managing and operating OCC and evaluating the Management Committee's performance in executing its responsibilities;
  - Selecting and overseeing and, where appropriate, replacing the Chairman<sup>1</sup>, Chief Executive Officer, and the Chief Operating Officer, as well as counseling and advising such officers in the management of OCC's business and affairs;
  - Overseeing the development and design of employee compensation, incentive, and benefit programs and evaluating the performance of any Executive Chairman, the Chief Executive Officer, and the Chief Operating Officer and approving the compensation of each;
  - Overseeing management succession planning and talent management processes;
  - Overseeing OCC's business strategies, including expansions of clearing and settlement services to new business lines and product types, to ensure they reflect the legitimate interests of relevant stakeholders and are consistent with the public interest;
  - Monitoring OCC's performance in delivering clearance and settlement services;
  - Reviewing and approving major corporate plans and actions, including capital expenditures, financial objectives, operating capital and capital structure, and fee structure, as well as periodically reviewing the types and amounts of insurance coverage available in light of OCC's clearance and settlement services;
  - Overseeing service providers that provide core services for OCC, including review of risk assessment for current vendors and approving terms for new vendors that will provide core services for OCC;
  - Overseeing senior management's review and approval of an agreement that establishes a relationship with a service provider for core services, and overseeing senior management's risk assessment for such agreements;
  - Reviewing and approving policies and procedures established by senior management that govern relationships and manage risks related to agreements with service providers for core services;
  - Evaluating any action taken by senior management to remedy

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<sup>2</sup> Or the Executive Chairman, if applicable.

significant deterioration in performance or address changing risks or material issues identified through senior management's monitoring of relationships with a service provider for core services, and if such risks or issues cannot be remedied, overseeing senior management's assessment and documentation of weaknesses or deficiencies in the relationship with the service provider;

- Overseeing OCC's processes and framework for comprehensively managing the range of risks that arise in or are borne by OCC, including the risk management policies, procedures, and systems designed to identify, measure, monitor, and manage such risks consistent within the risk appetite and risk tolerances approved by the Board;
- Assigning responsibility and accountability for risk decisions and overseeing the establishment of policies addressing decision-making in crises and emergencies;
- Overseeing and approving OCC's Recovery and Orderly Wind-Down Plan;
- Overseeing OCC's financial reporting, internal and external auditing, and accounting and compliance processes, including the approval of material changes in auditing and accounting principles and practices;
- Overseeing OCC's processes designed to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations, including banking, securities, and corporation laws and other applicable regulatory guidance and standards, and overseeing OCC's processes designed to conduct business in a legal and ethical manner;
- Overseeing OCC's system of internal controls, including review of the annual study and evaluation of OCC's system of internal accounting controls;
- Overseeing OCC's technology infrastructure, resources, and capabilities to ensure resiliency with regard to OCC's provision of its clearing, settlement, and risk management services;
- Overseeing OCC's process for consultation with a non-Board-level risk management committee and the consideration of, and responses to, input from the non-Board-level risk management committee by the Board through reports from the Risk Committee.
- Reviewing and considering the discussions with the Risk Committee regarding the Risk Committee's consultation with a non-Board-level risk management committee; and
- Performing such other functions as the Board believes appropriate or necessary, or as otherwise prescribed by rules or regulation, including OCC's By-Laws and Rules, or other policies.

## **BOARD ISSUES**

## Membership

1. **Size of Board; Composition.** OCC's By-Laws currently provide that the Board shall be comprised of:

- Nine directors who represent OCC clearing members ("Member Directors");
- Five directors designated by and representing each of OCC's Equity Exchanges ("Exchange Directors");
- No less than five directors who are not ~~affiliated an associated person or employee of an: (i) entity that is registered or exempt from registration with the Securities and Exchange Commission or Commodity Futures Trading Commission or (ii) affiliate of such an entity described in (i) with any national securities exchange, national securities association, designated contract market, futures commission merchant, or broker or dealer in securities~~ ("Public Directors"); and
- At the discretion of the Board, one Management Director, who may be chosen from the employees of the Corporation ("Management Director").

It is the policy of the Board that the Board at all times reflect the following characteristics:

- Each director shall at all times be committed to discharging effectively OCC's regulatory responsibilities in connection with its provision of clearance and settlement services as a SIFMU;
- Each director shall at all times exhibit high standards of integrity and commitment;
- Each director shall dedicate sufficient time, energy, and attention to ensure the diligent performance of his or her duties, including by attending meetings of the Board and committees of which he or she is a member, and by reviewing in advance all meeting materials;
- The Board shall encompass a range of talent, skill, industry knowledge, and expertise sufficient to provide sound and prudent guidance with respect to all of OCC's business, operations and interests;
- The Board shall reflect the diversity of OCC's employees and the employees of the market participants that OCC serves; and
- A ~~substantial portion majority~~ of directors shall be "independent" ~~of OCC and OCC's management~~ as defined by applicable regulatory requirements and the judgment of the Board.

The Governance and Nominating Committee is responsible for making recommendations to the Board regarding the composition of the Board as a whole, including whether the Board reflects: the appropriate balance of Member Directors, Exchange Directors, Public Directors and any Management Director; business specialization, technical skills, diversity (including diverse professional backgrounds); and other desired qualities such as sound judgment and a reputation for integrity.

2. **Board Membership Criteria.** The Board seeks directors from diverse professional backgrounds who combine a broad spectrum of experience and expertise with a reputation for integrity. In making their nominations, the Governance and Nominating Committee and the Board shall take into

consideration applicable board of directors composition requirements of the Securities and Exchange Commission (as well as the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, to the extent applicable to OCC). The Governance and Nominating Committee and the Board shall also take into consideration the desire to obtain input from a broad array of market participants on risk management issues. As provided in OCC's By-Laws, the Governance and Nominating Committee and the Board also shall use the criteria of the Fitness Standards for Directors, Clearing Members and Others ("Fitness Standards") in considering nominees for election to the Board. In addition, Board members should have the highest professional and personal ethics and values, the relevant expertise and experience required to offer advice and guidance to the Chairman, Chief Executive Officer, and Chief Operating Officer, and other members of the Management Committee, the ability to make independent analytical inquiries, a commitment to discharging effectively OCC's regulatory responsibilities and an understanding of OCC's business, and should be willing to devote adequate time and effort to Board responsibilities. Each Board member is expected to ensure that his or her other commitments do not materially interfere with his or her service overall as a director. The Governance and Nominating Committee shall take the foregoing criteria into account in connection with its recommendations for nomination of the Member Directors and Public Directors, as well as other considerations discussed in Section 4 below. In addition, in determining whether to recommend a Member Director or a Public Director for re-election, the Governance and Nominating Committee shall also consider the director's past performance, including attendance at meetings and participation and contributions to the activities of the Board.

Resignations and disqualifications from the Board shall be addressed as provided in the By-Laws.

3. **Appointment of Governance and Nominating Committee.** On an annual basis, the Board shall appoint a Governance and Nominating Committee having the powers and duties set forth in the By-Laws and Rules and as delegated by the Board. All of the Governance and Nominating Committee members will be selected by the Board from among the directors recommended by the then-constituted Governance and Nominating Committee after consultation with the Chairman and shall serve at the pleasure of the Board. The Chair of the Governance and Nominating Committee shall be designated by the Board, after consultation with the Chairman, from among the Public Director members of the Governance and Nominating Committee.
4. **Selection of Member Directors and Public Directors.** As provided in its Charter, the Governance and Nominating Committee conducts periodic assessments of the overall composition of the Board in light of OCC's current and expected business needs and, as a result of such assessments, the Governance and Nominating Committee shall recommend to the Board specific qualifications that it determines would be desirable to seek in candidates for Member Directors and Public Directors. In light of such assessments, the Governance and Nominating Committee may seek to identify new candidates for the Board who possess the specific qualifications approved by the Board and satisfy the other requirements for Board service, including those set forth in OCC's By-Laws. It is acknowledged that, over time, different skill sets are likely to be determined to be

desirable, so that the specific qualifications are likely to change. Moreover, it is acknowledged that it is not expected that the Board will necessarily include all identified skill sets at all times in light of the pool of candidates available to the Governance and Nominating Committee and other considerations such as re-nominating incumbent directors to maintain continuity and particular skills that they may have. In identifying new director candidates, the Governance and Nominating Committee seeks advice and names of candidates from Governance and Nominating Committee members, other members of the Board, members of management, and other public and private sources. The Governance and Nominating Committee may also, but need not, retain a search firm to assist it in these efforts.

As provided in the By-Laws, prior to each annual meeting of stockholders, the Governance and Nominating Committee shall nominate for approval by the Board one person for each directorship among the Member Directors and the Public Directors to be filled at the annual meeting. In selecting such nominees, the Governance and Nominating Committee shall follow the Director Nomination Procedure. With respect to Public Directors, the Governance and Nominating Committee shall consider whether the candidate lacks material relationships to OCC, OCC's the Management Committee, and other directors such that the Public Director may be considered to be "independent" by the Board. In order to achieve a balanced representation on the Board among Member Directors, the Board has determined that other considerations are to be taken into account in the nomination of Member Directors, including the volume of business transacted with OCC during the prior year and the mix of Member Directors that are primarily engaged in agency trading on behalf of retail customers or individual investors. As further provided in the By-Laws, the Board shall be responsible for filling vacancies on the Board among the Member Directors or the Public Directors that may occur between annual meetings of stockholders, in each case with a nominee recommended by the Governance and Nominating Committee.

5. **Selection of Exchange Directors.** As provided in the By-Laws, each Exchange Director shall, [after evaluation by the Governance and Nominating Committee](#), be elected by the Equity Exchange entitled to vote for such Exchange Director at each annual meeting of stockholders. An individual may be nominated by, elected by, and serve as an Exchange Director for more than one Equity Exchange. As further provided in the By-Laws, a vacancy occurring for any reason among the Exchange Directors shall be filled by the Equity Exchange entitled to elect such Exchange Director.
6. **Selection of Management Director.** As provided in the By-Laws, a Management Director may be elected by the stockholders at each annual meeting of the stockholders. If a Management Director shall cease to hold the office by virtue of which he or she was elected as a Management Director, he or she shall simultaneously be disqualified to serve as a Management Director.
7. **Extending Invitation to New Board Members.** The Chairman shall extend the invitation to potential candidates to stand for election to the Board.
8. **Retirement.**

**Term Limits.** As provided in the By-Laws, Member Directors are limited to serving three consecutive three-year terms; Exchange Directors, Public Directors, and any Management Director do not have term limits. As provided in the Charter for the Governance and Nominating Committee, the Governance and Nominating Committee is responsible for reviewing periodically the continued appropriateness of the term limits applicable to Member Directors set forth in the By-Laws and for recommending to the Board, where appropriate, changes to such provisions.

**Retirement Policy.** The Board does not favor a mandatory retirement age for directors, therefore no age limitations are imposed with respect to any category of director.

**Retirement Policy – Management Director.** As provided in the By-Laws, a Management Director is no longer eligible to serve if he or she ceases to hold a senior officer position at OCC by virtue of which he was elected as a Management Director.

**Member Directors Changing Their Employment.** If a Member Director ceases to be employed by the Clearing Member Organization that employed him or her at the time of his or her election as a Member Director, the director shall notify the Chairman. As provided in the Charter for the Governance and Nominating Committee, the Governance and Nominating Committee shall assess the appropriateness of such Member Director continuing to serve on the Board, and shall recommend to the Board any action to be taken, consistent with the By-Laws concerning the continued eligibility of such person to remain a Member Director. The affected director is expected to act in accordance with the Board's decision following such review. The Governance and Nominating Committee, in accordance with the By-Laws, is responsible for recommending a replacement in the event that any such resignation is accepted by the Board.

**Other Board Commitments.** It is the policy of the Board that non-employee directors shall disclose to the Chairman information regarding each other board of directors on which a non-employee director serves at the time of his or her election to the Board, and after election shall advise the Chairman in advance of accepting an invitation to serve on another board, in each case to ensure that such additional board service will not impact such director's ability to serve on OCC's Board and does not create a conflict of interest. Any Management Director should not accept an invitation to serve on another board without prior approval of the Governance and Nominating Committee.

The Chairman may request the voluntary resignation of a director whose other board service (i) interferes with the director's ability to dedicate sufficient time, energy and attention to the performance of his or her duties as a director of OCC, or (ii) results in the need for the director to recuse himself or herself regularly as a result of conflicts of interest.

## **Conduct**

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#### **1. Board Meetings.**



**Selection of Agenda Items.** The Chairman, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer, other directors or officers of OCC, and the Corporate Secretary, shall establish the agenda for Board meetings. Any director may request that an item be included on any meeting agenda.

**Calling Board Meetings.** Meetings of the Board shall be called by the Chairman, the Chairman's designee, or as provided in the By-Laws.

**Attendance.** Directors are expected to prepare for, attend, and participate in all Board and applicable committee meetings. Directors should use their best efforts to attend Board and committee meetings in person. When necessary, a director who is unable to attend in person may attend by telephone or other means of communication that allows all participants to hear and speak to each other if appropriate under the circumstances. A director who is unable to attend a meeting (which it is understood will occur on occasion) or who wishes to participate telephonically or use other communications equipment is expected to notify the Corporate Secretary or the Chairman in advance of such meeting. As provided in the Code of Conduct for OCC Directors, attendance by telephone or videoconference for meetings that are scheduled for in-person attendance is discouraged.

**Distribution of Materials; Board Presentations.** It is important for directors to have materials on topics to be discussed sufficiently in advance of a meeting date and for directors to be kept abreast of developments between Board meetings. OCC regularly informs directors of internal and competitive developments between such meetings.

Directors can generally expect to receive materials at least a week in advance of a meeting to permit meaningful review and enable them to prepare for the meeting. Directors should review material distributed in advance of such meetings. In the event of a pressing need for the Board to meet on short notice or if such materials would otherwise contain highly confidential or sensitive information, it is recognized that written materials may not be available in advance of the meeting. OCC operates a board portal for the general dissemination of meeting and other written material to directors.

**Attendance of Non-Directors.** The Board believes that attendance of key executive officers relevant for the topic being discussed augments the meeting process. Members of OCC's and other employees may attend Board meetings at the invitation of the Chairman, Chief Executive Officer, or Chief Operating Officer, and provide pertinent information as is necessary. Such persons may be excluded from Executive Sessions either of the Board or any committee thereof.

The Chairman, Chief Executive Officer, and Chief Operating Officer encourage members of the Management Committee to respond to questions posed by directors relating to their areas of expertise. The Board also believes that members of the Management Committee can assist the Board with its deliberations and provide critical insights and analyses, particularly when the Board hears presentations on the business plan for the upcoming year. Attendance of such officers allows the most knowledgeable and accountable executives to communicate directly with the Board. It also provides the Board

direct access to individuals critical to OCC's succession planning.

**Participation in Strategic Issues Discussions.** To facilitate the Board's oversight of OCC's major strategic, financial, and business activities, OCC will hold a meeting of the Board and the Management Committee focused on the overall strategic objectives of OCC each calendar year.

**Number of Meetings.** The Board shall hold a minimum of four meetings per year with additional meetings called as the Board deems appropriate.

**Quorum.** Except as may otherwise be provided in the By-Laws, a majority of the directors then in office, but not less than six (6) directors, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

**Minutes.** The Board shall maintain minutes of all Board meetings, which shall be furnished to the directors for review.

2. **Executive Sessions.** The Board and each Board committee may call executive sessions from which members of management and invited guests may be excluded. While it is up to the Board and each committee to decide when to call an executive session and who will participate in such sessions, it is expected that management will be excluded from executive sessions or portions thereof at which the discussion concerns management's performance and other matters of interest that non-management Directors wish to discuss outside of management's presence. Individual members of the Board and of a committee also may be excluded from executive sessions or portions thereof at which the discussion concerns a matter as to which that member has an actual or potential conflict of interest. The Board shall select a director to chair executive sessions in the absence of the Chairman. The Chair or Acting Chair of each committee shall chair an executive session of the committee. The chair of the executive session shall determine if separate minutes of an executive session are to be recorded as well as determine the level of detail to be included in such minutes, taking into account the sensitivity of the matters to be discussed and the possibility that candor may be limited if detailed minutes are recorded. It is expected that meeting minutes will reflect that an executive session was convened and broadly describe the topic(s) discussed in executive session.

3. **Ethics and Conflicts of Interest.** Each director is required to act in good faith in the best interests of OCC and with due regard to the fiduciary responsibilities owed to OCC as a business and a SIFMU. The Board has adopted a Code of Conduct for OCC Directors that includes a Conflict of Interest Policy. The Conflict of Interest Policy incorporates various provisions of applicable corporate law and other standards adopted by OCC to ensure that actual, potential or apparent conflicts of interests (referred to herein as "conflicts of interest") are handled with care. Directors are expected to avoid any action, position or interest that conflicts with an interest of OCC, or gives the appearance of a conflict, in accordance with the Conflict of Interest Policy. Each calendar year, OCC solicits information from directors in order to monitor conflicts of interest and directors are expected to be mindful of their fiduciary obligations to OCC as set forth in the Code of Conduct for OCC Directors. Public

Directors are expected to refrain from entering into material business relationships with other directors.

When faced with a situation involving a conflict of interest, directors are at all times expected to err on the side of caution and immediately bring to the attention of the Chairman and OCC's Chief Legal Officer any matters that may involve conflicts of interest even if the director does not believe that an actual conflict exists.

Each director is required to comply with the provisions of the Code of Conduct for OCC Directors, including, without limitation, the provisions relating to conflicts of interest and confidentiality. Directors are required to confirm each calendar year their compliance with the Code of Conduct for OCC Directors.

- 3. Board Compensation.** A Management Director shall not receive additional compensation for service as a director. Because OCC is an industry utility that benefits both clearing members and participant exchanges, Member Directors and Exchange Directors are not paid an annual retainer, but instead are each entitled to be paid \$100 for each meeting attended.

OCC believes that compensation for Public Directors should be competitive. The Compensation and Performance Committee will periodically review the level of the compensation for Public Directors, including how such compensation relates to director compensation of companies of comparable size and complexity. Changes to the compensation for Public Directors will be proposed to the full Board for consideration and approval.

- 4. Board Access to the Management Committee and Independent Advisors.** In discharging its oversight role, the Board may inquire into any matter it considers appropriate to carry out its duties and responsibilities. Directors should have complete and open access to members of the Management Committee and, as appropriate, to OCC's outside advisors. Directors shall coordinate such access through the Chairman, Chief Executive Officer, or Chief Operating Officer. Directors will use their judgment to assure that this access is not distracting to the business operation of OCC.

The Board shall have the authority to hire specialists or rely upon other outside advisors or specialists to assist it in carrying out its activities. The Board also shall have the authority to approve the fees and retention terms applicable to such advisors and specialists. The Board shall have the right at any time to retain independent outside financial, legal, or other advisors. The Board committees may retain independent outside financial, legal, or other advisors, and OCC will provide appropriate funding, as determined by the relevant committee, for the payment of reasonable compensation to such advisors. When providing the annual report of its activities to the Board, the relevant committee will include information concerning any engagement of outside advisors and the associated fees and expenses.

- 5. Board Interaction with Media and Others.** The Code of Conduct for OCC Directors includes provisions related to inquiries made to directors from media and others (including regulators). Directors are expected to comply with these

provisions.

6. **Confidentiality of Information.** In order to facilitate open discussion, confidentiality of information and deliberations is an imperative. As provided in the Code of Conduct for OCC Directors, each director has an affirmative duty to safeguard the confidentiality of information provided to the Board as well as the nature of Board room deliberations.
7. **Board Orientation and Continuing Education.** OCC shall provide new directors with a director orientation program to familiarize such directors with, among other things, OCC's business, strategic plans, significant financial, accounting and risk management issues, compliance programs, conflicts policies, the Code of Conduct for OCC Directors, the OCC By-Laws and Rules, the Principles, principal officers, internal auditors, and external auditors. Each director is encouraged to participate in continuing education programs as necessary or appropriate to assist him or her in performing his or her responsibilities as a director. The Corporate Secretary will periodically advise directors of available educational opportunities.
8. **Board and Committee Evaluations.** The Governance and Nominating Committee is responsible for developing and administering an annual self-evaluation of the Board and its committees. The Governance and Nominating Committee shall be responsible for establishing the evaluation criteria, implementing the process for such evaluation, as well as making appropriate recommendations for improving performance. These self-evaluations will focus primarily on the performance of the Board and each committee as a whole and shall concentrate on areas where performance might be improved.

## COMMITTEES

1. **Board Committees.** The Board shall establish any standing and other committees that it deems necessary or appropriate to discharge its responsibilities. [Each committee established by the Board must be comprised of a majority of directors who are deemed independent by the Board and in accordance with regulatory requirements.](#) The Board has established Board-level committees including: Audit, Compensation and Performance, Governance and Nominating, Regulatory, Risk, and Technology. The Board may form a new committee or disband a current committee depending on circumstances. The Board may form such other committees, including subcommittees, as it from time to time deems appropriate, and may delegate authority to one or more designated members of such committees. In addition, the Board may determine to form ad hoc committees or groups from time to time, and determine the composition and areas of responsibility of such committees or groups.
2. **Independence Criteria for Audit Committee Service.** The Board has adopted the following [additional](#) independence criteria with respect to the Audit Committee. A Management Director does not qualify as independent for Audit Committee purposes provided that any Non-Executive Chairman of OCC shall not be deemed to be a Management Director for this purpose. Exchange Directors, Member Directors, and Public Directors may qualify as independent for Audit Committee purposes, subject to an assessment by the Board (through the Governance and Nominating Committee) of individual directors for other

disqualifying material relationships with OCC, the Management Committee and other directors.

3. **Committee Assignments and Chairs.** The Chairs of the committees shall be determined in accordance with the terms of the applicable Committee Charter and, if applicable, the By-Laws. The Board shall have the authority to approve and shall each calendar year review committee assignments.

The Governance and Nominating Committee, after consultation with the Chairman, shall be responsible for making recommendations to the Board with respect to the assignment of directors to various committees, including the designation of Chair. After reviewing the recommendations, the Board shall be responsible for appointing the members to the committees.

Committee assignments and the designation of committee Chairs should be based on the director's knowledge, interests and areas of expertise. The Board does not favor mandatory rotation of committee assignments or Chairs. The Board believes experience and continuity are more important than rotation and that directors and Chairs should be rotated only if a change is likely to increase committee performance or facilitate committee work.

4. **Frequency and Length of Board Committee Meetings.** Committee Chairs should regularly consult with the Chairman, Chief Executive Officer, or Chief Operating Officer to obtain their insights and to optimize committee performance. The committee Chairs, in consultation with the Chairman, Chief Executive Officer, or Chief Operating Officer, as necessary, should establish the frequency and length of committee meetings. The Board agendas shall include regular reports from the Chairs of each of the Board committees.
5. **Development of Committee Agendas.** The committee Chairs, working with the Chairman, should establish committee agendas for the year. All standing committees should meet regularly during the year and receive reports from OCC personnel on developments affecting the committee's work.
6. **Attendance at and Preparation for Committee Meetings.** Directors are expected to attend all meetings of committees to which they are appointed, review all materials in advance and be prepared to participate fully in the committee's meetings.
7. **Charters.** For each standing committee the Board shall establish a written charter which shall set forth the responsibilities of that committee, as well as committee structure and operations, and any required reporting to the full Board.

For each of the Audit, Compensation and Performance, Governance and Nominating, Regulatory, Risk, and Technology Committees the charter shall set forth the purposes, goals, and responsibilities of such committee, the qualifications for committee membership, and committee reporting to the Board (which shall include a requirement that each committee provide the Board with an annual report summarizing the committee's activities over the prior year). Current versions of these charters shall be available on OCC's website.

## **MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE, EVALUATION AND SUCCESSION**

1. **Management Structure.** OCC's By-Laws provide the Board with the flexibility to select the appropriate management leadership structure for OCC. OCC's management leadership may be comprised of an Executive Chairman, a Chief Executive Officer, and a Chief Operating Officer, as the Board determines necessary. In making leadership determinations, the Board considers many factors, including the specific needs of the business and the best interests of OCC and the market participants that it serves.
2. **Selection and Evaluation of Management.** As required by the By-Laws, the Board annually elects certain corporate officers including any Executive Chairman (if applicable), and the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Secretary, and Treasurer. Each of these officers has the authorities, responsibilities and duties allocated to them as set forth in the By-Laws and Rules and such other duties as may be delegated to them as provided in the By-Laws or otherwise. Factors the Board considers in delegating authority to an officer to authorize a regulatory filing include, but are not limited to, the responsibilities and expertise of the officer and any limitations on the scope of the delegated authority that the Board determines are appropriate, including limitations to the subject matter, materiality of the changes, the regulatory process required to implement the changes, and the manner in which the officer must notify the Board or a committee about filings approved pursuant to such authority.

The Compensation and Performance Committee shall conduct an annual evaluation of the performance of each of any Executive Chairman and the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer, including performance against his or her established goals. The Compensation and Performance Committee shall take such evaluations into consideration in recommending to the Board each such officer's compensation. After reviewing the recommendations of the Compensation and Performance Committee, the Board shall be responsible for establishing each such officer's compensation.

3. **Management Succession Planning.** Succession planning for OCC's senior management, including any Executive Chairman, the Chief Executive Officer, and the Chief Operating Officer, is critical to OCC's long-term success. To assist the Board, such officers shall provide an annual succession planning report to the Compensation and Performance Committee. There should also be available, on a continuing basis, the recommendations of any Executive Chairman, Chief Executive Officer, and Chief Operating Officer as a successor should any of them unexpectedly become unable to serve.
4. **Review Cycle.** These Principles, along with the Fitness Standards, shall be reviewed by the Board at least once every twelve months.