

<p>Form 5500</p> <p>Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service</p> <hr/> <p>Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration</p> <hr/> <p>Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation</p>	<p>Annual Return/Report of Employee Benefit Plan</p> <p>This form is required to be filed for employee benefit plans under sections 104 and 4065 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and sections 6057(b) and 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code).</p> <p>▶ Complete all entries in accordance with the instructions to the Form 5500.</p>	<p>OMB Nos. 1210-0110 1210-0089</p> <hr/> <p style="font-size: 24pt; font-weight: bold;">2024</p> <hr/> <p>This Form is Open to Public Inspection</p>
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Part I Annual Report Identification Information
 For calendar plan year 2024 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2024 and ending 12/31/2024

A This return/report is for: a multiemployer plan a multiple-employer plan (Filers checking this box must provide participating employer information in accordance with the form instructions.)

a single-employer plan a DFE (specify) _____

B This return/report is: the first return/report the final return/report

an amended return/report a short plan year return/report (less than 12 months)

C If the plan is a collectively-bargained plan, check here. ▶

D Check box if filing under: Form 5558 automatic extension the DFVC program

special extension (enter description)

E If this is a retroactively adopted plan permitted by SECURE Act section 201, check here. ▶

Part II Basic Plan Information—enter all requested information

<p>1a Name of plan <u>ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC. EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN</u></p>	<p>1b Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶ <u>003</u></p>
<p>2a Plan sponsor's name (employer, if for a single-employer plan) Mailing address (include room, apt., suite no. and street, or P.O. Box) City or town, state or province, country, and ZIP or foreign postal code (if foreign, see instructions) <u>ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC.</u></p> <p><u>4050 GARDEN VIEW DRIVE</u> <u>SUITE 200</u> <u>GRAND FORKS, ND 58201</u></p>	<p>1c Effective date of plan <u>01/01/2017</u></p> <p>2b Employer Identification Number (EIN) <u>26-2006372</u></p> <p>2c Plan Sponsor's telephone number <u>701-402-0329</u></p> <p>2d Business code (see instructions) <u>541330</u></p>

Caution: A penalty for the late or incomplete filing of this return/report will be assessed unless reasonable cause is established.

Under penalties of perjury and other penalties set forth in the instructions, I declare that I have examined this return/report, including accompanying schedules, statements and attachments, as well as the electronic version of this return/report, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it is true, correct, and complete.

SIGN HERE	Filed with authorized/valid electronic signature.	10/02/2025	MITCH BYRNE
	Signature of plan administrator	Date	Enter name of individual signing as plan administrator
SIGN HERE	Filed with authorized/valid electronic signature.	10/02/2025	MITCH BYRNE
	Signature of employer/plan sponsor	Date	Enter name of individual signing as employer or plan sponsor
SIGN HERE			
	Signature of DFE	Date	Enter name of individual signing as DFE

3a Plan administrator's name and address <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Plan Sponsor	3b Administrator's EIN	
	3c Administrator's telephone number	
4 If the name and/or EIN of the plan sponsor or the plan name has changed since the last return/report filed for this plan, enter the plan sponsor's name, EIN, the plan name and the plan number from the last return/report: a Sponsor's name c Plan Name	4b EIN	
	4d PN	
5 Total number of participants at the beginning of the plan year	5	352
6 Number of participants as of the end of the plan year unless otherwise stated (welfare plans complete only lines 6a(1) , 6a(2) , 6b , 6c , and 6d). a(1) Total number of active participants at the beginning of the plan year a(2) Total number of active participants at the end of the plan year b Retired or separated participants receiving benefits..... c Other retired or separated participants entitled to future benefits d Subtotal. Add lines 6a(2) , 6b , and 6c e Deceased participants whose beneficiaries are receiving or are entitled to receive benefits. f Total. Add lines 6d and 6e g(1) Number of participants with account balances as of the beginning of the plan year (only defined contribution plans complete this item) g(2) Number of participants with account balances as of the end of the plan year (only defined contribution plans complete this item) h Number of participants who terminated employment during the plan year with accrued benefits that were less than 100% vested.....	6a(1)	287
	6a(2)	286
	6b	8
	6c	79
	6d	373
	6e	0
	6f	373
	6g(1)	347
	6g(2)	372
7 Enter the total number of employers obligated to contribute to the plan (only multiemployer plans complete this item)	7	

8a If the plan provides pension benefits, enter the applicable pension feature codes from the List of Plan Characteristics Codes in the instructions:
2I 2P 2Q 3I

b If the plan provides welfare benefits, enter the applicable welfare feature codes from the List of Plan Characteristics Codes in the instructions:

9a Plan funding arrangement (check all that apply)	9b Plan benefit arrangement (check all that apply)
(1) <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance	(1) <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance
(2) <input type="checkbox"/> Code section 412(e)(3) insurance contracts	(2) <input type="checkbox"/> Code section 412(e)(3) insurance contracts
(3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trust	(3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trust
(4) <input type="checkbox"/> General assets of the sponsor	(4) <input type="checkbox"/> General assets of the sponsor

10 Check all applicable boxes in 10a and 10b to indicate which schedules are attached, and, where indicated, enter the number attached. (See instructions)

a Pension Schedules

- (1) **R** (Retirement Plan Information)
- (2) **MB** (Multiemployer Defined Benefit Plan and Certain Money Purchase Plan Actuarial Information) - signed by the plan actuary
- (3) **SB** (Single-Employer Defined Benefit Plan Actuarial Information) - signed by the plan actuary
- (4) **DCG** (Individual Plan Information) – Number Attached 0
- (5) **MEP** (Multiple-Employer Retirement Plan Information)

b General Schedules

- (1) **H** (Financial Information)
- (2) **I** (Financial Information – Small Plan)
- (3) **A** (Insurance Information) – Number Attached _____
- (4) **C** (Service Provider Information)
- (5) **D** (DFE/Participating Plan Information)
- (6) **G** (Financial Transaction Schedules)

Part III Form M-1 Compliance Information (to be completed by welfare benefit plans)

11a If the plan provides welfare benefits, was the plan subject to the Form M-1 filing requirements during the plan year? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-2.) Yes No

If "Yes" is checked, complete lines 11b and 11c.

11b Is the plan currently in compliance with the Form M-1 filing requirements? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-2.) Yes No

11c Enter the Receipt Confirmation Code for the 2024 Form M-1 annual report. If the plan was not required to file the 2024 Form M-1 annual report, enter the Receipt Confirmation Code for the most recent Form M-1 that was required to be filed under the Form M-1 filing requirements. (Failure to enter a valid Receipt Confirmation Code will subject the Form 5500 filing to rejection as incomplete.)

Receipt Confirmation Code _____

SCHEDULE C (Form 5500) <small>Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service</small> <small>Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration</small> <small>Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation</small>	Service Provider Information This schedule is required to be filed under section 104 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). ▶ File as an attachment to Form 5500.	<small>OMB No. 1210-0110</small> 2024 This Form is Open to Public Inspection.
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For calendar plan year 2024 or fiscal plan year beginning **01/01/2024** and ending **12/31/2024**

A Name of plan ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC. EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN	B Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶	003
C Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC.	D Employer Identification Number (EIN) 26-2006372	

Part I Service Provider Information (see instructions)

You must complete this Part, in accordance with the instructions, to report the information required for **each person** who received, directly or indirectly, \$5,000 or more in total compensation (i.e., money or anything else of monetary value) in connection with services rendered to the plan or the person's position with the plan during the plan year. If a person received **only** eligible indirect compensation for which the plan received the required disclosures, you are required to answer line 1 but are not required to include that person when completing the remainder of this Part.

1 Information on Persons Receiving Only Eligible Indirect Compensation

a Check "Yes" or "No" to indicate whether you are excluding a person from the remainder of this Part because they received only eligible indirect compensation for which the plan received the required disclosures (see instructions for definitions and conditions)..... Yes No

b If you answered line 1a "Yes," enter the name and EIN or address of each person providing the required disclosures for the service providers who received only eligible indirect compensation. Complete as many entries as needed (see instructions).

(b) Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

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2. Information on Other Service Providers Receiving Direct or Indirect Compensation. Except for those persons for whom you answered "Yes" to line 1a above, complete as many entries as needed to list each person receiving, directly or indirectly, \$5,000 or more in total compensation (i.e., money or anything else of value) in connection with services rendered to the plan or their position with the plan during the plan year. (See instructions).

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Part I Service Provider Information (continued)

3. If you reported on line 2 receipt of indirect compensation, other than eligible indirect compensation, by a service provider, and the service provider is a fiduciary or provides contract administrator, consulting, custodial, investment advisory, investment management, broker, or recordkeeping services, answer the following questions for (a) each source from whom the service provider received \$1,000 or more in indirect compensation and (b) each source for whom the service provider gave you a formula used to determine the indirect compensation instead of an amount or estimated amount of the indirect compensation. Complete as many entries as needed to report the required information for each source.

(a) Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2	(b) Service Codes (see instructions)	(c) Enter amount of indirect compensation
(d) Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation	(e) Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation.	
(a) Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2	(b) Service Codes (see instructions)	(c) Enter amount of indirect compensation
(d) Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation	(e) Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation.	
(a) Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2	(b) Service Codes (see instructions)	(c) Enter amount of indirect compensation
(d) Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation	(e) Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation.	

Part II Service Providers Who Fail or Refuse to Provide Information

4 Provide, to the extent possible, the following information for each service provider who failed or refused to provide the information necessary to complete this Schedule.

(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide
(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide
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(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide
(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide

Part III Termination Information on Accountants and Enrolled Actuaries (see instructions)
(complete as many entries as needed)

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

SCHEDULE H (Form 5500) <small>Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service</small> <small>Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration</small> <small>Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation</small>	Financial Information This schedule is required to be filed under section 104 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), and section 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code). ▶ File as an attachment to Form 5500.	OMB No. 1210-0110 2024 This Form is Open to Public Inspection
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For calendar plan year 2024 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2024 and ending 12/31/2024	
A Name of plan ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC. EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN	B Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶ 003
C Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC.	D Employer Identification Number (EIN) 26-2006372

Part I	Asset and Liability Statement
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1 Current value of plan assets and liabilities at the beginning and end of the plan year. Combine the value of plan assets held in more than one trust. Report the value of the plan's interest in a commingled fund containing the assets of more than one plan on a line-by-line basis unless the value is reportable on lines 1c(9) through 1c(14). Do not enter the value of that portion of an insurance contract which guarantees, during this plan year, to pay a specific dollar benefit at a future date. **Round off amounts to the nearest dollar.** MTIAs, CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs do not complete lines 1b(1), 1b(2), 1c(8), 1g, 1h, and 1i. CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs also do not complete lines 1d and 1e. See instructions.

Assets	(a) Beginning of Year	(b) End of Year
a Total noninterest-bearing cash	1a	
b Receivables (less allowance for doubtful accounts):		
(1) Employer contributions	1b(1)	
(2) Participant contributions	1b(2)	
(3) Other	1b(3)	
c General investments:		
(1) Interest-bearing cash (include money market accounts & certificates of deposit)	1c(1)	933190 1987811
(2) U.S. Government securities	1c(2)	
(3) Corporate debt instruments (other than employer securities):		
(A) Preferred	1c(3)(A)	
(B) All other	1c(3)(B)	
(4) Corporate stocks (other than employer securities):		
(A) Preferred	1c(4)(A)	
(B) Common	1c(4)(B)	
(5) Partnership/joint venture interests	1c(5)	
(6) Real estate (other than employer real property)	1c(6)	
(7) Loans (other than to participants)	1c(7)	
(8) Participant loans	1c(8)	
(9) Value of interest in common/collective trusts	1c(9)	
(10) Value of interest in pooled separate accounts	1c(10)	
(11) Value of interest in master trust investment accounts	1c(11)	
(12) Value of interest in 103-12 investment entities	1c(12)	
(13) Value of interest in registered investment companies (e.g., mutual funds)	1c(13)	
(14) Value of funds held in insurance company general account (unallocated contracts)	1c(14)	
(15) Other	1c(15)	

1d Employer-related investments:		(a) Beginning of Year	(b) End of Year
(1) Employer securities.....	1d(1)	70400000	89100000
(2) Employer real property.....	1d(2)		
e Buildings and other property used in plan operation.....	1e		
f Total assets (add all amounts in lines 1a through 1e).....	1f	71333190	91087811
Liabilities			
g Benefit claims payable.....	1g		
h Operating payables.....	1h		
i Acquisition indebtedness.....	1i		
j Other liabilities.....	1j	1714317	1662234
k Total liabilities (add all amounts in lines 1g through 1j).....	1k	1714317	1662234
Net Assets			
l Net assets (subtract line 1k from line 1f).....	1l	69618873	89425577

Part II Income and Expense Statement

2 Plan income, expenses, and changes in net assets for the year. Include all income and expenses of the plan, including any trust(s) or separately maintained fund(s) and any payments/receipts to/from insurance carriers. Round off amounts to the nearest dollar. MTIAs, CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs do not complete lines 2a, 2b(1)(E), 2e, 2f, and 2g.

Income		(a) Amount	(b) Total
a Contributions:			
(1) Received or receivable in cash from: (A) Employers.....	2a(1)(A)	1327706	
(B) Participants.....	2a(1)(B)		
(C) Others (including rollovers).....	2a(1)(C)		
(2) Noncash contributions.....	2a(2)		
(3) Total contributions. Add lines 2a(1)(A) , (B) , (C) , and line 2a(2)	2a(3)		1327706
b Earnings on investments:			
(1) Interest:			
(A) Interest-bearing cash (including money market accounts and certificates of deposit).....	2b(1)(A)	49407	
(B) U.S. Government securities.....	2b(1)(B)		
(C) Corporate debt instruments.....	2b(1)(C)		
(D) Loans (other than to participants).....	2b(1)(D)		
(E) Participant loans.....	2b(1)(E)		
(F) Other.....	2b(1)(F)		
(G) Total interest. Add lines 2b(1)(A) through (F)	2b(1)(G)		49407
(2) Dividends:			
(A) Preferred stock.....	2b(2)(A)		
(B) Common stock.....	2b(2)(B)		
(C) Registered investment company shares (e.g. mutual funds).....	2b(2)(C)		
(D) Total dividends. Add lines 2b(2)(A) , (B) , and (C)	2b(2)(D)		0
(3) Rents.....	2b(3)		
(4) Net gain (loss) on sale of assets:			
(A) Aggregate proceeds.....	2b(4)(A)		
(B) Aggregate carrying amount (see instructions).....	2b(4)(B)		
(C) Subtract line 2b(4)(B) from line 2b(4)(A) and enter result.....	2b(4)(C)		
(5) Unrealized appreciation (depreciation) of assets:			
(A) Real estate.....	2b(5)(A)		
(B) Other.....	2b(5)(B)	18700001	
(C) Total unrealized appreciation of assets. Add lines 2b(5)(A) and (B)	2b(5)(C)		

		(a) Amount	(b) Total
(6) Net investment gain (loss) from common/collective trusts	2b(6)		
(7) Net investment gain (loss) from pooled separate accounts	2b(7)		
(8) Net investment gain (loss) from master trust investment accounts	2b(8)		
(9) Net investment gain (loss) from 103-12 investment entities	2b(9)		
(10) Net investment gain (loss) from registered investment companies (e.g., mutual funds)	2b(10)		
c Other income	2c		
d Total income. Add all income amounts in column (b) and enter total	2d		20077114

Expenses

e Benefit payment and payments to provide benefits:			
(1) Directly to participants or beneficiaries, including direct rollovers	2e(1)	225152	
(2) To insurance carriers for the provision of benefits	2e(2)		
(3) Other	2e(3)		
(4) Total benefit payments. Add lines 2e(1) through (3)	2e(4)		225152
f Corrective distributions (see instructions)	2f		
g Certain deemed distributions of participant loans (see instructions)	2g		
h Interest expense	2h		45258
i Administrative expenses:			
(1) Salaries and allowances	2i(1)		
(2) Contract administrator fees	2i(2)		
(3) Recordkeeping fees	2i(3)		
(4) IQPA audit fees	2i(4)		
(5) Investment advisory and investment management fees	2i(5)		
(6) Bank or trust company trustee/custodial fees	2i(6)		
(7) Actuarial fees	2i(7)		
(8) Legal fees	2i(8)		
(9) Valuation/appraisal fees	2i(9)		
(10) Other trustee fees and expenses	2i(10)		
(11) Other expenses	2i(11)		
(12) Total administrative expenses. Add lines 2i(1) through (11)	2i(12)		0
j Total expenses. Add all expense amounts in column (b) and enter total	2j		270410

Net Income and Reconciliation

k Net income (loss). Subtract line 2j from line 2d	2k		19806704
l Transfers of assets:			
(1) To this plan	2l(1)		
(2) From this plan	2l(2)		

Part III Accountant's Opinion

3 Complete lines 3a through 3c if the opinion of an independent qualified public accountant is attached to this Form 5500. Complete line 3d if an opinion is not attached.

a The attached opinion of an independent qualified public accountant for this plan is (see instructions):

(1) Unmodified (2) Qualified (3) Disclaimer (4) Adverse

b Check the appropriate box(es) to indicate whether the IQPA performed an ERISA section 103(a)(3)(C) audit. Check both boxes (1) and (2) if the audit was performed pursuant to both 29 CFR 2520.103-8 and 29 CFR 2520.103-12(d). Check box (3) if pursuant to neither.

(1) DOL Regulation 2520.103-8 (2) DOL Regulation 2520.103-12(d) (3) neither DOL Regulation 2520.103-8 nor DOL Regulation 2520.103-12(d).

c Enter the name and EIN of the accountant (or accounting firm) below:

(1) Name: **BRADY MARTZ & ASSOCIATES, P.C.**

(2) EIN: **45-0310328**

d The opinion of an independent qualified public accountant is **not attached** as part of Schedule H because:

(1) This form is filed for a CCT, PSA, DCG or MTIA. (2) It will be attached to the next Form 5500 pursuant to 29 CFR 2520.104-50.

Part IV Compliance Questions

4 CCTs and PSAs do not complete Part IV. MTIAs, 103-12 IEs, and GIAs do not complete lines 4a, 4e, 4f, 4g, 4h, 4k, 4m, 4n, or 5. 103-12 IEs also do not complete lines 4j and 4l. MTIAs also do not complete line 4l. DCGs do not complete lines 4e, 4f, 4k, 4l, and 5, and DCGs generally complete the rest of Part IV collectively for all plans in the DCG, except as otherwise provided (see instructions).

During the plan year:

	Yes	No	Amount
a Was there a failure to transmit to the plan any participant contributions within the time period described in 29 CFR 2510.3-102? Continue to answer "Yes" for any prior year failures until fully corrected. (See instructions and DOL's Voluntary Fiduciary Correction Program.)		X	
b Were any loans by the plan or fixed income obligations due the plan in default as of the close of the plan year or classified during the year as uncollectible? Disregard participant loans secured by participant's account balance. (Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part I if "Yes" is checked.)		X	
c Were any leases to which the plan was a party in default or classified during the year as uncollectible? (Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part II if "Yes" is checked.)		X	
d Were there any nonexempt transactions with any party-in-interest? (Do not include transactions reported on line 4a. Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part III if "Yes" is checked.)		X	
e Was this plan covered by a fidelity bond?	X		1000000
f Did the plan have a loss, whether or not reimbursed by the plan's fidelity bond, that was caused by fraud or dishonesty?		X	
g Did the plan hold any assets whose current value was neither readily determinable on an established market nor set by an independent third party appraiser?		X	
h Did the plan receive any noncash contributions whose value was neither readily determinable on an established market nor set by an independent third party appraiser?		X	
i Did the plan have assets held for investment? (Attach schedule(s) of assets if "Yes" is checked, and see instructions for format requirements.)	X		
j Were any plan transactions or series of transactions in excess of 5% of the current value of plan assets? (Attach schedule of transactions if "Yes" is checked and see instructions for format requirements.)		X	
k Were all the plan assets either distributed to participants or beneficiaries, transferred to another plan, or brought under the control of the PBGC?		X	
l Has the plan failed to provide any benefit when due under the plan?		X	
m If this is an individual account plan, was there a blackout period? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-3.)		X	
n If 4m was answered "Yes," check the "Yes" box if you either provided the required notice or one of the exceptions to providing the notice applied under 29 CFR 2520.101-3.			

5a Has a resolution to terminate the plan been adopted during the plan year or any prior plan year? Yes No
If "Yes," enter the amount of any plan assets that reverted to the employer this year _____.

5b If, during this plan year, any assets or liabilities were transferred from this plan to another plan(s), identify the plan(s) to which assets or liabilities were transferred. (See instructions.)

5b(1) Name of plan(s)	5b(2) EIN(s)	5b(3) PN(s)

5c Was the plan a defined benefit plan covered under the PBGC insurance program at any time during this plan year? (See ERISA section 4021 and instructions.) Yes No Not determined

If "Yes" is checked, enter the My PAA confirmation number from the PBGC premium filing for this plan year _____.

SCHEDULE R (Form 5500) <small>Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service</small> <small>Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration</small> <small>Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation</small>	Retirement Plan Information This schedule is required to be filed under sections 104 and 4065 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and section 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code). ▶ File as an attachment to Form 5500.	<small>OMB No. 1210-0110</small> 2024 This Form is Open to Public Inspection.
--	---	---

For calendar plan year 2024 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2024 and ending 12/31/2024

A Name of plan <u>ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC. EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN</u>	B Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶	<u>003</u>
C Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 <u>ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC.</u>	D Employer Identification Number (EIN) <u>26-2006372</u>	

Part I	Distributions
---------------	----------------------

All references to distributions relate only to payments of benefits during the plan year.

1 Total value of distributions paid in property other than in cash or the forms of property specified in the instructions.....

1		0
---	--	---

2 Enter the EIN(s) of payor(s) who paid benefits on behalf of the plan to participants or beneficiaries during the year (if more than two, enter EINs of the two payors who paid the greatest dollar amounts of benefits):
 EIN(s): 42-0127290

Profit-sharing plans, ESOPs, and stock bonus plans, skip line 3.

3 Number of participants (living or deceased) whose benefits were distributed in a single sum, during the plan year.....

3	
---	--

Part II	Funding Information (If the plan is not subject to the minimum funding requirements of section 412 of the Internal Revenue Code or ERISA section 302, skip this Part.)
----------------	---

4 Is the plan administrator making an election under Code section 412(d)(2) or ERISA section 302(d)(2)? Yes No N/A
If the plan is a defined benefit plan, go to line 8.

5 If a waiver of the minimum funding standard for a prior year is being amortized in this plan year, see instructions and enter the date of the ruling letter granting the waiver. **Date:** Month _____ Day _____ Year _____
If you completed line 5, complete lines 3, 9, and 10 of Schedule MB and do not complete the remainder of this schedule.

6 a Enter the minimum required contribution for this plan year (include any prior year accumulated funding deficiency not waived)	6a	
b Enter the amount contributed by the employer to the plan for this plan year	6b	
c Subtract the amount in line 6b from the amount in line 6a. Enter the result (enter a minus sign to the left of a negative amount).....	6c	

If you completed line 6c, skip lines 8 and 9.

7 Will the minimum funding amount reported on line 6c be met by the funding deadline?..... Yes No N/A

8 If a change in actuarial cost method was made for this plan year pursuant to a revenue procedure or other authority providing automatic approval for the change or a class ruling letter, does the plan sponsor or plan administrator agree with the change? Yes No N/A

Part III	Amendments
-----------------	-------------------

9 If this is a defined benefit pension plan, were any amendments adopted during this plan year that increased or decreased the value of benefits? If yes, check the appropriate box. If no, check the "No" box..... Increase Decrease Both No

Part IV	ESOPs (see instructions). If this is not a plan described under section 409(a) or 4975(e)(7) of the Internal Revenue Code, skip this Part.
----------------	---

10 Were unallocated employer securities or proceeds from the sale of unallocated securities used to repay any exempt loan? Yes No

11 a Does the ESOP hold any preferred stock? Yes No

b If the ESOP has an outstanding exempt loan with the employer as lender, is such loan part of a "back-to-back" loan? (See instructions for definition of "back-to-back" loan.) Yes No

12 Does the ESOP hold any stock that is not readily tradable on an established securities market? Yes No

Part V Additional Information for Multiemployer Defined Benefit Pension Plans

13 Enter the following information for each employer that (1) contributed more than 5% of total contributions to the plan during the plan year or (2) was one of the top-ten highest contributors (measured in dollars). See instructions. Complete as many entries as needed to report all applicable employers.

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: Hourly Weekly Unit of production Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: Hourly Weekly Unit of production Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: Hourly Weekly Unit of production Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: Hourly Weekly Unit of production Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: Hourly Weekly Unit of production Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: Hourly Weekly Unit of production Other (specify): _____

14 Enter the number of deferred vested and retired participants (inactive participants), as of the beginning of the plan year, whose contributing employer is no longer making contributions to the plan for:

a The current plan year. Check the box to indicate the counting method used to determine the number of inactive participants: <input type="checkbox"/> last contributing employer <input type="checkbox"/> alternative <input type="checkbox"/> reasonable approximation (see instructions for required attachment).....	14a	
b The plan year immediately preceding the current plan year. <input type="checkbox"/> Check the box if the number reported is a change from what was previously reported (see instructions for required attachment).....	14b	
c The second preceding plan year. <input type="checkbox"/> Check the box if the number reported is a change from what was previously reported (see instructions for required attachment).....	14c	

15 Enter the ratio of the number of participants under the plan on whose behalf no employer had an obligation to make an employer contribution during the current plan year to:

a The corresponding number for the plan year immediately preceding the current plan year	15a	
b The corresponding number for the second preceding plan year	15b	

16 Information with respect to any employers who withdrew from the plan during the preceding plan year:

a Enter the number of employers who withdrew during the preceding plan year	16a	
b If line 16a is greater than 0, enter the aggregate amount of withdrawal liability assessed or estimated to be assessed against such withdrawn employers.....	16b	

17 If assets and liabilities from another plan have been transferred to or merged with this plan during the plan year, check box and see instructions regarding supplemental information to be included as an attachment

Part VI Additional Information for Single-Employer and Multiemployer Defined Benefit Pension Plans

18 If any liabilities to participants or their beneficiaries under the plan as of the end of the plan year consist (in whole or in part) of liabilities to such participants and beneficiaries under two or more pension plans as of immediately before such plan year, check box and see instructions regarding supplemental information to be included as an attachment

19 If the total number of participants is 1,000 or more, complete lines (a) and (b):

a Enter the percentage of plan assets held as:
 Public Equity: _____% Private Equity: _____% Investment-Grade Debt and Interest Rate Hedging Assets: _____%
 High-Yield Debt: _____% Real Assets: _____% Cash or Cash Equivalents: _____% Other: _____%

b Provide the average duration of the Investment-Grade Debt and Interest Rate Hedging Assets:
 0-5 years 5-10 years 10-15 years 15 years or more

20 PBGC missed contribution reporting requirements. If this is a multiemployer plan or a single-employer plan that is not covered by PBGC, skip line 20.

a Is the amount of unpaid minimum required contributions for all years from Schedule SB (Form 5500) line 40 greater than zero? Yes No

b If line 20a is "Yes," has PBGC been notified as required by ERISA sections 4043(c)(5) and/or 303(k)(4)? Check the applicable box:
 Yes.
 No. Reporting was waived under 29 CFR 4043.25(c)(2) because contributions equal to or exceeding the unpaid minimum required contribution were made by the 30th day after the due date.
 No. The 30-day period referenced in 29 CFR 4043.25(c)(2) has not yet ended, and the sponsor intends to make a contribution equal to or exceeding the unpaid minimum required contribution by the 30th day after the due date.
 No. Other. Provide explanation: _____

Part VII IRS Compliance Questions

21a Does the plan satisfy the coverage and nondiscrimination tests of Code sections 410(b) and 401(a)(4) by combining this plan with any other plans under the permissive aggregation rules? Yes No

21b If this is a Code section 401(k) plan, check all boxes that apply to indicate how the plan is intended to satisfy the nondiscrimination requirements for employee deferrals and employer matching contributions (as applicable) under Code sections 401(k)(3) and 401(m)(2).
 Design-based safe harbor method
 "Prior year" ADP test
 "Current year" ADP test
 N/A

22 If the plan sponsor is an adopter of a pre-approved plan that received a favorable IRS Opinion Letter, enter the date of the Opinion Letter ___/___/____ (MM/DD/YYYY) and the Opinion Letter serial number _____.

**ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
GRAND FORKS, NORTH DAKOTA**

AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the ESOP Committee
Advanced Elements, Inc. Employee Stock Ownership Plan
Grand Forks, North Dakota

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Advanced Elements, Inc. Employee Stock Ownership Plan, an employee benefit plan subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), which comprise the statements of net assets available for benefits as of December 31, 2024 and 2023, and the related statements of changes in net assets available for benefits for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the net assets available for benefits of Advanced Elements, Inc. Employee Stock Ownership Plan as of December 31, 2024 and 2023, and the changes in its net assets available for benefits for the years then ended, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of Advanced Elements, Inc. Employee Stock Ownership Plan and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audits. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about Advanced Elements, Inc. Employee Stock Ownership Plan's ability to continue as a going concern for one year after the date the financial statements are available to be issued.

Management is also responsible for maintaining a current plan instrument, including all plan amendments, administering the plan, and determining that the plan's transactions that are presented and disclosed in the financial statements are in conformity with the plan's provisions, including maintaining sufficient records with respect to each of the participants, to determine the benefits due or which may become due to such participants.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Advanced Elements, Inc. Employee Stock Ownership Plan's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about Advanced Elements, Inc. Employee Stock Ownership Plan's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Other Matter – Supplemental Schedule Required by ERISA

Our audits were conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements as a whole. The supplemental Schedule of Assets (Held at End of Year) as of December 31, 2024, is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the financial statements but is supplementary information required by the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audits of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with GAAS.

In forming our opinion on the supplemental schedule, we evaluated whether the supplemental schedule, including their form and content, is presented in conformity with the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA.

In our opinion, the information in the accompanying schedule is fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the financial statements as a whole, and the form and content is presented in conformity with the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA.



BRADY, MARTZ & ASSOCIATES, P.C.
GRAND FORKS, NORTH DAKOTA

August 27, 2025

ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
STATEMENTS OF NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

	2024			2023		
	Allocated	Unallocated	Total	Allocated	Unallocated	Total
ASSETS						
Investments at Fair Value	<u>\$25,149,326</u>	<u>\$65,938,485</u>	<u>\$91,087,811</u>	<u>\$16,968,449</u>	<u>\$54,364,741</u>	<u>\$71,333,190</u>
LIABILITIES						
Loans Payable	<u>-</u>	<u>1,662,234</u>	<u>1,662,234</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,714,317</u>	<u>1,714,317</u>
NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS						
	<u><u>\$25,149,326</u></u>	<u><u>\$64,276,251</u></u>	<u><u>\$89,425,577</u></u>	<u><u>\$16,968,449</u></u>	<u><u>\$52,650,424</u></u>	<u><u>\$69,618,873</u></u>

See Notes to the Financial Statements

ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
STATEMENTS OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

	2024			2023		
	Allocated	Unallocated	Total	Allocated	Unallocated	Total
ADDITIONS TO NET ASSETS ATTRIBUTED TO:						
Investment Income						
Net Unrealized Appreciation in						
Fair Value of Investments	\$ 4,259,366	\$ 14,440,634	\$ 18,700,000	\$ 2,523,207	\$ 10,376,793	\$ 12,900,000
Interest	49,407	-	49,407	18,305	-	18,305
Total Investment Income	<u>4,308,773</u>	<u>14,440,634</u>	<u>18,749,407</u>	<u>2,541,512</u>	<u>10,376,793</u>	<u>12,918,305</u>
Employer Contributions	1,230,365	97,342	1,327,707	563,251	97,342	660,593
Allocation of 32,176 Shares in 2024 and 2023 of Advanced Elements, Inc Common Stock at Fair Value	<u>2,866,891</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,866,891</u>	<u>2,265,198</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,265,198</u>
Total Additions	<u>8,406,029</u>	<u>14,537,976</u>	<u>22,944,005</u>	<u>5,369,961</u>	<u>10,474,135</u>	<u>15,844,096</u>
DEDUCTIONS FROM NET ASSETS ATTRIBUTED TO:						
Interest Expense	-	45,258	45,258	-	46,598	46,598
Benefit Payments	225,152	-	225,152	66,410	-	66,410
Allocation of 32,176 Shares in 2024 and 2023 of Advanced Elements, Inc Common Stock at Fair Value	<u>-</u>	<u>2,866,891</u>	<u>2,866,891</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,265,198</u>	<u>2,265,198</u>
Total Deductions	<u>225,152</u>	<u>2,912,149</u>	<u>3,137,301</u>	<u>66,410</u>	<u>2,311,796</u>	<u>2,378,206</u>
Net Increase in Net Assets Available for Benefits	8,180,877	11,625,827	19,806,704	5,303,551	8,162,339	13,465,890
Net Assets Available for Benefits:						
Beginning of Year	<u>16,968,449</u>	<u>52,650,424</u>	<u>69,618,873</u>	<u>11,664,898</u>	<u>44,488,085</u>	<u>56,152,983</u>
End of Year	<u>\$ 25,149,326</u>	<u>\$ 64,276,251</u>	<u>\$ 89,425,577</u>	<u>\$ 16,968,449</u>	<u>\$ 52,650,424</u>	<u>\$ 69,618,873</u>

See Notes to the Financial Statements

ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

NOTE 1 PLAN DESCRIPTION

The following description of the Advanced Elements, Inc. Employee Stock Ownership Plan provides only general information. Participants should refer to the Plan document for a more complete description of the Plan's provisions.

Advanced Elements, Inc. ("the Company") established the Advanced Elements, Inc. Employee Stock Ownership Plan effective as of January 1, 2017. The Plan is designed to comply with Section 4975(e)(7) and the regulations thereunder of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (IRC), and is subject to the applicable provisions of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). The Plan is administered by the Board of Directors of the Company. Summit Fiduciary Group, LLC has been engaged to serve as the Plan's Directed Trustee.

The Plan purchased Company common stock using the proceeds of Company borrowings (see Note 6) and holds the common stock in a trust established under the Plan. As the Plan makes debt payments, an appropriate percentage of stock will be allocated to eligible employees' accounts in accordance with applicable regulations under the IRC.

The borrowing is collateralized by the unallocated shares of common stock and is guaranteed by the Company. The lender has no rights against shares of common stock once they are allocated to participants in accordance with the terms of the Plan Document. Accordingly, the financial statements of the Plan as of December 31, 2024 and 2023 present separately the assets and liabilities and changes therein pertaining to:

- a. the accounts of employees with vested rights in allocated common stock (allocated), and
- b. common stock not yet allocated to employees (unallocated).

Eligibility

Employees of the Company are generally eligible to participate in the Plan upon completing one year of service and attaining age 18. An employee will have completed a year of service if, at the end of twelve consecutive months of employment with the employer, the employee has been credited with at least 1,000 hours of service. Participants who do not have at least 1,000 hours of service during such Plan year or are not employed on the last working day of a Plan year are generally not eligible for an allocation of Company contributions for such year.

Contributions

Employer contributions are determined annually by the Board of Directors of the Company subject to limitations imposed under the Internal Revenue Code. The Company is obligated to make contributions in cash to the Plan which, when aggregated with the Plan's dividends and interest earnings, equal the amount necessary to enable the Plan to make its regularly scheduled payments of principal and interest due on its term loan. Employee contributions are not permitted.

ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - CONTINUED
DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

Payment of Benefits

The benefit of a participant entitled to a distribution of their ESOP account upon death or disability shall be made in the form of a lump sum distribution. The benefit of a participant entitled to a distribution of their ESOP account upon severance from employment with the Company for any reason other than death or disability, generally will be made in substantially equal annual installments over five years.

If a participant's vested benefit under the Plan exceeds \$5,000, they must consent to the distribution before it is made. If a participant's vested benefit under the Plan is \$1,000 or less, the vested benefit will be automatically distributed as soon as administratively feasible after the end of the plan year in which severance from employment occurs. If a participant's vested benefit is greater than \$1,000 but not greater than \$5,000, they will have the opportunity to elect that the distribution either be made in a lump sum payment or directly to an IRA. If no election is made, a lump sum distribution will be paid directly to an IRA. Under the provisions of the Plan, the Company is obligated to repurchase participant shares, which have been distributed under the terms of the Plan if the shares are not publicly traded or if the shares are subject to trading limitations.

Administrative Expenses

As provided in the Plan document, administrative expenses may be paid either by the Plan or by the Company. The Company has historically paid the administrative expenses of the Plan. The administrative expenses paid by the Company are not reflected in the financial statements.

Voting Rights

The Trustee of the Plan will generally vote all Company Stock held by it as a part of the Plan assets in accordance with its fiduciary responsibilities and the terms of the Plan. With respect to the approval or disapproval of any corporate merger or consolidation, recapitalization, reclassification, liquidation, dissolution, sale of substantially all assets of a trade or business, or such similar transactions, each participant is entitled to direct the Trustee with respect to the voting of all shares allocated to his or her account at such time. The Trustee shall vote any unallocated Company Stock in the Trust Fund, or any allocated Company Stock as to which no voting instructions have been received, as directed by the Board of Directors.

Vesting

Participants are vested based on the number of years of participation in the Plan. A participant is 100% vested after five years of credited service. A participant will be 100% vested after reaching normal retirement age, which is defined as attaining age 65 or, if earlier, upon attaining age 59 ½ and completing 20 years of service, or if the participant terminates employment due to death or as a result of becoming disabled.

ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - CONTINUED
DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

Participant Accounts

The Plan is a defined contribution plan under which a separate individual account is established for each participant. Each participant's account is credited as of the last day of the Plan year with an allocation of shares of the Company's common stock released by the Trustee from the unallocated account and forfeitures of terminated participants' non-vested accounts. Only those participants who are eligible employees of the Company as of the last day of the Plan year will receive an allocation. Allocations are based on a participant's eligible compensation, relative to total eligible compensation. Plan earnings are allocated to each participant's account based on the ratio of the participant's account balance.

Put Option

Under federal income tax regulations, employer stock that is held by the Plan and its participants and is not readily tradable on an established market, or is subject to trading limitations, includes a put option. The put option is a right to demand that the Company buy any shares of its stock distributed to participants for which there is no established market. The put price is representative of the current value of the stock. The Company can pay for the purchase with interest over a period of five years. The purpose of the put option is to ensure that the participant has the ultimate ability to obtain cash.

Diversification

Diversification is offered to participants close to retirement so that they may have the opportunity to move part of the value of their investment in Company common stock into investments which are more diversified. Participants who are at least age 55 with at least 10 years of participation in the Plan may elect to diversify a portion of their account, subject to the provisions of the Plan document.

Forfeitures

Plan forfeitures are allocated to each participant's account based upon the relation of the participant's eligible compensation to total eligible compensation for the Plan year. For the years ended December 31, 2024 and 2023, \$7,732 and \$13,436, respectively, of forfeitures were reallocated to the remaining participants in the plan and the balance of non-vested forfeitures as of December 31, 2024 and 2023 was \$0.

NOTE 2 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Accounting

The financial statements of the Plan are prepared on the accrual basis of accounting.

ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - CONTINUED
DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

Basis of Presentation

The accompanying financial statements are presented in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, (“GAAP”), as codified by the Financial Accounting Standards Board.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Allocations

The financial statements of the Plan present separately the assets and liabilities and changes therein pertaining to (a) the accounts of employees which rights in allocated stock (“allocated”) and (b) stock not yet allocated to employees (“unallocated”), including shares that are committed to be released. Shares are released from collateral and become allocated generally in the period in which debt service is actually paid.

Investment Valuation and Income Recognition

The shares of Company common stock are reported at estimated fair value, which is based on an annual independent third-party appraisal. See Note 4 for discussion of fair value measurements. Income is recorded as earned on an accrual basis. Purchases and sales of securities are recorded on a trade date basis. Net realized and unrealized appreciation (depreciation) includes the Plan’s gains and losses on investments bought and sold as well as held during the year.

Payment of Benefits

Benefits are recorded when paid.

Income Taxes

The Plan’s policy is to evaluate the likelihood that its uncertain tax positions will prevail upon examination based on the extent to which those positions have substantial support within the Internal Revenue Code and Regulations, Revenue Rulings, court decisions, and other evidence.

ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - CONTINUED
DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

NOTE 3 INVESTMENTS

The Plan's investments, at December 31, are presented in the following table:

	2024		2023	
	Allocated	Unallocated	Allocated	Unallocated
Advanced Elements Inc. Company Common Stock				
Number of Shares	<u>259,950</u>	<u>740,050</u>	<u>227,774</u>	<u>772,226</u>
Cost	<u>\$ 2,966,232</u>	<u>\$ 1,533,768</u>	<u>\$ 2,899,627</u>	<u>\$ 1,600,373</u>
Estimated Fair Value	<u>\$ 23,161,515</u>	<u>\$65,938,485</u>	<u>\$16,035,259</u>	<u>\$54,364,741</u>
Money Market	1,987,811	-	933,190	-
Total Investments	<u>\$ 25,149,326</u>	<u>\$65,938,485</u>	<u>\$16,968,449</u>	<u>\$54,364,741</u>

NOTE 4 FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) Accounting Standards Codification (ASC) 820, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures*, establishes a framework for measuring fair value. That framework provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value. The hierarchy gives the highest priority to unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (Level 1 measurements) and the lowest priority to unobservable inputs (Level 3 measurements). The three levels of the fair value hierarchy under FASB ASC 820 are described below:

- Level 1 Inputs to the valuation methodology are unadjusted quoted prices for identical assets or liabilities in active markets that the Plan has the ability to access.
- Level 2 Inputs to the valuation methodology include:
 - Quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets;
 - Quoted prices for identical or similar assets or liabilities in inactive markets;
 - Inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability;
 - Inputs that are derived principally from or corroborated by observable market data by correlation or other means.

If the asset or liability has a specified (contractual) term, the Level 2 input must be observable for substantially the full term of the asset or liability.

ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - CONTINUED
DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

Level 3 Inputs to the valuation methodology are unobservable and significant to the fair value measurement.

The asset's or liability's fair value measurement level within the fair value hierarchy is based on the lowest level of any input that is significant to the fair value measurement. Valuation techniques used need to maximize the use of observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs.

Following is a description of the valuation methodologies used for assets measured at fair value. There have been no changes in the methodologies used at December 31, 2024 and 2023.

Common stock: The fair value of Advanced Elements, Inc. common stock held by the Plan is valued at estimated fair value based upon an independent appraisal. This appraisal was based upon a combination of the market and earnings valuation techniques. The appraiser took into account historical and projected cash flow and net income, return on assets, return on equity, market comparables and estimated fair value of company assets and liabilities.

Money Market: Valued at cost plus interest earned.

The methods described above may produce a fair value calculation that may not be indicative of net realizable value or reflective of future fair values. Furthermore, while the Plan believes its valuation methods are appropriate and consistent with other market participants, the use of different methodologies or assumptions to determine the fair value of certain financial instruments could result in a different fair value measurement at the reporting date.

The following table sets forth by level, within the fair value hierarchy, the Plan's assets at fair value as of December 31, 2024:

	<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>Total</u>
Advanced Elements, Inc Company Common Stock	\$ -	\$ -	\$89,100,000	\$89,100,000
Money Market	<u>1,987,811</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,987,811</u>
Total Assets at Fair Value	<u>\$1,987,811</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$89,100,000</u>	<u>\$91,087,811</u>

ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC.
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - CONTINUED
DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

The following table sets forth by level, within the fair value hierarchy, the Plan's assets at fair value as of December 31, 2023:

	<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>Total</u>
Advanced Elements, Inc Company Common Stock	\$ -	\$ -	\$70,400,000	\$70,400,000
Money Market	<u>933,190</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>933,190</u>
Total Assets at Fair Value	<u>\$ 933,190</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$70,400,000</u>	<u>\$71,333,190</u>

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here were no Level 3 purchases, sales, or transfers in or out during the years ended December 31, 2024 and 2023.

NOTE 5 PLAN TERMINATION

Although it has not expressed any intent to do so, Advanced Elements, Inc. has the right under the Plan to terminate the Plan subject to the provisions of ERISA and the Plan document. Upon termination of the Plan, the Board of Directors directs the Trustee to pay all liabilities and expenses of the ESOP and to sell shares of financed common stock held as collateral to the extent it determines such sale to be necessary in order to repay the loan. Subsequently, the interest of each participant in the trust fund will be distributed to such participant or his or her beneficiary at the time prescribed by the Plan terms and the IRC.

NOTE 6 LOAN PAYABLE

On January 1, 2018, the Plan entered into a \$2,000,000 term loan agreement with the Company to purchase 965,283.0483 shares of company stock. Unallocated shares are collateral for the loan. Shares are released from collateral and allocated to participants as payments of principal and interest are made. The number of shares released in any year is the number of shares held as collateral, times the current year payment divided by the total of this year's payments, plus all future year's principal and interest payments. This resulted in 32,176 shares being released and allocated for the Plan years ended December 31, 2024 and 2023.

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DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

The agreement provides for the loan to be repaid over thirty years. The interest rate on the loan is fixed at 2.64%. The fair value of the note payable as of December 31, 2024 and 2023 equates to the carrying value, determined by using interest rates currently available for issuance of debt with similar terms, maturity dates, and nonperformance risk. Annual payments of principal and interest are due December 31st of each year until maturity in 2047. The Company is obligated to make contributions to the Plan that, when aggregated with the Plan's dividends, equal the amount necessary to enable the Plan to make its regularly scheduled payment of principal and interest due on the note payable. The scheduled principal amortization of the loan for the next five years and thereafter is as follows:

2025	\$	53,458
2026		54,869
2027		56,318
2028		57,805
2029		59,331
Thereafter		<u>1,380,453</u>
Total		<u>\$ 1,662,234</u>

NOTE 7 INCOME TAX STATUS

The Plan has received a determination letter from the IRS dated July 6, 2018, stating that the Plan is qualified under the IRC and, therefore, the related trust is exempt from taxation. Once qualified, the Plan is required to operate in conformity with the IRC to maintain its qualification. The Plan has been amended since receiving the determination letter. However, the Plan administrator believes that the Plan is currently designed, and being operated, in compliance with applicable requirements of the IRC. Therefore, they believe that the Plan was qualified, and the related trust was tax -exempt as of the financial statement date.

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires plan management to evaluate tax positions taken by the plan and recognize a tax liability (or asset) if the Plan has taken an uncertain position that more likely than not would not be sustained upon examination by taxing authorities. The Plan is subject to routine audits by taxing jurisdictions; however, there are currently no audits for any tax periods in progress.

NOTE 8 RELATED PARTY AND PARTY IN INTEREST TRANSACTIONS

The Plan invests in Company common stock and has indebtedness guaranteed by loans with the Company. These are related party and party in interest transactions. As described in Note 1, the Company pays all plan expenses. The Plan has a number of service providers. Such providers are parties in interest under ERISA.

ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - CONTINUED
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NOTE 9 RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

The Plan investments consist primarily of the Company's common stock, which is exposed to various risks such as interest rate, market and credit risks, as well as valuation assumptions based on earnings, cash flows and other such techniques. Due to the level of risk associated with the investment in the common stock and to uncertainties inherent in the estimates and assumptions, it is at least reasonably possible that changes in the value of the common stock will occur in the near term and that such changes could materially affect account balances and the amounts reported in the statement of net assets available for benefits.

NOTE 10 SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

No significant events have occurred subsequent to the Plan's year end. Subsequent events have been evaluated through August 27, 2025, which is the date these financial statements were available to be issued.

ADVANCED ELEMENTS, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
FORM 5500 ANNUAL REPORT – SCHEDULE H, LINE 4(I)
EIN NUMBER: 26-2006372, PLAN NUMBER: 003
SCHEDULE OF ASSETS (HELD AT END OF YEAR)
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024

Identity of Issue, Borrower, Lessor or Similar Party	Number of Shares/ Units		Description of Investment	Cost	Current Value
* Alerus Money Market Account	1,987,811	Allocated	Money Market	\$ 1,987,811	\$ 1,987,811
Common Stock:					
* Advanced Elements, Inc Common Stock	259,950	Allocated	Plan Sponsor Stock	2,966,232	23,161,515
Common Stock:					
* Advanced Elements, Inc Common Stock	740,050	Unallocated	Plan Sponsor Stock	<u>1,533,768</u>	<u>65,938,485</u>
			Total	<u>\$ 6,487,811</u>	<u>\$ 91,087,811</u>
* Party-in-interest as defined by ERISA					