

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Form 5500</b></p> <p style="font-size: small;">Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service</p> <hr/> <p style="font-size: small;">Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration</p> <hr/> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation</p>	<p><b>Annual Return/Report of Employee Benefit Plan</b></p> <p style="font-size: small;">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>▶ <b>Complete all entries in accordance with the instructions to the Form 5500.</b></p>	<p style="font-size: x-small;">OMB Nos. 1210-0110 1210-0089</p> <hr/> <p style="font-size: large; font-weight: bold; text-align: center;">2024</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">This Form is Open to Public Inspection</p>
---	---	---

**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><b>1a</b> Name of plan <u>H.C. WAINWRIGHT &amp; CO. EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN</u></p>	<p><b>1b</b> Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶ <u>003</u></p>
<p><b>2a</b> 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>HCWHC, INC.</u></p> <p><u>430 PARK AVENUE, 3RD FLOOR</u> <u>NEW YORK, NY 10022</u></p>	<p><b>1c</b> Effective date of plan <u>01/01/2019</u></p> <p><b>2b</b> Employer Identification Number (EIN) <u>37-1868324</u></p> <p><b>2c</b> Plan Sponsor's telephone number <u>212-356-0500</u></p> <p><b>2d</b> Business code (see instructions) <u>523120</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.

<b>SIGN HERE</b>	Filed with authorized/valid electronic signature.	12/18/2025	SCOTT GRAY
	Signature of plan administrator	Date	Enter name of individual signing as plan administrator
<b>SIGN HERE</b>			
	Signature of employer/plan sponsor	Date	Enter name of individual signing as employer or plan sponsor
<b>SIGN HERE</b>			
	Signature of DFE	Date	Enter name of individual signing as DFE

<b>3a</b> Plan administrator's name and address <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Plan Sponsor	<b>3b</b> Administrator's EIN	
	<b>3c</b> Administrator's telephone number	
<b>4</b> 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: <b>a</b> Sponsor's name <b>c</b> Plan Name	<b>4b</b> EIN	
	<b>4d</b> PN	
<b>5</b> Total number of participants at the beginning of the plan year	<b>5</b>	144
<b>6</b> Number of participants as of the end of the plan year unless otherwise stated (welfare plans complete only lines <b>6a(1)</b> , <b>6a(2)</b> , <b>6b</b> , <b>6c</b> , and <b>6d</b> ). <b>a(1)</b> Total number of active participants at the beginning of the plan year ..... <b>a(2)</b> Total number of active participants at the end of the plan year ..... <b>b</b> Retired or separated participants receiving benefits..... <b>c</b> Other retired or separated participants entitled to future benefits ..... <b>d</b> Subtotal. Add lines <b>6a(2)</b> , <b>6b</b> , and <b>6c</b> ..... <b>e</b> Deceased participants whose beneficiaries are receiving or are entitled to receive benefits. .... <b>f</b> Total. Add lines <b>6d</b> and <b>6e</b> ..... <b>g(1)</b> Number of participants with account balances as of the beginning of the plan year (only defined contribution plans complete this item) ..... <b>g(2)</b> Number of participants with account balances as of the end of the plan year (only defined contribution plans complete this item) ..... <b>h</b> Number of participants who terminated employment during the plan year with accrued benefits that were less than 100% vested.....	<b>6a(1)</b>	97
	<b>6a(2)</b>	91
	<b>6b</b>	0
	<b>6c</b>	33
	<b>6d</b>	124
	<b>6e</b>	0
	<b>6f</b>	124
	<b>6g(1)</b>	131
	<b>6g(2)</b>	124
<b>h</b>	<b>6h</b>	6
<b>7</b> Enter the total number of employers obligated to contribute to the plan (only multiemployer plans complete this item) .....	<b>7</b>	

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

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

<b>9a</b> Plan funding arrangement (check all that apply)	<b>9b</b> 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 \_\_\_\_\_
- (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 0
- (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 \_\_\_\_\_

---

<b>SCHEDULE H</b> <b>(Form 5500)</b>  <small>Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service</small>  <small>Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration</small>  <small>Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation</small>	<b>Financial Information</b>  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).  <b>▶ File as an attachment to Form 5500.</b>	<small>OMB No. 1210-0110</small>  <b>2024</b>  <b>This Form is Open to Public Inspection</b>
--	--	--

For calendar plan year 2024 or fiscal plan year beginning <b>01/01/2024</b> and ending <b>12/31/2024</b>	
<b>A</b> Name of plan <b>H.C. WAINWRIGHT &amp; CO. EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN</b>	<b>B</b> Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶ <b>003</b>
<b>C</b> Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 <b>HCWHC, INC.</b>	<b>D</b> Employer Identification Number (EIN) <b>37-1868324</b>

<b>Part I</b>	<b>Asset and Liability Statement</b>
---------------	--------------------------------------

**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.

		(a) Beginning of Year	(b) End of Year
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>a</b> Total noninterest-bearing cash .....	<b>1a</b>		
<b>b</b> Receivables (less allowance for doubtful accounts):			
<b>(1)</b> Employer contributions .....	<b>1b(1)</b>	10584767	11635047
<b>(2)</b> Participant contributions .....	<b>1b(2)</b>		
<b>(3)</b> Other .....	<b>1b(3)</b>		
<b>c</b> General investments:			
<b>(1)</b> Interest-bearing cash (include money market accounts & certificates of deposit) .....	<b>1c(1)</b>		
<b>(2)</b> U.S. Government securities .....	<b>1c(2)</b>		
<b>(3)</b> Corporate debt instruments (other than employer securities):			
<b>(A)</b> Preferred .....	<b>1c(3)(A)</b>		
<b>(B)</b> All other .....	<b>1c(3)(B)</b>		
<b>(4)</b> Corporate stocks (other than employer securities):			
<b>(A)</b> Preferred .....	<b>1c(4)(A)</b>		
<b>(B)</b> Common .....	<b>1c(4)(B)</b>		
<b>(5)</b> Partnership/joint venture interests .....	<b>1c(5)</b>		
<b>(6)</b> Real estate (other than employer real property) .....	<b>1c(6)</b>		
<b>(7)</b> Loans (other than to participants) .....	<b>1c(7)</b>		
<b>(8)</b> Participant loans .....	<b>1c(8)</b>		
<b>(9)</b> Value of interest in common/collective trusts .....	<b>1c(9)</b>		
<b>(10)</b> Value of interest in pooled separate accounts .....	<b>1c(10)</b>		
<b>(11)</b> Value of interest in master trust investment accounts .....	<b>1c(11)</b>		
<b>(12)</b> Value of interest in 103-12 investment entities .....	<b>1c(12)</b>		
<b>(13)</b> Value of interest in registered investment companies (e.g., mutual funds) .....	<b>1c(13)</b>		
<b>(14)</b> Value of funds held in insurance company general account (unallocated contracts) .....	<b>1c(14)</b>		
<b>(15)</b> Other .....	<b>1c(15)</b>		

<b>1d</b> Employer-related investments:		(a) Beginning of Year	(b) End of Year
(1) Employer securities.....	<b>1d(1)</b>	231151766	216402932
(2) Employer real property.....	<b>1d(2)</b>		
<b>e</b> Buildings and other property used in plan operation.....	<b>1e</b>		
<b>f</b> Total assets (add all amounts in lines 1a through 1e).....	<b>1f</b>	241736533	228037979
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<b>g</b> Benefit claims payable.....	<b>1g</b>		
<b>h</b> Operating payables.....	<b>1h</b>		
<b>i</b> Acquisition indebtedness.....	<b>1i</b>		
<b>j</b> Other liabilities.....	<b>1j</b>	411275185	389642085
<b>k</b> Total liabilities (add all amounts in lines 1g through 1j).....	<b>1k</b>	411275185	389642085
<b>Net Assets</b>			
<b>l</b> Net assets (subtract line 1k from line 1f).....	<b>1l</b>	-169538652	-161604106

**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.

<b>Income</b>		(a) Amount	(b) Total
<b>a Contributions:</b>			
(1) Received or receivable in cash from: <b>(A)</b> Employers.....	<b>2a(1)(A)</b>	11635047	
<b>(B)</b> Participants.....	<b>2a(1)(B)</b>		
<b>(C)</b> Others (including rollovers).....	<b>2a(1)(C)</b>		
(2) Noncash contributions.....	<b>2a(2)</b>		
(3) Total contributions. Add lines <b>2a(1)(A)</b> , <b>(B)</b> , <b>(C)</b> , and line <b>2a(2)</b> .....	<b>2a(3)</b>		11635047
<b>b Earnings on investments:</b>			
<b>(1) Interest:</b>			
<b>(A)</b> Interest-bearing cash (including money market accounts and certificates of deposit).....	<b>2b(1)(A)</b>		
<b>(B)</b> U.S. Government securities.....	<b>2b(1)(B)</b>		
<b>(C)</b> Corporate debt instruments.....	<b>2b(1)(C)</b>		
<b>(D)</b> Loans (other than to participants).....	<b>2b(1)(D)</b>		
<b>(E)</b> Participant loans.....	<b>2b(1)(E)</b>		
<b>(F)</b> Other.....	<b>2b(1)(F)</b>		
<b>(G)</b> Total interest. Add lines <b>2b(1)(A)</b> through <b>(F)</b> .....	<b>2b(1)(G)</b>		0
<b>(2) Dividends:</b>			
<b>(A)</b> Preferred stock.....	<b>2b(2)(A)</b>		
<b>(B)</b> Common stock.....	<b>2b(2)(B)</b>	20250000	
<b>(C)</b> Registered investment company shares (e.g. mutual funds).....	<b>2b(2)(C)</b>		
<b>(D)</b> Total dividends. Add lines <b>2b(2)(A)</b> , <b>(B)</b> , and <b>(C)</b> .....	<b>2b(2)(D)</b>		20250000
<b>(3)</b> Rents.....	<b>2b(3)</b>		
<b>(4) Net gain (loss) on sale of assets:</b>			
<b>(A)</b> Aggregate proceeds.....	<b>2b(4)(A)</b>		
<b>(B)</b> Aggregate carrying amount (see instructions).....	<b>2b(4)(B)</b>		
<b>(C)</b> Subtract line <b>2b(4)(B)</b> from line <b>2b(4)(A)</b> and enter result.....	<b>2b(4)(C)</b>		
<b>(5) Unrealized appreciation (depreciation) of assets:</b>			
<b>(A)</b> Real estate.....	<b>2b(5)(A)</b>		
<b>(B)</b> Other.....	<b>2b(5)(B)</b>	-14748835	
<b>(C)</b> Total unrealized appreciation of assets. Add lines <b>2b(5)(A)</b> and <b>(B)</b> .....	<b>2b(5)(C)</b>		

		(a) Amount	(b) Total
(6) Net investment gain (loss) from common/collective trusts .....	<b>2b(6)</b>		
(7) Net investment gain (loss) from pooled separate accounts .....	<b>2b(7)</b>		
(8) Net investment gain (loss) from master trust investment accounts .....	<b>2b(8)</b>		
(9) Net investment gain (loss) from 103-12 investment entities .....	<b>2b(9)</b>		
(10) Net investment gain (loss) from registered investment companies (e.g., mutual funds) .....	<b>2b(10)</b>		
<b>c</b> Other income .....	<b>2c</b>		
<b>d</b> Total income. Add all <b>income</b> amounts in column (b) and enter total .....	<b>2d</b>		17136212

**Expenses**

<b>e</b> Benefit payment and payments to provide benefits:			
(1) Directly to participants or beneficiaries, including direct rollovers .....	<b>2e(1)</b>		
(2) To insurance carriers for the provision of benefits .....	<b>2e(2)</b>		
(3) Other .....	<b>2e(3)</b>		
(4) Total benefit payments. Add lines <b>2e(1)</b> through <b>(3)</b> .....	<b>2e(4)</b>		0
<b>f</b> Corrective distributions (see instructions) .....	<b>2f</b>		
<b>g</b> Certain deemed distributions of participant loans (see instructions) .....	<b>2g</b>		
<b>h</b> Interest expense .....	<b>2h</b>		9201666
<b>i</b> Administrative expenses:			
(1) Salaries and allowances .....	<b>2i(1)</b>		
(2) Contract administrator fees .....	<b>2i(2)</b>		
(3) Recordkeeping fees .....	<b>2i(3)</b>		
(4) IQPA audit fees .....	<b>2i(4)</b>		
(5) Investment advisory and investment management fees .....	<b>2i(5)</b>		
(6) Bank or trust company trustee/custodial fees .....	<b>2i(6)</b>		
(7) Actuarial fees .....	<b>2i(7)</b>		
(8) Legal fees .....	<b>2i(8)</b>		
(9) Valuation/appraisal fees .....	<b>2i(9)</b>		
(10) Other trustee fees and expenses .....	<b>2i(10)</b>		
(11) Other expenses .....	<b>2i(11)</b>		
(12) Total administrative expenses. Add lines <b>2i(1)</b> through <b>(11)</b> .....	<b>2i(12)</b>		0
<b>j</b> Total expenses. Add all <b>expense</b> amounts in column (b) and enter total .....	<b>2j</b>		9201666

**Net Income and Reconciliation**

<b>k</b> Net income (loss). Subtract line <b>2j</b> from line <b>2d</b> .....	<b>2k</b>		7934546
<b>l</b> Transfers of assets:			
(1) To this plan .....	<b>2l(1)</b>		
(2) From this plan .....	<b>2l(2)</b>		

**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: MELISSA G. CRITCHER, CPA, PC

(2) EIN: 27-1654932

**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
<b>a</b> 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>b</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	
<b>c</b> 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	
<b>d</b> 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	
<b>e</b> Was this plan covered by a fidelity bond?	X		1000000
<b>f</b> Did the plan have a loss, whether or not reimbursed by the plan's fidelity bond, that was caused by fraud or dishonesty?		X	
<b>g</b> 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	
<b>h</b> 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	
<b>i</b> Did the plan have assets held for investment? (Attach schedule(s) of assets if "Yes" is checked, and see instructions for format requirements.)	X		
<b>j</b> 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	
<b>k</b> Were all the plan assets either distributed to participants or beneficiaries, transferred to another plan, or brought under the control of the PBGC?		X	
<b>l</b> Has the plan failed to provide any benefit when due under the plan?		X	
<b>m</b> If this is an individual account plan, was there a blackout period? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-3.)		X	
<b>n</b> 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.)

<b>5b(1)</b> Name of plan(s)	<b>5b(2)</b> EIN(s)	<b>5b(3)</b> 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 \_\_\_\_\_.

<b>SCHEDULE R</b> <b>(Form 5500)</b>  <small>Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service</small>  <small>Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration</small>  <small>Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation</small>	<b>Retirement Plan Information</b>  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).  <b>▶ File as an attachment to Form 5500.</b>	<small>OMB No. 1210-0110</small>  <b>2024</b>  <b>This Form is Open to Public Inspection.</b>
--	---	---

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

<b>A</b> Name of plan <u>H.C. WAINWRIGHT &amp; CO. EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN</u>	<b>B</b> Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶	<u>003</u>
<b>C</b> Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 <u>HCWHC, INC.</u>	<b>D</b> Employer Identification Number (EIN) <u>37-1868324</u>	

<b>Part I</b>	<b>Distributions</b>
---------------	----------------------

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

<b>1</b> 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): \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

<b>Part II</b>	<b>Funding Information</b> (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.**

<b>6 a</b> Enter the minimum required contribution for this plan year (include any prior year accumulated funding deficiency not waived) .....	6a	
<b>b</b> Enter the amount contributed by the employer to the plan for this plan year .....	6b	
<b>c</b> 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

<b>Part III</b>	<b>Amendments</b>
-----------------	-------------------

**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

<b>Part IV</b>	<b>ESOPs</b> (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:

<b>a</b> 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).....	<b>14a</b>	
<b>b</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).....	<b>14b</b>	
<b>c</b> 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).....	<b>14c</b>	

**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:

<b>a</b> The corresponding number for the plan year immediately preceding the current plan year .....	<b>15a</b>	
<b>b</b> The corresponding number for the second preceding plan year .....	<b>15b</b>	

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

<b>a</b> Enter the number of employers who withdrew during the preceding plan year .....	<b>16a</b>	
<b>b</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.....	<b>16b</b>	

**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 \_\_\_\_\_.

**H. C. WAINWRIGHT & CO. EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN**

Financial Statements and Supplemental Schedule  
as of December 31, 2024 and 2023 and for the year  
ended December 31, 2024

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Pages</u>
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT	1-3
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS:	
Statements of Net Assets (Deficit) Available for Benefits December 31, 2024 and 2023	4
Statement of Changes in Net Assets (Deficit) Available for Benefits for the Year Ended December 31, 2024	5
Notes to Financial Statements for the Years Ended December 31, 2024 and 2023	6-14
SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULE:	
Schedule H, Line 4i - Schedule of Assets (Held at Year End) at December 31, 2024	15
NOTE:	
The accompanying financial statements have been prepared for the purpose of filing DOL Form 5500. Supplemental schedules required by Section 2520 of the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, other than the one listed above, are omitted because of the absence of the conditions under which they are required.	

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Participants and Plan Administrator of the H. C.  
Wainwright & Co. Employee Stock Ownership Plan

***Opinion***

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of H. C. Wainwright & Co. 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 (deficit) available for benefits as of December 31, 2024 and 2023, and the related statement of changes in net assets (deficit) available for benefits for the year ended December 31, 2024, and the related notes to the financial statements.

In my opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the net assets (deficit) available for benefits of H. C. Wainwright & Co. Employee Stock Ownership Plan as of December 31, 2024 and 2023 and the changes in its net assets (deficit) available for benefits for the year ended December 31, 2024, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

***Basis for Opinion***

I conducted my audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS). My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of my report. I am required to be independent of H. C. Wainwright & Co. Employee Stock Ownership Plan and to meet my other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to my audits. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my 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 H. C. Wainwright & Co. Employee Stock Ownership Plan's ability to continue as a going concern for the twelve months following the date the financial statements were available to be used.

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***

My 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 my 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, I:

- 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 H. C. Wainwright & Co. 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 my judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about H. C. Wainwright & Co. Employee Stock Ownership Plan's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

I am 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 I identified during the audit.

### ***Supplemental Schedule Required by ERISA***

My audits were conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements as a whole. The supplemental schedule of assets held at 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 my opinion on the supplemental schedule, I evaluated whether the supplemental schedule, including the form and content, is presented in conformity with the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA.

In my 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.

---



Melissa G. Critcher, CPA, PC

Waxhaw, NC

December 17, 2025

## H. C. WAINWRIGHT & CO. EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN

### STATEMENTS OF NET ASSETS (DEFICIT) AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

	<u>Allocated</u>	<u>2024 Unallocated</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Allocated</u>	<u>2023 Unallocated</u>	<u>Total</u>
ASSETS:						
Investment in H. C. Wainwright & Co. common stock at fair value	\$ 85,786,069	\$ 130,616,863	\$ 216,402,932	\$ 83,206,315	\$ 147,945,451	\$ 231,151,766
Employer contribution receivable	-	11,635,047	11,635,047	-	10,584,767	10,584,767
Total Assets	<u>85,786,069</u>	<u>142,251,910</u>	<u>228,037,979</u>	<u>83,206,315</u>	<u>158,530,218</u>	<u>241,736,533</u>
LIABILITIES:						
Accrued interest payable	-	5,459,602	5,459,602	-	5,074,724	5,074,724
Accrued principal payable	-	6,175,445	6,175,445	-	5,510,043	5,510,043
Note payable	-	378,007,038	378,007,038	-	400,690,418	400,690,418
Total Liabilities	<u>-</u>	<u>389,642,085</u>	<u>389,642,085</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>411,275,185</u>	<u>411,275,185</u>
NET ASSETS (DEFICIT) AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS	<u>\$ 85,786,069</u>	<u>\$ (247,390,175)</u>	<u>\$ (161,604,106)</u>	<u>\$ 83,206,315</u>	<u>\$ (252,744,967)</u>	<u>\$ (169,538,652)</u>

See notes to financial statements.

## H. C. WAINWRIGHT & CO. EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN

### STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS (DEFICIT) AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024

	2024		Total
	Allocated	Unallocated	
ADDITIONS:			
Investment income:			
Net depreciation in fair value of investments	\$ (5,309,049)	\$ (9,439,786)	\$ (14,748,835)
Dividends	-	20,250,000	20,250,000
	<u>(5,309,049)</u>	<u>10,810,214</u>	<u>5,501,165</u>
Employer contributions	-	11,635,047	11,635,047
Allocation of 3,605.5351 shares of common stock of H. C. Wainwright & Co. at fair value	<u>7,888,803</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,888,803</u>
Total additions, net	<u>2,579,754</u>	<u>22,445,261</u>	<u>25,025,015</u>
DEDUCTIONS:			
Interest expense	-	9,201,666	9,201,666
Allocation of 3,605.5351 shares of common stock of H. C. Wainwright & Co. at fair value	<u>-</u>	<u>7,888,803</u>	<u>7,888,803</u>
Total deductions	<u>-</u>	<u>17,090,469</u>	<u>17,090,469</u>
INCREASE IN NET ASSETS (DEFICIT) AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS	2,579,754	5,354,792	7,934,546
NET ASSETS (DEFICIT) AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>83,206,315</u>	<u>(252,744,967)</u>	<u>(169,538,652)</u>
NET ASSETS (DEFICIT) AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS, END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 85,786,069</u>	<u>\$ (247,390,175)</u>	<u>\$ (161,604,106)</u>

## **H. C. WAINWRIGHT & CO. EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN**

### NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

---

#### 1. PLAN DESCRIPTION

The following description of the H. C. Wainwright & Co. Employee Stock Ownership Plan (the "Plan") is provided for general information purposes only. Participants should refer to the Plan document for more complete information.

General – H. C. Wainwright & Co. (the "Company") established the Plan effective January 1, 2019. The Plan was designed to operate, as a leveraged employee stock ownership plan ("ESOP"). The Plan was 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 ESOP Trust and Plan Committee.

On December 29, 2022, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 was signed into law, which includes the package of retirement provisions referred to as "SECURE 2.0". These provisions continue the themes and reforms that began with the 2019 SECURE Act, focusing on getting more participants into the retirement system and finding ways for them to accumulate more assets. These changes have various effective dates starting in 2023 and forward. Since the provisions include both required and optional elements, the Plan administrator will determine the optional provisions to elect.

Effective January 1, 2024, the Plan was amended to incorporate provisions related to SECURE 2.0 to increase the amount of the mandatory distribution and increase the required minimum distribution. Furthermore, if the value of a participant's vested account is zero, then such participant shall be deemed to have received a distribution of the participant's entire vested account as of the date of the participant's termination of employment.

On December 27, 2019, the ESOP purchased 30,000 Class B non-voting convertible preferred shares, or approximately 30% of the Company's issued and outstanding equity on an as converted basis, from the Company's shareholder for \$51.5 million (the "ESOP Transaction"), (see Note 5).

Prior to the Second Stage ESOP Transaction, as defined below, the Company redeemed the 30,000 shares of non-voting Class B convertible preferred stock in exchange for 30,000 shares of Company voting common stock.

The ESOP became 100% owner of the voting common stock on December 14, 2020, through a second stage transaction (the "Second Stage ESOP Transaction"). The ESOP acquired 40.0% of the issued and outstanding shares of voting common stock, consisting of 40,000 shares, from the Company using a combination of cash and a promissory note totaling \$163,746,387 (the "ESOP Purchase Price") and the Company converted the remaining 30.0% equity interest in the Company, consisting of 30,000 shares of voting common stock, for 200 shares of non-voting common stock and 37,692.3 warrants to acquire shares of voting common stock (the "Exchange"). The ESOP Purchase Price consisted of two components: (i) \$145,000,000 (the "Base Purchase Price"); and (ii) \$18,746,347 (the "Net Capital Adjustment").

Prior to the Third Stage ESOP Transaction, as defined below, the Company exercised 30,000 Class A warrants and 7,692.3 Class B warrants in a cashless exercise that resulted in receiving 28,905.8 shares of voting common stock of the Company.

The ESOP became the sole owner of all issued and outstanding stock on May 27, 2021, through a third stage transaction (the “Third Stage ESOP Transaction” collectively, with the ESOP Transaction and the Second Stage Transaction, the “Transactions”). The ESOP acquired 28,905.8 shares of voting common stock of the Company for a purchase price of \$310,000,000 (the “Purchase Price”), or \$10,724.4913 per share.

The terms of the ESOP Note (see Note 5) require the Company to fund the ESOP sufficiently to pay the Plan’s obligation under the ESOP Note. The Company may make additional payments to the ESOP at the discretion of management. The ESOP is required under the terms of the ESOP Note to pay principal and interest to the Company’s President.

The borrowing is to be repaid over a period of 50 years by fully deductible Company contributions to the trust fund. Because of the Plan’s outstanding obligation for the debt related to the purchase of Company stock, the Company is required to contribute sufficient amounts to service the current year’s principal and interest payments on the obligation. As the Plan makes each payment of principal, as appropriate percentage of stock is allocated to eligible employees’ accounts in accordance with applicable regulations under the Code.

The borrowings were collateralized by the unallocated shares of stock and guaranteed by the Company. The Company has no rights against the shares of common stock once they are allocated to the participants in accordance with the terms of the ESOP. Accordingly, the financial statements of the Plan as of December 31, 2024 and 2023 and for the year ended December 31, 2024, 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 eligible to participate in the Plan after completing one year of service providing they worked at least 1,000 hours during the Plan year. Employees 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 not eligible for an allocation of Company contributions for such year.

Contributions - The Company is obligated to make contributions in cash to the Plan which, when aggregated with the Plan’s dividend and interest earnings, as applicable, equal the amount necessary to enable the Plan to make its regularly scheduled payments of principal and interest due on its term loan. Participant contributions are not permitted. For the year ended December 31, 2024, the Company will contribute \$11,635,047.

Payment of Benefits – Distributions on account of death, disability, or retirement are paid out in approximately five equal payments (payment amounts will fluctuate as the valuation of the stock changes). If a terminated participant’s balance is less than \$5,000, distribution is made in a lump-sum payment as soon as administratively feasible after the close of the Plan year in which the

participant's employment terminates. If the terminated participant's balance exceeds \$5,000 and the participant is not reemployed before the end of the fifth Plan year following the Plan year in which the participant's employment terminates, distribution will commence in the sixth year following the Plan year in which the participant's employment terminates. Distributions of such accounts will be made in substantially equal annual installments over a period of five years. Distributions are made in cash or, if a participant elects, in the form of Company common stock plus cash for any fractional share of common stock. The only distributions that will be paid before the internal ESOP loan is fully repaid are those related to retirement, death or disability. 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.

Voting Rights – All Company stock in the Trust shall be voted by the Trustee. Each participant or beneficiary in the Plan is entitled to direct the Trustee as to the manner in which voting rights on shares of Company Stock which are allocated to the Company stock account of such participant or beneficiary are to be exercised with respect to the approval or disapproval of any corporate merger or consolidation, recapitalization, reclassification, liquidation, dissolution, sale of substantially all of the Company's assets, or such similar transaction as the secretary may prescribe in the Treasury Regulations.

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 each Plan year with an allocation 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 earned units relative to total units of all such participants for that year. Fractional shares of disbursed accounts are allocated to each participant's account based upon the relation of the participant's available cash to total available cash of the Plan at the stock value of the previous Plan year end. Plan earnings and losses are allocated to each participant's account based on the ratio of the participant's beginning of the year account balance to all participants' beginning of year account balances. The benefit to which a participant is entitled is the benefit that can be provided from the participant's vested account balance.

Vesting - If a participant's employment with the Company ends for any reason other than retirement, permanent disability or death, the participant would vest in the balances in their account based on total years of service with the Company. Employees vest 20% per year after completing two years of service until becoming 100% vested after six years of credited service in accordance with the Plan document.

Put Option - Under federal income tax regulations, the 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 market. The put price is representative of the current appraised 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 ability to ultimately 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 that are more diversified. In accordance with Code section 401(a)(9), participants who have 10 years of Plan participation and reach age 55 are eligible to diversify a portion of the employer securities held in their ESOP accounts. Diversification is offered to each eligible participant over a 6-year period. In each of the first 5 years, a participant may diversify up to 25% of the number of post-1986 shares allocated to his or her account, less any shares previously diversified. In the sixth year, the percentage changes to 50%. Participants who elect to diversify receive a cash distribution. The election to diversify is made subsequent to year-end based upon the shares of employer stock in the participant's account at year-end.

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. Forfeitures allocated to participant accounts for the years ended December 31, 2024 and 2023 totaled \$0. Forfeited non-vested accounts to be allocated to participant accounts in future years as of December 31, 2024 and 2023, were \$0.

## 2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

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

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 certain assets and liabilities and changes therein, and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities. Accordingly, the actual amounts could differ from those estimates. Any adjustments applied to estimated amounts are recognized in the year in which such adjustments are determined.

Allocations – The financial statements of the Plan present separately the assets and liabilities and changes therein, pertaining to (a) accounts of employees with 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 the Company’s common stock are reported at fair value. See Note 4 for a discussion of the fair value measurements. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. Plan management determines the Plan’s valuation policies utilizing information provided by the trustee and an independent annual appraisal.

Purchases and sales of securities are recorded on a trade-date basis. Interest income is recorded on the accrual basis. Dividends are recorded on the ex-dividend date. Realized gains and losses from security transactions are reported on the average cost method. Net appreciation (depreciation) includes the Plan’s gains and losses on the investments bought and sold as well as held during the year.

Operating Expenses - As provided in the Plan agreement, administrative expenses may be paid either by the Plan or by the Company. All expenses of maintaining the Plan are paid by the



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

The asset 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.

*Company Common Stock:* The fair value of the investment in common stock of the Company held by the Plan is valued at an estimated fair value as determined by an independent annual appraisal. Due to significant unobservable inputs included in the valuation model for the Company common stock, the resulting fair value of this investment is classified as a level 3.

The following tables set forth by level, within the fair value hierarchy, the Plan's investment assets at fair value as of December 31, 2024 and 2023:

	<u>Assets at Fair Value as of December 31, 2024</u>			
	<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>Total</u>
Company Common Stock	<u>          -</u>	<u>          -</u>	<u>\$216,402,932</u>	<u>\$216,402,932</u>

	<u>Assets at Fair Value as of December 31, 2023</u>			
	<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>Total</u>
Company Common Stock	<u>          -</u>	<u>          -</u>	<u>\$231,151,766</u>	<u>\$231,151,766</u>

The Plan recognizes transfers between the levels as of the beginning of the reporting period. There were no transfers between the levels for the years ended December 31, 2024 and 2023.

There were no purchases/sales or transfers of level three assets for the years ended December 31, 2024 and 2023. There was a net depreciation in fair value for the Company stock for the year ended December 31, 2024 equal to \$14,748,835.

Gains and losses (realized and unrealized) included in changes in net assets for the period above are reported in net appreciation (depreciation) in fair value of investments in the Statement of Changes in Net Assets (Deficit) Available for Benefits.

The fair value of the investment in common stock of the Company held by the Plan is valued at an estimated fair value as determined by an independent annual appraisal. This appraisal was based upon a combination of the market and income valuation techniques consistent with prior years as illustrated in the following table for the year ended December 31, 2024.

Instrument	Fair Value	Principal Valuation Technique	Unobservable Inputs
H. C. Wainwright & Co. common stock	\$216,402,932	Income	Historical and projected cash flows Net income Return on assets Return on equity Market comparable Estimated fair value of Company assets and liabilities

The valuation process involves the selection of an appraiser under contract for a term of three years with the right to cancel such contract at any time. Plan management accumulates the data for the appraiser from historical and projected financial information of the Company. The appraiser prepares a report of estimated per share value that a participant will receive upon distribution.

The preceding methods described may produce a fair value calculation that may not be indicative of net realizable value or reflective of future values. Furthermore, although 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.

#### 5. NOTES PAYABLE

On December 31, 2021, the Company and H. C. Wainwright & Co. Employee Stock Ownership Trust entered into a refinanced note and pledge arrangement in the amount of \$484,144,756. The ESOP acquired 98,905 shares of common stock at a cost of \$525,246,347 through numerous stages. The shares were acquired in exchange for a note payable to the Company (the “ESOP Note”). The ESOP note requires annual payments of principal and interest due on December 31 each year through 2071 and are secured by the shares of unallocated Company common stock held by the ESOP plus any dividends accrued. The annual payment varied for the years ended December 31, 2024 and 2023 and starting in 2025 and going forward the annual payment equals \$12,062,017.

The agreement provides for the loan to be repaid over the next 48 remaining years with a due date of December 31, 2071. The fair value of the note payable as of December 31, 2024 and 2023 was \$378,007,038 and \$400,690,418, respectively. The interest rate is fixed at 1.9% per annum.

Unallocated shares are used as 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 ratio of the current year payments divided by the total of this year’s payments, plus all future years’ principal and interest payments. This resulted in 3,605.5351 shares being released and allocated for the Plan year ended December 31, 2024.

#### 6. RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS AND PARTY-IN-INTEREST TRANSACTIONS

The Plan invests in Company common stock and has indebtedness guaranteed by the Company. These are related party and exempt party-in-interest transactions. As described in Note 2, the

Company pays all Plan administrative expense. The Plan has a number of service providers. Such providers are parties-in-interest under ERISA.

#### 7. PLAN TERMINATION

The Company reserves the right to terminate the Plan at any time, subject to Plan provisions. Upon termination of the Plan, the Employee Benefits Administration Committee 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.

#### 8. FEDERAL INCOME TAX STATUS

The Company and the Plan administrator believe that the Plan is currently designed and operated in compliance with the applicable requirements of the Internal Revenue Code and the Plan and the related trust continue to be tax-exempt. Therefore, no provision for income taxes has been included in the Plan's financial statements.

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require 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 the applicable authorities. The Plan is subject to routine audits by taxing jurisdictions; however, there are currently no audits for any tax periods in progress.

#### 9. ADMINISTRATION OF PLAN ASSETS

The Plan's assets, which consist principally of Company common stock, are held by the Trustee of the Plan. Company contributions are held and managed by the Trustee, which invests cash received, interest and dividend income and makes distributions to participants. The Trustee also administers the payment of interest and principal on the loan, which is reimbursed to the Trustee through contributions as determined by the Company.

Certain administrative functions are performed by officers or employees of the Company. No such officer or employee received compensation from the Plan. Administrative expenses for the Trustee's fees are paid directly by the Company.

#### 10. 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 assumption based on earnings, cash flows, and other such techniques. Market risks include global events which could impact the value of investment securities, such as a pandemic or international conflict. Due to the level of risk associated with the investment in the common stock and to uncertainties inherent in estimates and assumptions, it is at least reasonably possible that changes in the value of common stock will occur in the near term and that such changes could materially affect the amounts reported in the Statements of Net Assets (Deficit) Available for Benefits.

## 11. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

During the course of the audit, it was noted that the Plan had not obtained a fidelity bond. Subsequent to year-end, the Plan obtained a valid fidelity bond.

The Plan has evaluated subsequent events through December 17, 2025, the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

## **H. C. WAINWRIGHT & CO. EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN**

SCHEDULE H, LINE 4i - SCHEDULE OF ASSETS (HELD AT YEAR END)

AT DECEMBER 31, 2024

EIN: 37-1868324- PLAN NUMBER: 003

<b>(a)</b>	<b>(b)</b>	<b>(c)</b>	<b>(d)</b>	<b>(e)</b>
<u>Party-in-interest</u>	<u>Identity of issuer, borrower, lessor or similar party</u>	<u>Description of investment including maturity date, rate of interest collateral, par or maturity value</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Current Value</u>
*	H. C. Wainwright & Co.	Common Stock	\$ 525,246,347	\$ 216,402,932

\*Party-in-interest transaction, not a prohibited transaction.

See independent auditor's report.

## **H. C. WAINWRIGHT & CO. EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN**

SCHEDULE H, LINE 4i - SCHEDULE OF ASSETS (HELD AT YEAR END)

AT DECEMBER 31, 2024

EIN: 37-1868324- PLAN NUMBER: 003

<b>(a)</b>	<b>(b)</b>	<b>(c)</b>	<b>(d)</b>	<b>(e)</b>
<u>Party-in-interest</u>	<u>Identity of issuer, borrower, lessor or similar party</u>	<u>Description of investment including maturity date, rate of interest collateral, par or maturity value</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Current Value</u>
*	H. C. Wainwright & Co.	Common Stock	\$ 525,246,347	\$ 216,402,932

\*Party-in-interest transaction, not a prohibited transaction.

See independent auditor's report.