COSTA DONN C Form 4

December 16, 2010

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

Check this box if no longer

subject to Section 16. Form 4 or

Form 5 obligations

may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF **SECURITIES**

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person *

COSTA DONN C

(Last)

(Instr. 3)

(First) (Middle)

111 N. WALL STREET

(Street)

SPOKANE, WA 99201

STERLING FINANCIAL CORP

/WA/[STSA] 3. Date of Earliest Transaction

(Month/Day/Year) 12/14/2010

Symbol

4. If Amendment, Date Original

Filed(Month/Day/Year)

OMB APPROVAL

OMB Number:

3235-0287

2005

January 31, Expires:

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response...

0.5

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to

Issuer

(Check all applicable)

Director 10% Owner

X_ Officer (give title Other (specify below) below)

President - Golf Savings Bank

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)

X Form filed by One Reporting Person Form filed by More than One Reporting

Person

(City) (State) (Zip) Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

1. Title of 2. Transaction Date 2A. Deemed Security

(Month/Day/Year)

Execution Date, if (Month/Day/Year)

3. 4. Securities TransactionAcquired (A) or Code Disposed of (D) (Instr. 8)

(Instr. 3, 4 and 5)

Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4) Code V Amount (D) Price

5. Amount of

Securities

Beneficially

6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect Beneficial (I) (Instr. 4)

Indirect Ownership (Instr. 4)

7. Nature of

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

(A)

Persons who respond to the collection of SEC 1474 information contained in this form are not (9-02)required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

1. Title of Derivative Security

Conversion or Exercise

3. Transaction Date 3A. Deemed (Month/Day/Year)

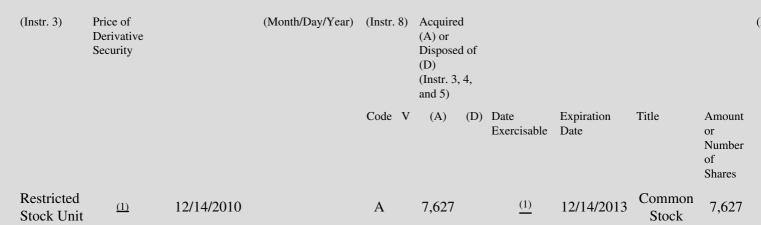
Execution Date, if any

4. 5. Number Transaction of Derivative Expiration Date Code Securities

6. Date Exercisable and (Month/Day/Year)

7. Title and Amount of 8 **Underlying Securities** (Instr. 3 and 4)

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Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address Relationships

Director 10% Owner Officer Other

COSTA DONN C 111 N. WALL STREET SPOKANE, WA 99201

President - Golf Savings Bank

Signatures

/s/ Robert G. Butterfield, attorney-in-fact

12/16/2010 Date

**Signature of Reporting Person

Explanation of Responses:

- * If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(b)(v).
- ** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

Each restricted stock unit represents a contingent right to receive one share of common stock. 75% of the restricted stock units are scheduled to vest on December 14, 2012, 25% of the restricted stock units are scheduled to vest on December 14, 2013, subject to the reporting person's continued employment with the Company on such date.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, *see* Instruction 6 for procedure. Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.

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