Eckhardt Ezra Form 4 March 19, 2012

FORM 4

OMB APPROVAL

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

OMB Number: 3235-0287

if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or

Check this box

Expires: January 31, 2005

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

Estimated average burden hours per response... 0.5

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Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction

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

ruction 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

1(b).

Common

(Print or Type Responses)

1 Name and Address of Departing De

Eckhardt Ezra	2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol STERLING FINANCIAL CORP /WA/ [STSA]	S. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable)			
(Last) (First) (Middle) 111 N. WALL STREET	3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year) 03/16/2012	Director 10% Owner Section Other (specify below) COO - Sterling Financial Corp.			
(Street) SPOKANE, WA 99201	4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)	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 Ac	quired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned			
1.Title of Security (Month/Day/Year) Executivally (Instr. 3) Execution Date 2A. Dec Execution 2D Security (Month/Day/Year) Execution 2D Secution 2D Security (Month/Day/Year) Execution 2D Security (Month/Day/Year) Execution 2D Secution 2D		5. Amount of Securities Form: Direct Indirect Beneficially (D) or Beneficial Owned Indirect (I) Ownership Following (Instr. 4) (Instr. 4)			

Stock 03/16/2012 A(1) 600 (2) A \$ 0 47,298 D

Common

Stock 10,072 I 401k

Common Spouse IRA

Code V Amount

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

Persons who respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB control

Reported

Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)

(A)

(D)

Price

Edgar Filing: Eckhardt Ezra - Form 4

number.

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

1. Title of	2.	3. Transaction Date	3A. Deemed	4.	5.	6. Date Exerc	cisable and	7. Titl	le and	8. Price of	9. Nu
Derivative	Conversion	(Month/Day/Year)	Execution Date, if	Transacti	orNumber	Expiration D	ate	Amou	ınt of	Derivative	Deriv
Security	or Exercise		any	Code	of	(Month/Day/	Year)	Under	rlying	Security	Secui
(Instr. 3)	Price of		(Month/Day/Year)	(Instr. 8)	Derivative	e		Secur	ities	(Instr. 5)	Bene
	Derivative				Securities			(Instr.	3 and 4)		Own
	Security				Acquired						Follo
	·				(A) or						Repo
					Disposed						Trans
					of (D)						(Instr
					(Instr. 3,						`
					4, and 5)						
									Amount		
						Date	Expiration		or		
						Exercisable	^	Title	Number		
						Lacroisdoic	Dute		of		
				Code V	(A) (D)				Shares		

Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address Relationships

Director 10% Owner Officer Other

Eckhardt Ezra

111 N. WALL STREET COO - Sterling Financial Corp.

SPOKANE, WA 99201

Signatures

/s/ Daniel G. Byrne, attorney-in-fact 03/19/2012

**Signature of Reporting Person Date

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).
- Grant of salary stock in the form of mandatorily deferred Restricted Stock Units as approved by Sterling's board of directors on December (1) 8, 2010. Future RSUs are to be granted each payroll period and will be calculated using the closing price of Sterling's common stock on the NASDAQ Capital Market as of the last trading day in each payroll period.
- (2) Units vest immediately upon grant, however, delivery of the awarded shares is deferred until future distribution dates provided in the Agreement between Sterling and Mr. Eckhardt.

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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