

MERIDIAN BIOSCIENCE INC

Form S-3

November 29, 2017

Table of Contents

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on November 29, 2017

Registration No. 333-

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM S-3

REGISTRATION STATEMENT

*UNDER*

*THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933*

MERIDIAN BIOSCIENCE, INC.

(Exact name of Registrant as Specified in its Charter)

Ohio  
(State Or Other Jurisdiction Of  
Incorporation Or Organization)

31-0888197  
(IRS Employer  
Identification Number)

3471 River Hills Drive

**Cincinnati, Ohio 45244**

**(513) 271-3700**

**(Address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of registrant's principal executive offices)**

**F. Mark Reuter, Esq.**

**Keating Muething & Klekamp PLL**

**One East Fourth Street, Suite 1400**

**Cincinnati, Ohio 45202**

**Telephone: (513) 579-6469**

**Facsimile: (513) 579-6457**

**(Name, Address and Telephone Number of Agent for Service)**

**Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public:** From time to time after the effective date of this Registration Statement as determined by market conditions and other factors.

If the only securities being registered on this form are being offered pursuant to dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box.

If any of the securities being registered on this Form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered only in connection with dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box.

If this Form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act, please check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a post-effective amendment filed pursuant to Rule 462(c) under the Securities Act, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a registration statement pursuant to General Instruction I.D. or a post-effective amendment thereto that shall become effective upon the filing with the Commission pursuant to Rule 462(e) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

If this Form is a post-effective amendment to a registration statement filed pursuant to General Instruction I.D. filed to register additional securities or additional classes of securities pursuant to Rule 413(b) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, smaller reporting company or an emerging growth company. See the definitions of large accelerated filer, accelerated filer, smaller reporting company and emerging growth company in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act.

Large accelerated filer		Accelerated filer
Non-accelerated filer	(Do not check if a smaller reporting company)	Smaller reporting company
		Emerging growth company

If an emerging growth company, indicate by check mark if the registrant has elected not to use the extended transition period for complying with any new or revised financial accounting standards provided pursuant to Section 7(a)(2)(B) of the Securities Act.

### CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

Title of Each Class of	Amount to be	Proposed Maximum Offering Price	Proposed Maximum Aggregate Offering Price (1)(3)	Amount of Registration Fee (4)
Securities to be Registered (1)(2)	Registered (2)	Per Unit (1)		
Common Stock				
Preferred Stock				
Depository Shares				
Debt Securities				
Warrants				
Units				
Total			<b>\$100,000,000</b>	<b>\$12,450</b>

- (1) Not specified as to each class of securities to be registered hereunder pursuant to General Instruction II.D. to Form S-3 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended.
- (2) Includes an indeterminate number of securities that may be issued from time to time in primary offerings or upon exercise, conversion or exchange of any securities registered hereunder that provide for exercise, conversion or exchange.
- (3) With respect to debt securities, excluding accrued interest and accrued amortization of discount, if any, to the date of delivery. If any debt securities are issued at an original issue discount, then the offering price of such debt

securities shall be equal to any such greater principal amount due at maturity, such aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$100,000,000 less the value of securities previously issued hereunder.

(4) The registration fee has been calculated in accordance with Rule 457(o) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended.

**The Registrant hereby amends this Registration Statement on such date or dates as may be necessary to delay its effective date until the Registrant shall file a further amendment which specifically states that this Registration Statement shall thereafter become effective in accordance with Section 8(a) of the Securities Act or until this Registration Statement shall become effective on such date as the Securities and Exchange Commission acting pursuant to Section 8(a) may determine.**

**Table of Contents**

**The information in this prospectus is not complete and may be changed. We may not sell the securities until the Registration Statement filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission is effective. This prospectus is not an offer to sell these securities and is not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any state where the offer or sale is not permitted.**

**SUBJECT TO COMPLETION DATED NOVEMBER 29, 2017**

**Prospectus**

**\$100,000,000**

**Common Stock, Preferred Stock,**

**Depository Shares, Debt Securities, Warrants and Units**

By this prospectus and an accompanying prospectus supplement, we may from time to time offer and sell, in one or more offerings, any combination of common stock, preferred stock, depository shares, debt securities, warrants, and units. The aggregate initial offering price of all securities sold under this prospectus will not exceed \$100,000,000 (or the equivalent thereof in one or more foreign currencies, foreign currency units or composite currencies).

We will provide you with more specific terms of these securities in one or more supplements to this prospectus or in one or more free writing prospectuses. You should read this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement carefully before you invest.

We may offer these securities from time to time in amounts, at prices and on other terms to be determined at the time of offering. We may offer and sell these securities to or through underwriters, dealers or agents, or directly to investors, on a continuous or delayed basis. The supplements to this prospectus will provide the specific terms of the plan of distribution. The price to the public of such securities and the net proceeds we expect to receive from such sale will also be set forth in a prospectus supplement.

Our common stock is listed on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol **VIVO**.

On November 27, 2017, the closing price of our common stock as reported by the NASDAQ Global Select Market was \$14.60 per share.



Table of Contents

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	Page
<u>ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS</u>	1
<u>WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION</u>	1
<u>INFORMATION INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE</u>	2
<u>RISK FACTORS</u>	3
<u>SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD LOOKING STATEMENTS</u>	4
<u>USE OF PROCEEDS</u>	6
<u>MERIDIAN BIOSCIENCE, INC.</u>	7
<u>THE SECURITIES WE MAY OFFER</u>	7
<u>RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES</u>	8
<u>DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK</u>	8
<u>DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK</u>	11
<u>DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES</u>	14
<u>DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES</u>	17
<u>DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS</u>	23
<u>DESCRIPTION OF UNITS</u>	25
<u>PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION</u>	26
<u>LEGAL MATTERS</u>	28
<u>EXPERTS</u>	28

---

Table of Contents

**ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS**

This prospectus is part of a registration statement filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission using a shelf registration process. Under this shelf process, we may sell the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities which may be offered. Each time securities are offered for sale, we will provide a prospectus supplement that contains specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement and any free writing prospectus we may authorize may also add or update information contained in this prospectus. You should read both this prospectus, any prospectus supplement and any free writing prospectus together with additional information described below under **Where You Can Find More Information** and **Information Incorporated by Reference**.

The registration statement that contains this prospectus (including the exhibits thereto) contains additional important information about us and the securities we may offer under this prospectus. Specifically, we have filed certain legal documents that establish the terms of the securities offered by this prospectus as exhibits to the registration statement. We will file certain other legal documents that establish the terms of the securities offered by this prospectus as exhibits to reports we file with the SEC. You may obtain copies of that registration statement and the other reports and documents referenced herein as described below under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information**.

**You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and in any prospectus supplement. We have not authorized any other person to provide you with different information. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. We are not making offers to sell or solicitations to buy the securities in any jurisdiction in which an offer or solicitation is not authorized or in which the person making that offer or solicitation is not qualified to do so or to anyone to whom it is unlawful to make an offer or solicitation. You should not assume that the information in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement, as well as the information we file or previously filed with the SEC that we incorporate by reference in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement, is accurate as of any date other than its respective date. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.**

In this prospectus, unless the context otherwise requires, references to **we**, **us**, **our** or **Meridian** refer to Meridian Bioscience, Inc. and its subsidiaries.

**WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION**

We file annual, quarterly and other reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Our SEC filings are available to the public over the Internet at the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. You may also read and copy any document we file at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, NE, Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the operation of the Public Reference Room. Our Annual Report on Form 10-K, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, and Current Reports on Form 8-K, including any amendments to those reports, and other information that we file with or furnish to the SEC pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the **Exchange Act**) can also be accessed free of charge through the Internet.

We have filed with the SEC a registration statement under the Securities Act of 1933 relating to the offering of these securities. The registration statement, including the attached exhibits, contains additional relevant information about us and the securities. This prospectus does not contain all of the information set forth in the registration statement. You can obtain a copy of the registration statement from the SEC as described above. The registration statement and the documents referred to below under **Information Incorporated by Reference** and our other SEC filings are also



available on our Internet website, <http://www.meridianbioscience.com>. We have not incorporated by reference into this prospectus the information on our website, and you should not consider it to be a part of this prospectus.

**Table of Contents**

**INFORMATION INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE**

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference into this prospectus certain information we file with it, which means that we can disclose important information by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be a part of this prospectus, and information that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede information contained in this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below that we have previously filed with the SEC (excluding any portions of any Form 8-K that are not deemed filed pursuant to the General Instructions of Form 8-K):

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended September 30, 2017;

our Current Report on Form 8-K filed on October 11, 2017; and

the description of our common stock contained in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A as filed with the SEC on or about August 15, 1986 and amended August 20, 1986.

We also incorporate by reference into this prospectus additional documents that we may file with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act prior to the completion or termination of the offering, including all such documents we may file with the SEC after the date of the initial registration statement and prior to the effectiveness of the registration statement, but excluding any information deemed furnished and not filed with the SEC or not required to be incorporated herein by reference. Any statements contained in a previously filed document incorporated by reference into this prospectus is deemed to be modified or superseded for purposes of this prospectus to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus, or in a subsequently filed document also incorporated by reference herein, modifies or supersedes that statement.

This prospectus may contain information that updates, modifies or is contrary to information in one or more of the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus. You should rely only on the information incorporated by reference or provided in this prospectus. We have not authorized anyone else to provide you with different information. You should not assume that the information in this prospectus is accurate as of any date other than the date of this prospectus or the date of the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

We will provide to each person, including any beneficial owner, to whom this prospectus is delivered, upon written or oral request, at no cost to the requester, a copy of any and all of the information that is incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

Requests for such documents should be directed to:

**Melissa A. Lueke**

**Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer**

**Meridian Bioscience, Inc.**

**3471 River Hills Drive**

**Cincinnati, Ohio 45244**

**Telephone: (513) 271-3700**

You may also access the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus through our website at <http://www.meridianbioscience.com>. Except for the specific incorporated documents listed above, no information available on or through our website shall be deemed to be incorporated in this prospectus or the registration statement of which it forms a part.

**Table of Contents**

**RISK FACTORS**

*Investing in our securities involves risk. Please see the risk factors set forth in Part I, Item 1A in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for our most recent fiscal year, as updated by our quarterly reports on Form 10-Q and other filings we make with the SEC, as incorporated by reference in this prospectus. Additional risk factors may be included in a prospectus supplement relating to a particular series or offering of securities. Before making an investment decision, you should carefully consider these risks as well as other information we include or incorporate by reference in this prospectus. The risks and uncertainties we have described are not the only ones we face. Additional risks and uncertainties not presently known to us or that we currently deem immaterial may also affect our business operations. These risks could materially affect our business, results of operations or financial condition and cause the value of our securities to decline.*

---

**Table of Contents****SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD LOOKING STATEMENTS**

This prospectus (including the information incorporated by reference) contains, and any prospectus supplement may contain, certain statements that may be deemed to be forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. Forward-looking statements anticipate results based on our estimates, assumptions and plans that are subject to uncertainty. The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 provides a safe harbor for forward-looking statements. All statements in this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement not dealing with historical results or current facts are forward-looking and are based on estimates, assumptions and projections. Statements which include the words believes, seeks, expects, may, should, intends, likely, targets, plans, anticipates, estimates or those words and similar statements of a future or forward-looking nature identify forward-looking statements.

Factors that could cause actual results to differ from those in the forward-looking statements may accompany the statements themselves. In addition, generally applicable factors that could cause actual results or outcomes to differ from those expressed in the forward-looking statements are and will be discussed in our reports on Forms 10-K, 10-Q and 8-K incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

All forward-looking statements address matters that involve risks and uncertainties. Accordingly, there are or will be important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those indicated in these statements. These risks and uncertainties include without limitation, the following: Meridian's operating results, financial condition and continued growth depends, in part, on its ability to introduce into the marketplace enhancements of existing products or new products that incorporate technological advances, meet customer requirements and respond to products developed by Meridian's competition, its ability to effectively sell such products and its ability to successfully expand and effectively manage increased sales and marketing operations. While Meridian has introduced a number of internally developed products, there can be no assurance that it will be successful in the future in introducing such products on a timely basis or in protecting its intellectual property, and unexpected or costly manufacturing costs associated with the ramp up of new products could cause actual results to differ from expectations. Meridian relies on proprietary, patented and licensed technologies. As such, the Company's ability to protect its intellectual property rights, as well as the potential for intellectual property litigation, would impact its results. Ongoing consolidations of reference laboratories and formation of multi-hospital alliances may cause adverse changes to pricing and distribution. Recessionary pressures on the economy and the markets in which our customers operate, as well as adverse trends in buying patterns from customers, can change expected results. Costs and difficulties in complying with laws and regulations, including those administered by the United States Food and Drug Administration, can result in unanticipated expenses and delays and interruptions to the sale of new and existing products, as well as the uncertainty of regulatory approvals and the regulatory process. The international scope of Meridian's operations, including changes in the relative strength or weakness of the U.S. dollar and general economic conditions in foreign countries, can impact results and make them difficult to predict. One of Meridian's growth strategies is the acquisition of companies and product lines. There can be no assurance that additional acquisitions will be consummated or that, if consummated, will be successful and the acquired businesses will be successfully integrated into Meridian's operations. There may be risks that acquisitions may disrupt operations and may pose potential difficulties in employee retention, and there may be additional risks with respect to Meridian's ability to recognize the benefits of acquisitions, including potential synergies and cost savings or the failure of acquisitions to achieve their plans and objectives. Meridian cannot predict the outcome of goodwill impairment testing and the impact of possible goodwill impairments on Meridian's earnings and financial results. Meridian cannot predict the possible impact of U.S. health care legislation enacted in 2010 the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, as amended by the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act and any modification or repeal of any of the provisions thereof initiated by Congress or the presidential administration, and any similar initiatives in other countries on its results of operations. Efforts to reduce the U.S. federal deficit, the outcome of tax reform legislation, breaches of Meridian's information technology

systems and natural disasters and other events could have a materially adverse effect on Meridian's results of operations and revenues. In addition to the factors

**Table of Contents**

described in this paragraph, Part I, Item 1A Risk Factors of our Annual Report on Form 10-K contains a list and description of uncertainties, risks and other matters that may affect the Company.

Readers should note that these risk factors may not be exhaustive. We operate in a continually changing business environment, and new or different risks emerge from time to time. Management cannot predict such new or different risks or the impact of such risks on our businesses. You should not rely unduly on these forward-looking statements, which are not a prediction of actual results and speak only as of the date on which they are made. We undertake no obligation to revise or update publicly any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, unless required by law.

**Table of Contents**

**USE OF PROCEEDS**

Except as may be otherwise described in the applicable prospectus supplement, the net proceeds from the sale of the securities offered hereunder will be added to our general funds and used for general corporate purposes, which may include, but are not limited to:

ongoing research and development activities;

commercialization of new products;

potential acquisitions;

capital expenditures;

debt service and retirement; and

general working capital.

The amounts and timing of our actual expenditures for each purpose may vary significantly depending upon numerous factors, including the status of our research and product and clinical development efforts, regulatory approvals, competition, marketing and sales activities, the market acceptance of any products introduced by us, and economic or other conditions. Pending such uses, we intend to invest the net proceeds of this offering in short-term, investment grade, interest-bearing securities.



**Table of Contents**

**MERIDIAN BIOSCIENCE, INC.**

Meridian is a fully integrated life science company that develops, manufactures, markets and distributes a broad range of innovative diagnostic test kits, rare reagents, specialty biologicals and components. Utilizing a variety of methods, our diagnostic tests provide accuracy, simplicity and speed in the early diagnosis and treatment of common medical conditions, such as infections and lead poisoning. Meridian's diagnostic products are used outside of the human body and require little or no special equipment. The Company's diagnostic products are designed to enhance patient well-being while reducing the total outcome costs of health care. Meridian has strong market positions in the areas of gastrointestinal and upper respiratory infections, and blood lead level testing. In addition, Meridian is a supplier of rare reagents, specialty biologicals and components used by organizations in the life science and agri-bio industries engaged in research. Its products are also used by companies as components in the manufacture of diagnostics. The Company markets its products and technologies to hospitals, reference laboratories, research centers, diagnostics manufacturers and agri-bio companies in more than 70 countries around the world. The Company's shares are traded on the NASDAQ Global Select Market, symbol VIVO. Meridian's website address is [www.meridianbioscience.com](http://www.meridianbioscience.com).

Our principal executive offices are located at 3471 River Hills Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45244. Our telephone number is (513) 271-3700. SEC filings, news releases, our Code of Ethics applicable to directors, officers and employees and other information may be accessed free of charge through our Internet website, [www.meridianbioscience.com](http://www.meridianbioscience.com). Other than the information specifically incorporated by reference in this prospectus, information on our website is not part of this prospectus.

**THE SECURITIES WE MAY OFFER**

The descriptions of the securities contained in this prospectus, together with the applicable prospectus supplements and any related free writing prospectuses, summarize the material terms and provisions of the various types of securities that we may offer. Prices for such securities will be determined by market conditions at the time of offering. We will describe in the applicable prospectus supplement relating to any securities the particular terms of the securities offered by that prospectus supplement. If we indicate in the applicable prospectus supplement, the terms of the securities may differ from the terms we have summarized below. We will also include in the prospectus supplement information, where applicable, about material United States federal income tax considerations relating to the securities, and the securities exchange or market, if any, on which the securities will be listed.

We may sell from time to time, in one or more offerings:

shares of our common stock;

shares of our preferred stock;

depository shares;

debt securities, in one or more series;

warrants to purchase any of the securities listed above; and/or

units consisting of one or more of the foregoing.

In this prospectus, we will refer to the common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares, debt securities, warrants and units, collectively, as securities. The total dollar amount of all securities that we may issue will not exceed \$100,000,000. This prospectus may not be used to communicate a sale of securities unless it is accompanied by a prospectus supplement.

In addition, the prospectus supplement will set forth the terms of the offering, the initial public offering price and net proceeds to us.

**Table of Contents****RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES**

The following table sets forth the ratio of our earnings to our fixed charges for the periods indicated. Dollars are in thousands.

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
<b>Earnings</b>					
Earnings before income taxes	\$ 36,429	\$ 50,644	\$ 55,063	\$ 52,108	\$ 57,362
Fixed charges	1,856	1,094	180	195	174
	\$ 38,285	\$ 51,738	\$ 55,243	\$ 52,303	\$ 57,536
<b>Fixed charges</b>					
Interest expensed and capitalized	\$ 1,642	\$ 897	\$	\$	\$
Interest within rental expense	214	197	180	195	174
	\$ 1,856	\$ 1,094	\$ 180	\$ 195	\$ 174
<b>Ratio</b>	20.63	47.29	306.91	268.22	\$ 330.67

**DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK**

This section summarizes the general terms of the common stock that we may offer. The prospectus supplement relating to the common stock offered will set forth the number of shares offered, the initial offering price and recent market prices, dividend information and any other relevant information. The summary in this section and in the prospectus supplement does not describe every aspect of the common stock and is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to all the provisions of our Articles of Incorporation and Amended Code of Regulations and to the provisions of the Ohio Revised Code.

The following briefly summarizes the material terms of the common stock that we may offer, other than pricing and related terms which will be disclosed in a prospectus supplement. The total number of authorized shares of common stock is 71,000,000, no par value per share. Holders of common stock are entitled to one vote for each share held of record on all matters submitted to a vote of shareholders. Shareholders have the right to cumulate their votes in the election of directors.

Holders of common stock are entitled to receive dividends when and if declared by our board of directors out of funds legally available therefor, subject to any contractual restrictions on the payment of dividends and to any restrictions on the payment of dividends imposed by the terms of any outstanding preferred shares or debt securities.

Upon our dissolution or liquidation or the sale of all or substantially all of our assets, after payment in full of all amounts required to be paid to creditors and to the holders of preferred shares having liquidation preferences, if any, the holders of our common stock will be entitled to receive pro rata our remaining assets available for distribution.

As of November 14, 2017, we had 42,306,907 shares of common stock outstanding. Shares of common stock carry no preemptive or conversion or subscription rights and are not subject to redemption or sinking fund provisions. All outstanding shares of common stock are, and any shares of common stock issued upon conversion of any convertible securities will be, fully paid and non-assessable.

Our common stock is listed on the NASDAQ Global Select Market and trades under the symbol VIVO. Our registrar and transfer agent is ComputerShare Investor Services, LLC.

## Table of Contents

### **Provisions Affecting Business Combinations**

Our articles of incorporation opt out of Ohio's control share acquisition law. We are, however, subject to Chapter 1704 of the Ohio Revised Code, which generally prohibits certain business combinations and transactions with interested shareholders for a period of three years after the interested shareholder acquired ten percent or more of the voting power of the corporation in the election of directors, unless prior to the interested shareholder's acquisition of ten percent or more of the corporation's shares, the directors of the corporation approved the business combination or other transaction or the purchase of shares by the interested shareholder on the date the shareholder acquired ten percent or more of the corporation's shares.

In general, subsequent to the three-year period, a transaction subject to Chapter 1704 may take place provided that at least one of the following is satisfied:

prior to the date the interested shareholder acquired ten percent or more of the corporation's shares, the board of directors approved the purchase of shares by the interested shareholder;

the transaction is approved, at a meeting held for that purpose, by the affirmative vote of the holders of shares of the corporation entitling them to exercise at least two-thirds of the voting power of the corporation in the election of directors, or of such different proportion as the articles of incorporation may provide, provided that the transaction is also approved by the affirmative vote of the holders of at least a majority of the disinterested shares; or

the transaction results in shareholders, other than the interested shareholder, receiving a fair price (as described in Chapter 1704) plus interest for their shares.

In addition, our articles of incorporation provide that any business combination between us and any person that beneficially owns more than 30% of our shares entitled to vote in the election of directors (or at any time owned more than 30% of our shares entitled to vote in the election of directors) must be approved by the affirmative vote of 85% of all shares entitled to vote in the election of directors. The 85% voting requirement is not applicable if:

the cash, or fair market value of other consideration, to be received per share by our common shareholders in the business combination is at least an amount equal to the highest per share price paid by the other entity in acquiring any of its holdings of our common shares plus the aggregate amount, if any, by which 5% per annum of the per share price exceeds the aggregate amount of all dividends paid in cash, in each case since the date on which the other entity acquired the 30% interest; after the other entity has acquired a 30% interest and prior to the consummation of the business combination, (1) the other entity has taken steps to ensure that our board of directors included at all times representation by continuing directors proportionate to the shareholdings of the public holders of our common shares not affiliated with the other entity (with a continuing director to occupy any resulting fractional board position), (2) the other entity has not acquired any newly issued shares, directly or indirectly, from us (except upon conversion of convertible securities acquired by it prior to obtaining a 30% interest or as a result of a pro rata share dividend or share split) and (3) the other entity has not acquired any additional outstanding common shares or securities convertible into our common shares except as part of the transaction that resulted in the other entity's acquiring its 30%

interest;

the other entity has not (1) received the benefit, directly or indirectly (except proportionately as a shareholder), of any loans, advances, guarantees, pledges or other financial assistance or tax credits provided by us or (2) made any major change in our business or equity capital structure without in either case the approval of at least a majority of all the directors and at least two-thirds of the continuing directors, in either case prior to the consummation of the business combination; and

a proxy statement responsive to the requirements of the Exchange Act has been mailed to our public shareholders for the purpose of soliciting shareholder approval of the business combination and contained at the front, in a prominent place, any recommendations as to the advisability (or

**Table of Contents**

inadvisability) of the business combination that the continuing directors, or any of them, may choose to state and, if deemed advisable by a majority of the continuing directors, an opinion of a reputable investment banking firm as to the fairness (or not) of the terms of the business combination, from the point of view of our remaining public shareholders (the investment banking firm to be selected by a majority of the continuing directors and to be paid a reasonable fee for their services by us upon receipt of the opinion).

The Ohio Revised Code also requires approval of mergers, dissolutions, dispositions of all or substantially all of a corporation's assets and majority share acquisitions and combinations involving issuance of shares representing one-sixth or more of the voting power of the corporation immediately after the consummation of the transaction (other than so-called parent-subsidary mergers), by two-thirds of the voting power of a corporation, unless the articles of incorporation specify a different proportion (but not less than a majority). Our articles of incorporation do not specify a voting power proportion different than that specified by Ohio law in connection with the approval of these transactions.

These provisions of Ohio law would be important in any attempted takeover of us and could operate, depending on how utilized by the board of directors, either to discourage a hostile takeover or to enable the board to negotiate a higher price than may be initially proposed in any such situation.

**Table of Contents**

**DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK**

The following briefly summarizes the material terms of the preferred stock that we may offer, other than pricing and related terms which will be disclosed in a prospectus supplement. You should read the particular terms of any series of preferred stock that we offer, which we will describe in more detail in any prospectus supplement relating to such series. You should also read the more detailed provisions of our Articles of Incorporation and the statement with respect to shares relating to each particular series of preferred stock for provisions that may be important to you. The statement with respect to shares relating to each particular series of preferred stock offered by the accompanying prospectus supplement and this prospectus will be filed as an exhibit to a document incorporated by reference in the registration statement. The prospectus supplement will also state whether any of the terms summarized below do not apply to the series of preferred stock being offered.

**General**

Our board of directors is authorized to issue up to 1,000,000 shares of preferred stock. As of the date of this prospectus, we have not issued any shares of preferred stock. Our board of directors can issue shares of preferred stock in one or more series and can specify the following terms for each series:

the number of shares;

the designation, powers, preferences and rights, including voting, of the shares; and

the qualifications, limitations or restrictions, except as otherwise stated in our Articles of Incorporation.

Before issuing any series of preferred stock, our board of directors will adopt resolutions creating and designating the series as a series of preferred stock, and the resolutions will be filed in a statement with respect to shares as an amendment to our Articles of Incorporation.

The rights of holders of preferred stock offered may be adversely affected by the rights of holders of any shares of preferred stock that may be issued in the future. Our board of directors may cause shares of preferred stock to be issued in public or private transactions for any proper corporate purpose. Examples include issuances to obtain additional financing in connection with acquisitions or otherwise, and issuances to our officers, directors and employees and its subsidiaries pursuant to benefit plans or otherwise. The preferred stock could have the effect of acting as an anti-takeover device to prevent a change in control of us.

Unless the particular prospectus supplement states otherwise, holders of each series of preferred stock will not have any preemptive or subscription rights to acquire more of our stock.

The transfer agent, registrar, dividend disbursing agent and redemption agent for shares of each series of preferred stock will be named in the prospectus supplement relating to such series.

**Rank**

Unless otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement relating to the shares of any series of preferred stock, the shares will rank on an equal basis with each other series of preferred stock and prior to the common stock as to



dividends and distributions of assets.

**Dividends**

Unless the particular prospectus supplement states otherwise, holders of each series of preferred stock will be entitled to receive cash dividends, when, as and if declared by our board of directors out of funds legally available for dividends. The rates and dates of payment of dividends will be set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to each series of preferred stock. Dividends will be payable to holders of record of preferred stock as they appear on our books. Dividends on any series of preferred stock may be cumulative or noncumulative.

## **Table of Contents**

We may not declare, pay or set apart for payment dividends on the preferred stock unless full dividends on any other series of preferred stock that ranks on an equal or senior basis have been paid or sufficient funds have been set apart for payment for:

all prior dividend periods of the other series of preferred stock that pay dividends on a cumulative basis; or

the immediately preceding dividend period of the other series of preferred stock that pay dividends on a noncumulative basis.

Partial dividends declared on shares of preferred stock and any other series of preferred stock ranking on an equal basis as to dividends will be declared pro rata. A pro rata declaration means that the ratio of dividends declared per share to accrued dividends per share will be the same for all such series of preferred stock.

Similarly, we may not declare, pay or set apart for payment non-stock dividends or make other payments on the common stock or any other stock ranking junior to the preferred stock unless full dividends on all series of preferred stock have been paid or set apart for payment for:

all prior dividend periods if the preferred stock pays dividends on a cumulative basis; or

the immediately preceding dividend period if the preferred stock pays dividends on a noncumulative basis.

## **Conversion and Exchange**

The prospectus supplement for any series of preferred stock will state the terms, if any, on which shares of that series are convertible into or exchangeable for shares of our common stock.

## **Redemption**

If so specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, a series of preferred stock may be redeemable at any time, in whole or in part, at our option or at the option of the holders, or may be mandatorily redeemed.

Any partial redemptions of preferred stock will be made in a way that our board of directors decides is equitable.

Unless we default in the payment of the redemption price, dividends will cease to accrue after the redemption date on shares of preferred stock called for redemption and all rights of holders of such shares will terminate except for the right to receive the redemption price.

## **Liquidation Preference**

Upon our voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, holders of each series of preferred stock will be entitled to receive distributions upon liquidation in the amount set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to such series of preferred stock, plus an amount equal to any accrued and unpaid dividends. Such distributions will be made before any distribution is made on any securities ranking junior to the preferred stock with respect to liquidation, including common stock.

If the liquidation amounts payable relating to the preferred stock of any series and any other securities ranking on a parity regarding liquidation rights are not paid in full, the holders of the preferred stock of such series and such other securities will share in any such distribution of our available assets on a ratable basis in proportion to the full liquidation preferences. Holders of such series of preferred stock will not be entitled to any other amounts from us after they have received their full liquidation preference.

**Table of Contents**

**Voting Rights**

If we issue voting such preferred stock, holders of preferred stock will be entitled to one vote per share on each matter submitted to our shareholders or as otherwise set forth in the applicable certificate of designation. If we issue non-voting such preferred stock, holders of preferred stock will have no voting rights, except as required by applicable law. The prospectus supplement will state the voting rights, if any, applicable to any particular series of preferred stock.

**Table of Contents**

**DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES**

The following briefly summarizes the provisions of the depositary shares and depositary receipts that we may issue from time to time and which would be important to holders of depositary shares and depositary receipts, other than pricing and related terms, which will be disclosed in the applicable prospectus supplement. The prospectus supplement will also state whether any of the general provisions summarized below do not apply to the depositary shares or depositary receipts being offered and provide any additional provisions applicable to the depositary shares or depositary receipts being offered. The following description and any description in a prospectus supplement may not be complete and are subject to, and qualified in their entirety by reference to the terms and provisions of the form of deposit agreement filed as an exhibit to the registration statement which contains this prospectus.

**Depositary Shares**

We may offer depositary shares evidenced by depositary receipts. Each depositary share represents a fraction or a multiple of a share of a particular series of preferred stock that we issue and deposit with a depositary. The fraction or the multiple of a share of preferred stock, which each depositary share represents, will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

We will deposit the shares of any series of preferred stock represented by depositary shares according to the provisions of a deposit agreement to be entered into between us and a bank or trust company, which we will select as its preferred stock depositary. We will name the depositary in the applicable prospectus supplement. Each holder of a depositary share will be entitled to all the rights and preferences of the underlying preferred stock in proportion to the applicable fraction or multiple of a share of preferred stock represented by the depositary share. These rights include any applicable dividend, voting, redemption, conversion and liquidation rights. The depositary will send the holders of depositary shares all reports and communications that we deliver to the depositary and which we are required to furnish to the holders of depositary shares.

**Depositary Receipts**

The depositary shares will be evidenced by depositary receipts issued pursuant to the deposit agreement. Depositary receipts will be distributed to anyone who is buying the fractional shares of preferred stock in accordance with the terms of the applicable prospectus supplement.

**Withdrawal of Preferred Stock**

Unless the related depositary shares have previously been called for redemption, a holder of depositary shares may receive the number of whole shares of the related series of preferred stock and any money or other property represented by the holder's depositary receipts after surrendering the depositary receipts at the corporate trust office of the depositary, paying any taxes, charges and fees provided for in the deposit agreement and complying with any other requirement of the deposit agreement. Partial shares of preferred stock will not be issued. If the surrendered depositary shares exceed the number of depositary shares that represent the number of whole shares of preferred stock the holder wishes to withdraw, then the depositary will deliver to the holder at the same time a new depositary receipt evidencing the excess number of depositary shares. Once the holder has withdrawn the preferred stock, the holder will not be entitled to re-deposit that preferred stock under the deposit agreement or to receive depositary shares in exchange for such preferred stock.

**Dividends and Other Distributions**

The depositary will distribute to record holders of depositary shares any cash dividends or other cash distributions it receives on preferred stock. Each holder will receive these distributions in proportion to the number of depositary shares owned by the holder. The depositary will distribute only whole U.S. dollars and cents. The depositary will add any fractional cents not distributed to the next sum received for distribution to record holders of depositary shares.

## **Table of Contents**

In the event of a non-cash distribution, the depositary will distribute property to the record holders of depositary shares, unless the depositary determines that it is not feasible to make such a distribution. If this occurs, the depositary may, with our approval, sell the property and distribute the net proceeds from the sale to the holders.

The amounts distributed to holders of depositary shares will be reduced by any amounts required to be withheld by the preferred stock depositary or by we on account of taxes or other governmental charges.

## **Redemption of Depositary Shares**

If the series of preferred stock represented by depositary shares is subject to redemption, then we will give the necessary proceeds to the depositary. The depositary will then redeem the depositary shares using the funds it received from us for the preferred stock. The redemption price per depositary share will be equal to the redemption price payable per share for the applicable series of the preferred stock and any other amounts per share payable with respect to the preferred stock multiplied by the fraction of a share of preferred stock represented by one depositary share. Whenever we redeem shares of preferred stock held by the depositary, the depositary will redeem the depositary shares representing the shares of preferred stock on the same day, provided we have paid in full to the depositary the redemption price of the preferred stock to be redeemed and any accrued and unpaid dividends. If fewer than all the depositary shares of a series are to be redeemed, the depositary shares will be selected by lot or ratably or by any other equitable method as the depositary will decide.

After the date fixed for redemption, the depositary shares called for redemption will no longer be considered outstanding. Therefore, all rights of holders of the depositary shares will cease, except that the holders will still be entitled to receive any cash payable upon the redemption and any money or other property to which the holder was entitled at the time of redemption. To receive this amount or other property, the holders must surrender the depositary receipts evidencing their depositary shares to the preferred stock depositary. Any funds that we deposit with the preferred stock depositary for any depositary shares that the holders fail to redeem will be returned to us after a period of two years from the date we deposit the funds.

## **Voting the Preferred Stock**

Upon receipt of notice of any meeting at which the holders of preferred stock are entitled to vote, the depositary will notify holders of depositary shares of the upcoming vote and arrange to deliver our voting materials to the holders. The record date for determining holders of depositary shares that are entitled to vote will be the same as the record date for the preferred stock. The materials the holders will receive will describe the matters to be voted on and explain how the holders, on a certain date, may instruct the depositary to vote the shares of preferred stock underlying the depositary shares. For instructions to be valid, the depositary must receive them on or before the date specified. To the extent possible, the depositary will vote the shares as instructed by the holder. We agree to take all reasonable actions that the depositary determines are necessary to enable it to vote as a holder has instructed. The depositary will abstain from voting shares of preferred stock deposited under a deposit agreement if it has not received specific instructions from the holder of the depositary shares representing those shares.

## **Amendment and Termination of the Deposit Agreement**

We may agree with the depositary to amend the deposit agreement and the form of depositary receipt at any time. However, any amendment that materially and adversely alters the rights of the holders of depositary receipts will not be effective unless it has been approved by the holders of at least a majority of the affected depositary shares then outstanding. We will make no amendment that impairs the right of any holder of depositary shares, as described above under **Withdrawal of Preferred Stock**, to receive shares of preferred stock and any money or other property

represented by those depositary shares, except in order to comply with mandatory provisions of applicable law. If an amendment becomes effective, holders are deemed to agree to the amendment and to be bound by the amended deposit agreement if they continue to hold their depositary receipts.



## **Table of Contents**

The deposit agreement automatically terminates if a final distribution in respect of the preferred stock has been made to the holders of depositary receipts in connection with our liquidation, dissolution or winding-up. We may also terminate the deposit agreement at any time we wish with at least 60 days prior written notice to the depositary. If we do so, the depositary will give notice of termination to the record holders not less than 30 days before the termination date. Once depositary receipts are surrendered to the depositary, it will send to each holder the number of whole or fractional shares of the series of preferred stock underlying that holder's depositary receipts.

## **Charges of Depositary and Expenses**

We will pay all transfer and other taxes and governmental charges arising solely from the existence of the depositary arrangements. We will pay all charges of the depositary in connection with the initial deposit of the related series of offered preferred stock, the initial issuance of the depositary shares, all withdrawals of shares of the related series of offered preferred stock by holders of the depositary shares and the registration of transfers of title to any depositary shares. However, holders of depositary receipts will pay other taxes and governmental charges and any other charges provided in the deposit agreement to be payable by them.

## **Limitations on Our Obligations and Liability to Holders of Depositary Receipts**

The deposit agreement will expressly limit our obligations and the obligations of the depositary. It will also limit our liability and the liability of the depositary as follows:

we and the depositary are only liable to the holders of depositary receipts for negligence or willful misconduct; and

we and the depositary have no obligation to become involved in any legal or other proceeding related to the depositary receipts or the deposit agreement on your behalf or on behalf of any other party, unless you provide us with satisfactory indemnity.

## **Resignation and Removal of Depositary**

The depositary may resign at any time by notifying us of its election to do so. In addition, we may remove the depositary at any time. Within 60 days after the delivery of the notice of resignation or removal of the depositary, we will appoint a successor depositary.

## **Reports to Holders**

We will deliver all required reports and communications to holders of the offered preferred stock to the depositary, and it will forward those reports and communications to the holders of depositary shares.

**Table of Contents**

**DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES**

**General**

The debt securities are governed by documents called indentures. An indenture is a contract between Meridian and the trustee named in the applicable prospectus supplement, which acts as trustee for the debt securities. There may be more than one trustee under each indenture for different series of debt securities. The trustee has two main roles. First, the trustee can enforce your rights against Meridian if Meridian defaults. There are some limitations on the extent to which the trustee acts on your behalf, described under Remedies If An Event of Default Occurs. Second, the trustee may perform administrative duties for Meridian, such as sending you interest payments, transferring your debt securities to a new buyer if you sell, and sending you notices.

The debt securities will be unsecured general obligations of Meridian and may include:

senior debt securities, to be issued under the senior indenture; and

subordinated debt securities, to be issued under the subordinated indenture.

The prospectus supplement relating to any particular debt securities offered will indicate whether the debt securities are senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities and will describe the specific terms of the debt securities. The summary in this section and in any prospectus supplement does not describe every aspect of the senior or subordinated indenture or the debt securities, and is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to all the provisions of the applicable indenture and the debt securities. The forms of the senior indenture and subordinated indenture and the forms of the debt securities are or will be filed as exhibits to or incorporated by reference in the registration statement. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#) for information on how to obtain a copy.

This section summarizes the general terms of the senior and subordinated debt securities that we may offer. When we refer to the indenture, we mean the senior indenture and the subordinated indenture collectively, unless we indicate otherwise. When we refer to the trustee, we mean the senior trustee and the subordinated trustee collectively, unless we indicate otherwise. When we refer to the debt securities, we mean the senior and subordinated debt securities, unless we indicate otherwise.

The prospectus supplement relating to any series of debt securities will describe the following specific financial, legal and other terms particular to such series of debt securities:

the title of the debt securities;

any limit on the aggregate principal amount of the debt securities;

the date or dates on which the debt securities will mature;

the rate or rates (which may be fixed or variable) at which the debt securities will bear interest, if any, and the date or dates from which the interest will accrue;

the dates on which interest on the debt securities will be payable and the regular record dates for those interest payment dates;

the place or places where the principal and premium, if any, and interest, if any, shall be payable, where the debt securities may be surrendered for transfer or exchange, and where notices and demands may be served;

the date, if any, after which and the price or prices at which the debt securities may, in accordance with any option or mandatory redemption provisions, be redeemed and the other detailed terms and provisions of any such optional or mandatory redemption provision;

any mandatory or optional sinking funds or analogous provisions or provisions for redemption at the holder's option;

**Table of Contents**

the denomination in which the debt securities will be issuable, if other than denominations of \$1,000 and any integral multiple thereof;

if other than the principal amount thereof, the portion of the principal amount of the debt securities which will be payable upon the declaration of acceleration of the maturity of those debt securities;

any addition to, or modification or deletion of, any events of default or covenants with respect to the securities;

any provision relating to the defeasance of our obligations in connection with the debt securities;

any provision regarding exchangeability or conversion of the debt securities into our common stock or other securities;

whether any debt securities will be issued in the form of a global security, and, if different than described below under Book-Entry Securities, any circumstances under which a global security may be exchanged for debt securities registered in the names of persons other than the depository for the global security or its nominee;

the subordination provisions applicable to the subordinated debt securities; and

any other material terms of the debt securities.

The terms of any series of debt securities may vary from the terms described here. Thus, this summary also is subject to and qualified by reference to the description of the particular terms of your debt securities to be described in the prospectus supplement. The prospectus supplement relating to the debt securities will be attached to the front of this prospectus.

The indenture and its associated documents contain the full legal text of the matters described in this section. The indenture and the debt securities are governed by New York law.

**Events Of Default**

You will have special rights if an event of default occurs, with respect to any series of debt securities, and is not cured, as described later in this subsection. Under the indenture, the term event of default means any of the following:

Meridian does not pay interest on a debt security within 30 days of its due date;

Meridian does not pay the principal or any premium on a debt security on its due date;

Meridian remains in breach of any covenant or warranty described in the indenture for 90 days after Meridian receives a notice stating it is in breach, which notice must be sent by either the trustee or direct holders of at least 25% of the principal amount of outstanding debt securities;

Meridian fails to pay an amount of debt as defined in any mortgage, indenture, security agreement or other instrument totaling more than \$25,000,000 in principal amount, Meridian's obligation to repay is accelerated by its lenders, and this payment obligation remains accelerated for 30 days after Meridian receives notice of default as described in the previous paragraph;

Meridian becomes subject to one or more final, non-appealable judgments, orders or decrees requiring payments of more than \$25,000,000 and such judgments, orders or decrees remain unsatisfied for 60 days during which a stay of enforcement has not been in effect after Meridian receives notice as described two paragraphs above; or

certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization of Meridian.

**Remedies if an Event of Default Occurs**

If an event of default has occurred and has not been cured (if a cure period is provided for), the trustee or the direct holders of 25% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities may declare the entire principal amount of all the debt securities of that series to be due and immediately payable. This is called a declaration of acceleration of maturity.

## **Table of Contents**

Except in cases of default, whereby a trustee has some special duties, a trustee is not required to take any action under the indenture at the request of any direct holders unless the direct holders offer the trustee reasonable protection from costs, expenses and liability (called an indemnity). If reasonable indemnity is provided, the direct holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the relevant series may direct the time, method and place of conducting any lawsuit or other formal legal action seeking any remedy available to the trustee. These majority direct holders may also direct the trustee in performing any other action under the indenture.

In general, before you bypass the trustee and bring your own lawsuit or other formal legal action or take other steps to enforce your rights or protect your interests relating to the debt securities, the following must occur:

you must give the trustee written notice that an event of default has occurred and remains uncured;

the direct holders of at least 25% in principal amount of all outstanding debt securities of the relevant series must make a written request that the trustee take action in its own name as trustee because of the default, and must offer reasonable indemnity to the trustee against the costs, expenses and other liabilities of taking that action;

the trustee must have not taken action for 60 days after receipt of the above notice and offer of indemnity; and

the trustee must not have received from direct holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series a direction inconsistent with the written notice during the 60 day period after receipt of the above notice.

However, you are entitled at any time to bring a lawsuit for the payment of money due on your debt security on or after its due date.

## **Waiver of Default**

The holders of a majority in principal amount of the relevant series of debt securities may waive a default for all such series of debt securities. If this happens, the default will be treated as if it had not occurred. No one can waive a payment default on a holder's debt security, however, without the holder's approval.

## **Modification**

There are three types of changes we can make to the indentures and the debt securities.

### *Changes Requiring Your Approval*

First, there are changes that cannot be made to the indentures or your debt securities without your specific approval. The following is a list of those types of changes:

change the payment due date;

reduce any amounts due on a debt security;

reduce the amount of principal payable upon acceleration of the maturity of a debt security following a default;

impair your right to sue for payment;

reduce the percentage in principal amount of debt securities, the consent of whose holders is required to modify or amend the indenture;

## **Table of Contents**

reduce the percentage in principal amount of debt securities, the consent of whose holders is required to waive compliance with certain provisions of the indenture or to waive certain defaults; and

modify any other aspect of the provisions dealing with modification and waiver of the indenture.

### *Changes Requiring a Majority Vote*

The second type of change to the indentures and the debt securities is the kind that requires consent of the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the particular series affected. With a majority vote, the holders may waive past defaults, provided that such defaults are not of the type described previously under Changes Requiring Your Approval.

### *Changes Not Requiring Approval*

The third type of change does not require any vote by direct holders of debt securities. This type is limited to clarifications and certain other changes that would not adversely affect holders of the debt securities.

## **Consolidation, Merger And Sale Of Assets**

Meridian may consolidate or merge with or into another entity, and Meridian may sell or lease substantially all of Meridian's assets to another corporation if the following conditions, among others, are met:

where Meridian merges out of existence or sells or leases substantially all its assets, the other entity must be a corporation, partnership or trust organized under the laws of a state or the District of Columbia or under federal law, and it must agree to be legally responsible for the debt securities; and

the merger, sale of assets or other transaction must not cause a default or an event of default on the debt securities.

## **Form, Exchange, Registration And Transfer**

Generally, we will issue debt securities only in registered global form. See **Book-Entry Securities** below. However, if specified in the prospectus supplement, we may issue certificated securities in definitive form.

You may have your debt securities broken into more debt securities of smaller denominations or combined into fewer debt securities of larger denominations, as long as the total principal amount is not changed. This is called an exchange.

You may exchange or transfer debt securities at the office of the trustee. The trustee acts as our agent for registering debt securities in the names of holders and transferring debt securities. We may appoint another entity or perform this role itself. The entity performing the role of maintaining the list of registered direct holders is called the security registrar. It will also perform transfers. You will not be required to pay a service charge to transfer or exchange debt securities, but you may be required to pay for any tax or other governmental charge associated with the exchange or transfer. The transfer or exchange will only be made if the security registrar is satisfied with your proof of ownership.



If the debt securities are redeemable and Meridian redeems less than all of the debt securities of a particular series, Meridian may block the transfer or exchange of those debt securities during the period beginning 15 days before the day Meridian mails the notice of redemption and ending on the day of that mailing, in order to freeze the list of holders to prepare the mailing. We may also refuse to register transfers or exchanges of debt securities selected for redemption, except that we will continue to permit transfers and exchanges of the unredeemed portion of any debt security being partially redeemed.

## **Table of Contents**

### **Book-Entry Securities**

The debt securities will be represented by one or more global securities. Unless otherwise indicated in the prospectus supplement, the global security representing the debt securities will be deposited with, or on behalf of, The Depository Trust Company ( DTC ), New York, New York, or other successor depository we appoint, and registered in the name of the depository or its nominee. The debt securities will not be issued in definitive form unless otherwise provided in the prospectus supplement.

DTC will act as securities depository for the securities. The debt securities will be issued as fully registered securities registered in the name of Cede & Co. (DTC's nominee).

DTC has informed us as follows:

DTC is a limited-purpose trust company organized under the New York Banking Law, a banking organization within the meaning of the New York Banking Law, a member of the Federal Reserve System, a clearing corporation within the meaning of the New York Uniform Commercial Code, and a clearing agency registered pursuant to the provisions of Section 17A of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

DTC holds securities that its participants deposit with DTC and facilitates the settlement among participants of securities transactions, such as transfers and pledges, in deposited securities through electronic computerized book-entry changes in participants' accounts, thereby eliminating the need for physical movement of securities certificates.

Direct participants include securities brokers and dealers, trust companies, clearing corporations, and certain other organizations.

DTC is owned by a number of its direct participants and by the New York Stock Exchange, Inc., the American Stock Exchange, Inc. and the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority.

Access to the DTC system is also available to indirect participants such as securities brokers and dealers, banks and trust companies that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a direct participant, either directly or indirectly.

The rules applicable to DTC and its direct and indirect participants are on file with the SEC. We have provided the following descriptions of the operations and procedures of DTC solely as a matter of convenience. These operations and procedures are solely within the control of DTC and are subject to change by them from time to time. Neither we, any underwriter nor the trustee take any responsibility for these operations or procedures, and you are urged to contact DTC or its participants directly to discuss these matters.

We expect that under procedures established by DTC:

Upon deposit of the global securities with DTC or its custodian, DTC will credit on its internal system the accounts of direct participants designated by the underwriters with portions of the principal amounts of the global securities; and

Ownership of the debt securities will be shown on, and the transfer of ownership of the debt securities will be effected only through, records maintained by DTC or its nominee, with respect to interests of direct participants, and the records of direct and indirect participants, with respect to interests of persons other than participants.

The laws of some jurisdictions require that purchasers of securities take physical delivery of those securities in the form of a certificate. For that reason, it may not be possible to transfer interests in a global security to those persons. In addition, because DTC can act only on behalf of its participants, who in turn act on behalf of persons who hold interests through participants, the ability of a person having an interest in a global security to pledge or transfer that interest to persons or entities that do not participate in DTC's system, or otherwise to take actions in respect of that interest, may be affected by the lack of a physical definitive security in respect of that interest.

## **Table of Contents**

So long as DTC or its nominee is the registered owner of a global security, DTC or that nominee will be considered the sole owner or holder of the debt securities represented by that global security for all purposes under the mortgage indenture and under the debt securities. Except as described below, owners of beneficial interests in a global security will not be entitled to have debt securities represented by that global security registered in their names, will not receive or be entitled to receive the debt securities in the form of a physical certificate and will not be considered the owners or holders of the debt securities under the mortgage indenture or under the debt securities, and may not be entitled to give the trustee directions, instructions or approvals. For that reason, each holder owning a beneficial interest in a global security must rely on DTC's procedures and, if that holder is not a direct or indirect participant in DTC, on the procedures of the DTC participant through which that holder owns its interest, to exercise any rights of a holder of debt securities under the mortgage indenture or the global security.

We will not have any responsibility or liability for any aspect of DTC's records relating to the debt securities or relating to payments made by DTC on account of the debt securities, or any responsibility to maintain, supervise or review any of DTC's records relating to the debt securities.

We will make payments on the debt securities represented by the global securities to DTC or its nominee, as the registered owner of the debt securities. We expect that when DTC or its nominee receives any payment on the debt securities represented by a global security, DTC will credit participants' accounts with payments in amounts proportionate to their beneficial interests in the global security as shown in DTC's records. We also expect that payments by DTC's participants to owners of beneficial interests in the global security held through those participants will be governed by standing instructions and customary practice as is now the case with securities held for the accounts of customers registered in the names of nominees for such customers. DTC's participants will be responsible for those payments.

Payments on the debt securities represented by the global securities will be made in immediately available funds. Transfers between participants in DTC will be made in accordance with DTC's rules and will be settled in immediately available funds.

## **Notices**

Notices to holders of debt securities will be given by mail to the addresses of such holders as they appear in the security register.

## **The Trustee**

U.S. Bank National Association acts as trustee under each of the senior debt indenture and the subordinated debt indenture.

**Table of Contents**

**DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS**

We may issue warrants for the purchase of common stock, debt securities or other securities registered pursuant to this registration statement and described in this prospectus. We may issue warrants independently or together with other securities that may be attached to or separate from the warrants. We will issue each series of warrants under a separate warrant agreement that will be entered into between us and a bank or trust company, as warrant agent, and will be described in the prospectus supplement relating to the particular issue of warrants. The warrant agent will act solely as our agent in connection with the warrant of such series and will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency for or with holders or beneficial owners of warrants. The following describes certain general terms and provisions of debt warrants or common stock warrants we may offer. We will set forth further terms of the debt warrants, common stock warrants or warrants to purchase other securities and the applicable warrant agreement in the applicable prospectus supplement.

**Common Stock and Preferred Stock Warrants**

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the terms of any common stock or preferred stock warrants, including the following:

the title of such warrants;

the offering price of such warrants, which we may distribute proportionately free of charge to our shareholders (in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may refer to warrants distributed proportionately free of charge to our shareholders as rights to purchase our common stock and any securities not taken by our shareholders may be reoffered to the public);

the aggregate number of such warrants;

the designation and terms of the securities purchasable upon exercise of such warrants;

if applicable, the designation and terms of the securities with which such warrants are issued and the number of such warrants issued with each such security;

if applicable, the date from and after which such warrants and any securities issued therewith will be separately transferable;

the number of shares of securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants and the price at which such shares may be purchased upon exercise;

the date on which the right to exercise such warrants shall commence and the date on which such right shall expire;

if applicable, the minimum or maximum amount of such warrants which may be exercised at any one time;

the currency, currencies or currency units in which the offering price, if any, and the exercise price are payable;

if applicable, a discussion of certain United States federal income tax considerations;

the identity of the warrant agent for the warrants; and

the anti-dilution provisions of the warrants, if any.

**Debt Warrants**

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the terms of any debt warrants, including the following:

the title of the debt warrants;

the offering price for the debt warrants;

**Table of Contents**

the aggregate number of the debt warrants;

the designation and terms of the debt securities purchasable upon exercise of such debt warrants;

if applicable, the designation and terms of the securities with which such debt warrants are issued and the number of such debt warrants issued with each security;

if applicable, the date from and after which such debt warrants and any securities issued therewith will be separately transferable;

the principal amount of debt securities purchasable upon exercise of a debt warrant and the price at which such principal amount of debt securities may be purchased upon exercise;

the date on which the right to exercise such debt warrants shall commence and the date on which such right shall expire;

if applicable, the minimum or maximum amount of such debt warrants which may be exercised at any one time;

whether the debt warrants represented by the debt warrant certificates or debt securities that may be issued upon exercise of the debt warrants will be issued in registered form;

information with respect to book-entry procedures, if any;

the currency, currencies or currency units in which the offering price, if any, and the exercise price are payable;

if applicable, a discussion of certain United States federal income tax considerations;

the identity of the warrant agent for the warrants;

the anti-dilution provisions of such debt warrants, if any;

the redemption or call provisions, if any, applicable to such debt warrants; and

any additional terms of the debt warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of such debt warrants.



**Table of Contents**

**DESCRIPTION OF UNITS**

We may, from time to time, issue units comprised of one or more of the other securities that may be offered under this prospectus, in any combination. Each unit will be issued so that the holder of the unit is also the holder of each security included in the unit. Thus, the holder of a unit will have the rights and obligations of a holder of each included security. The unit agreement under which a unit is issued may provide that the securities included in the unit may not be held or transferred separately at any time, or at any time before a specified date.

Any applicable prospectus supplement will describe:

the designation and material terms of the units and of the securities comprising the units, including whether and under what circumstances those securities may be held or transferred separately;

any material provisions relating to the issuance, payment, settlement, transfer or exchange of the units or of the securities comprising the units; and

any material provisions of the governing unit agreement that differ from those described above.

We may issue units in such amounts and in such numerous, distinct series as we determine.

**Table of Contents**

**PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION**

We may offer the securities covered by this prospectus in any of the following ways (or in any combination) from time to time:

to or through underwriters or dealers;

directly to purchasers or to a single purchaser; or

through agents; or

in at the market offerings, within the meaning of Rule 415(a)(4) of the Securities Act, to or through a market maker or into an existing trading market, on an exchange or otherwise.

Securities also may be offered directly by us or through agents designated by us from time to time. Any such agent will be named, and the terms of any such agency (including any commissions payable by us to any such agent) will be set forth, in the prospectus supplement relating to such securities. Unless otherwise indicated in such prospectus supplement, any such agent will act on a best efforts basis for the period of its appointment. Agents named in a prospectus supplement may be deemed to be underwriters (within the meaning of the Securities Act) of the securities described in such prospectus supplement and, under agreements which may be entered into with us, may be entitled to indemnification by us against certain civil liabilities under the Securities Act or to contribution with respect to payments which the agents may be required to make in respect of such liabilities.

In addition, we may enter into derivative or other hedging transactions with third parties, or sell securities not covered by this prospectus to third parties in privately negotiated transactions. If any applicable prospectus supplement indicates, in connection with such a transaction, such third parties may, pursuant to this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement, sell securities covered by this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement. If so, the third party may use securities borrowed from others to settle such sales and may use securities received from us to close out any related short positions. We may also loan or pledge securities covered by this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement to third parties, who may sell the loaned securities or, in an event of default in the case of a pledge, sell the pledged securities pursuant to this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement.

Any applicable prospectus supplement will set forth the terms of the offering of the securities covered by this prospectus, including:

the name or names of any underwriters, dealers or agents and the amounts of securities underwritten or purchased by each of them, if any;

any material relationship with the underwriter and the nature of such relationship, if any;

the over-allotment options under which underwriters may purchase additional securities, if any;

the public offering price or purchase price of the securities and the proceeds to us and any discounts, commissions, or concessions or other items constituting compensation allowed, re-allowed or paid to underwriters, dealers or agents, if any;

any securities exchanges on which the securities may be listed, if any; and

the manner for refunding any excess amount paid (including whether interest will be paid).

Any public offering price or purchase price and any discounts, commissions, concessions or other items constituting compensation allowed or re-allowed or paid to underwriters, dealers or agents may be changed from time to time.

The securities may be offered and sold from time to time in one or more transactions, including negotiated transactions, at a fixed price or prices or at varying prices determined at the time of sale. If underwriters are used

## **Table of Contents**

in the sale of any securities, the securities will be acquired by the underwriters for their own account and may be resold from time to time in one or more transactions described above. The securities may be either offered to the public through underwriting syndicates represented by managing underwriters, or directly by underwriters. Generally, the underwriters' obligations to purchase the securities will be subject to certain conditions precedent. The underwriters will be obligated to purchase all of the securities if they purchase any of the securities.

We may sell the securities through agents from time to time. If required by applicable law, any applicable prospectus supplement will name any agent involved in the offer or sale of the securities and any commissions we pay to them. Generally, unless otherwise indicated in any applicable prospectus supplement, any agent will be acting on a best efforts basis for the period of its appointment. If a dealer is used in the sale of the securities in respect of which the prospectus is delivered, we will sell such securities to the dealer, as principal. The dealer may then resell such securities to the public at varying prices to be determined by such dealer at the time of resale.

We may authorize underwriters, dealers or agents to solicit offers by certain purchasers to purchase the securities from us at the public offering price set forth in any applicable prospectus supplement or other prices pursuant to delayed delivery or other contracts providing for payment and delivery on a specified date in the future. Any delayed delivery contracts will be subject only to those conditions set forth in any applicable prospectus supplement, and any applicable prospectus supplement will set forth any commissions we pay for solicitation of these delayed delivery contracts.

Each underwriter, dealer and agent participating in the distribution of any offered securities that are issuable in bearer form will agree that it will not offer, sell, resell or deliver, directly or indirectly, offered securities in bearer form in the United States or to United States persons except as otherwise permitted by Treasury Regulations Section 1.163-5(c)(2)(i)(D).

Offered securities may also be offered and sold, if so indicated in any applicable prospectus supplement, in connection with a remarketing upon their purchase, in accordance with a redemption or repayment pursuant to their terms, or otherwise, by one or more remarketing firms, acting as principals for their own accounts or as agents for us. Any remarketing firm will be identified and the terms of its agreements, if any, with us, and its compensation will be described in any applicable prospectus supplement.

We may sell equity securities in an offering at the market, as defined in Rule 415 under the Securities Act. A post-effective amendment to this Registration Statement will be filed to identify the underwriter(s) at the time of the take-down for at the market offerings.

Agents, underwriters and other third parties described above may be entitled under relevant underwriting or other agreements to indemnification by us against certain civil liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribution with respect to payments which the agents, underwriters or other third parties may be required to make in respect thereof. Agents, underwriters and such other third parties may be customers of, engage in transactions with, or perform services for us in the ordinary course of business.

**Table of Contents**

**LEGAL MATTERS**

Certain legal matters in connection with the securities offered by this prospectus will be passed upon for us by Keating Muething & Klekamp PLL, Cincinnati, Ohio. Any underwriters, dealers or agents will be advised by their own legal counsel concerning issues related to any offering.

**EXPERTS**

The financial statements, schedule, and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting incorporated by reference in this prospectus and elsewhere in the registration statement have been so incorporated by reference in reliance upon the reports of Grant Thornton LLP, independent registered public accountants, upon the authority of said firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

Table of Contents**PART II****INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS****Item 14. Other Expenses Of Issuance And Distribution.**

The expenses in connection with the issuance and distribution of the securities being registered, other than underwriting discounts and commissions, are estimated below:

Securities and Exchange Commission registration fee	\$ 12,450
Trustee fees and expenses	*
Legal fees and expenses	*
Accounting fees and expenses	*
Miscellaneous	*
Total	\$ *

\* These fees will be dependent on the type of securities offered and number of offerings and, therefore, cannot be estimated at this time. In accordance with Rule 430B, additional information regarding estimated fees and expenses will be provided at the time information as to an offering is included in a prospectus supplement.

**Item 15. Indemnification Of Directors And Officers.**

Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act of 1933 may be permitted to directors, officers or persons controlling the registrant pursuant to the foregoing provisions, the registrant has been informed that in the opinion of the Securities and Exchange Commission such indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Act and is therefore unenforceable.

Ohio Revised Code, Section 1701.13(E), allows indemnification by the Registrant to any person made or threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, other than an action by or in the right of the Registrant, by reason of the fact that he is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of the Registrant, against expenses, including, attorney's fees, judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with such action, suit or proceeding, if he acted in good faith and in a manner reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the Registrant's best interests and, with respect to criminal actions, in which he had no reasonable cause to believe that his conduct was unlawful. Similar provisions apply to actions brought by or in the right of the Registrant, except that no indemnification shall be made in such cases when the person shall have been adjudged to be liable for negligence or misconduct to the Registrant unless deemed otherwise by the court. Indemnifications are to be made by a majority vote of a quorum of disinterested directors or the written opinion of independent counsel or by the shareholders or by the court.

Article V of the Company's Amended Code of Regulations provides as follows:



---

**Table of Contents**

**INDEMNIFICATION OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS**

Section 1. **Right of Indemnification.**

Each Director, officer and member of a committee of this Corporation, and any person who may have served at the request of this Corporation as a Director, trustee, officer, employee or agent of any other corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, such person's heirs, executors and administrators, shall be indemnified and held harmless by the Corporation, to the furthest extent permitted by law as then in effect, against all costs and expenses reasonably incurred by such person concerning, or in connection with, the defense of any claim asserted or suit or proceeding brought against such person by reason of that person's conduct or actions in such capacity at the time of incurring such costs or expenses, except costs and expenses incurred in relation to matters as to which such person shall have been willfully derelict in the performance of that person's duty. Such costs and expenses shall include the cost of reasonable settlements (with or without suit), judgments, attorneys' fees, costs of suit, fines and penalties and other liabilities (other than amounts paid by any such person to this Corporation or any subsidiary thereof). The right to indemnification conferred in this Section 1 shall be a contract right and shall include the right to be paid by the Corporation the expenses incurred in defending any proceeding in advance of its final dispositions (hereinafter an advancement of expenses). Any advancement of expenses shall be made only upon delivery to the Corporation of an undertaking by or on behalf of such indemnitee, to repay all amounts so advanced if it shall ultimately be determined by final judicial decision from which there is no further right to appeal that such indemnitee is not entitled to be indemnified for such expenses under this Section 1. To the extent any of the indemnification provisions set forth above prove to be ineffective for any reason in furnishing the indemnification provided, each of the persons named above shall be indemnified by the Corporation to the full extent authorized by Ohio law.

Section 2. **Definition of Performance.**

For the purposes of this Article, a Director, officer or member of a committee shall conclusively be deemed not to have been willfully derelict in the performance of such person's duty as such Director, officer or member of committee:

(a) Determination by Suit. In a matter which shall have been the subject of a suit or proceeding in which such person was a party which is disposed of by adjudication on the merits, unless such person shall have been finally adjudged in such suit or proceeding to, have been willfully derelict in the performance of that person's duty as such Director, officer or member of a committee; or

(b) Determination by Committee. In a matter not falling within (a) above, a majority of disinterested members of the Board of Directors or a majority of a committee of disinterested Shareholders of the Corporation, selected as hereinafter provided, shall determine that such person was not willfully derelict. Such determination shall be made by the disinterested members of the Board of Directors except where such members shall determine that such matter should be referred to said committee of disinterested Shareholders.

Section 3. **Selection of Committee.**

The selection of a committee of Shareholders provided above may be made by the majority vote of the disinterested Directors or, if there be no disinterested Director or Directors, by the chief executive officer of the Corporation. A Director or Shareholder shall be deemed disinterested in a matter if such person has no interest therein other than as a Director or Shareholder of the Corporation as the case may be. The Corporation shall pay the fees and expenses of the Shareholders or Directors, as the case may be, incurred in connection with making a determination as above provided.



Section 4. Non-Committee Determination.

In the event that a Director, officer or member of a committee shall be found by some other method not to have been willfully derelict in the performance of such person's duty as such Director, officer or member of a committee, then such determination as to dereliction shall not be questioned on the ground that it was made otherwise than as provided above.

II-2

**Table of Contents**

Section 5. Indemnification by Law or Contract.

The foregoing rights of indemnification and payment of expenses shall not be exclusive of, and shall be in addition to any rights to which any such person may otherwise be entitled as a matter of law or by contract with the Corporation which is expressly permitted hereby.

Section 6. Insurance.

The Corporation may, to the full extent then permitted by law and authorized by the Board of Directors, purchase and maintain insurance or furnish similar protection, including but not limited to trust funds, letters of credit or self-insurance, on behalf of or for any persons described in this Article V, against any liability asserted against and incurred by any such person in any such capacity, or arising out of his status as such, whether or not the Corporation would have the power to indemnify such person against such liability. Insurance may be purchased from or maintained with a person in which the Corporation has a financial interest.

Section 7. Miscellaneous.

The right of indemnification conferred hereby shall be extended to any threatened action, suit or proceeding, and the failure to institute it shall be deemed its final determination. Advances may be made by the Corporation against costs, expenses and fees, as and upon the terms, determined by the Board of Directors.

The Registrant maintains liability insurance for all of its directors and officers ( D&O Insurance ). The D&O Insurance provides for payment on behalf of the directors and officers, up to the policy limits and after expenditure of a specified deductible, of all Loss (as defined) from claims made against them during the policy period for defined wrongful acts, which include errors, misstatements or misleading statements, acts or omissions and neglect or breach of duty by directors and officers in the discharge of their individual or collective duties as such. The D&O Insurance includes the cost of investigations and defenses, appeals and bonds and settlements and judgments and contains various limits, exclusions and reporting requirements.

**Item 16. Exhibits And Financial Statement Schedules.**

**Exhibit**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Description Of Document</b>
1.1(1)	Form of Underwriting Agreement
4.1(2)	<u>Articles of Incorporation (incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement on Form S-3 File No. 333-02613 filed on April 18, 1996 and as amended as reported on Form 8-K filed on May 16, 2007)</u>
4.2(2)	<u>Amended Code of Regulations (incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Form 8-K filed on November 13, 2012)</u>
4.3(1)	Specimen Common Stock Certificate
4.4(1)	Form of Certificate of Designation of Preferred Stock
4.5(1)	Specimen Preferred Stock Certificate

- 4.6(2) Form of Senior Indenture (incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement on Form S-3 File No. 333-178207 filed on November 29, 2011)
- 4.7(2) Form of Subordinated Indenture (incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement on Form S-3 File No. 333-178207 filed on November 29, 2011)
- 4.8(1) Form of Debt Security
- 4.9(1) Form of Deposit Agreement

---

**Table of Contents**

**Exhibit**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Description Of Document</b>
4.10(1)	Form of Depositary Receipt
4.11(1)	Form of Warrant Agreement
4.12(1)	Form of Warrant Certificate
4.13(1)	Form of Unit Agreement
4.14(1)	Form of Unit Certificate
5.1	<u>Opinion of Keating Muething &amp; Klekamp PLL</u>
8.1(1)	Opinion of tax counsel
12.1	<u>Computation of Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u>
23.1	<u>Consent of Grant Thornton LLP</u>
23.2	<u>Consent of Keating Muething &amp; Klekamp PLL (contained in Exhibit 5.1)</u>
24.1	<u>Powers of Attorney (contained on the signature page)</u>
25.1	<u>Statement of Eligibility on Form T-1 under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, of U.S. Bank National Association, as Trustee under the Senior Indenture</u>
25.2	<u>Statement of Eligibility on Form T-1 under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, of U. S. Bank National Association, as Trustee under the Subordinated Indenture</u>

- (1) To be filed as an exhibit to a Current Report on Form 8-K.
- (2) Incorporated by reference from other documents filed with the Commission as indicated.

**Item 17. Undertakings.**

(a) The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes:

(1) To file, during any period in which offers or sales are being made, a post-effective amendment to this Registration Statement:

(ii) To include any prospectus required by Section 10(a)(3) of the Securities Act of 1933;

(iii) To reflect in the prospectus any facts or events arising after the effective date of the Registration Statement (or the most recent post-effective amendment thereof) which, individually or in the aggregate, represent a fundamental change in the information set forth in the Registration Statement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any increase or decrease in volume of securities offered (if the total dollar value of securities offered would not exceed that which was registered) and any deviation from the low or high end of the estimated maximum offering range may be reflected in the form of prospectus filed with the Commission pursuant to Rule 424(b) under the Securities Act of 1933 if, in the aggregate, the changes in volume and price represent no more than a 20% change in the maximum aggregate offering price set forth in the Calculation of Registration Fee table in the effective Registration Statement.

(iv) To include any material information with respect to the plan of distribution not previously disclosed in the Registration Statement or any material change to such information in the Registration Statement;

Provided, however, that paragraphs (a)(1)(i), (ii) and (iii) above do not apply if the registration statement is on Form S-3 and the information required to be included in a post-effective amendment by those paragraphs is contained in reports filed with or furnished to the Commission by the registrant pursuant to Section 13 or

**Table of Contents**

Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 that are incorporated by reference in the registration statement, or is contained in a form of prospectus filed pursuant to Rule 424(b) that is part of the registration statement.

- (2) That, for the purpose of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each such post-effective amendment shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial *bona fide* offering thereof.
- (3) To remove from registration by means of a post-effective amendment any of the securities being registered which remain unsold at the termination of the offering.
- (4) That, for the purpose of determining liability under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser:
  - (i) Each prospectus filed by a registrant pursuant to Rule 424(b)(3) shall be deemed to be part of the Registration Statement as of the date the filed prospectus was deemed part of and included in the Registration Statement; and
  - (ii) Each prospectus required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2), (b)(5), or (b)(7) as part of a Registration Statement in reliance on Rule 430B relating to an offering made pursuant to Rule 415(a)(1)(i), (vii), or (x) for the purpose of providing the information required by section 10(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 shall be deemed to be part of and included in the Registration Statement as of the earlier of the date such form of prospectus is first used after effectiveness or the date of the first contract of sale of securities in the offering described in the prospectus. As provided in Rule 430B, for liability purposes of the issuer and any person that is at that date an underwriter, such date shall be deemed to be a new effective date of the Registration Statement relating to the securities in the Registration Statement to which that prospectus relates, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial *bona fide* offering thereof. Provided, however, that no statement made in a Registration Statement or prospectus that is part of the Registration Statement or made in a document incorporated or deemed incorporated by reference into the Registration Statement or prospectus that is part of the Registration Statement will, as to a purchaser with a time of contract of sale prior to such effective date, supersede or modify any statement that was made in the Registration Statement or prospectus that was part of the Registration Statement or made in any such document immediately prior to such effective date;
- (5) That, for the purpose of determining liability of the registrant under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser in the initial distribution of the securities, the undersigned registrant undertakes that in a primary offering of securities of the undersigned registrant pursuant to this Registration Statement, regardless of the underwriting method used to sell the securities to the purchaser, if the securities are offered or sold to such purchaser by means of any of the following communications, the undersigned registrant will be a seller to the purchaser and will be considered to offer or sell such securities to such purchaser:
  - (i) Any preliminary prospectus or prospectus of the undersigned registrant relating to the offering required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424;
  - (ii) Any free writing prospectus relating to the offering prepared by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant or used or referred to by the undersigned registrant;
  - (iii) The portion of any other free writing prospectus relating to the offering containing material information about the undersigned registrant or its securities provided by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant; and
  - (iv) Any other communication that is an offer in the offering made by the undersigned registrant to the purchaser.

- (b) The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes that, for purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each filing of the registrant's annual report pursuant to Section 13(a) or

II-5

**Table of Contents**

Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 that is incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.

- (c) The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes to supplement the prospectus, after the expiration of the subscription period, to set forth the results of the subscription offer, the transactions by the underwriters during the subscription period, the amount of unsubscribed securities to be purchased by the underwriters, and the terms of any subsequent reoffering thereof. If any public offering by the underwriters is to be made on terms differing from those set forth on the cover page of the prospectus, a post-effective amendment will be filed to set forth the terms of such offering.
  
- (d) If the securities to be registered are to be offered at competitive bidding, the undersigned registrant hereby undertakes: (1) to use its best efforts to distribute prior to the opening of bids, to prospective bidders, underwriters, and dealers, a reasonable number of copies of a prospectus which at that time meets the requirements of Section 10(a) of the Act, and relating to the securities offered at competitive bidding, as contained in the Registration Statement, together with any supplements thereto, and (2) to file an amendment to the Registration Statement reflecting the results of bidding, the terms of the reoffering and related matters to the extent required by the applicable form, not later than the first use, authorized by the issuer after the opening of bids, of a prospectus relating to the securities offered at competitive bidding, unless no further public offering of such securities by the issuer and no reoffering of such securities by the purchasers is proposed to be made.
  
- (e) Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act of 1933 may be permitted to directors, officers and controlling persons of the registrant pursuant to the foregoing provisions, or otherwise, the registrant has been advised that in the opinion of the Securities and Exchange Commission such indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Act and is, therefore, unenforceable. In the event that a claim for indemnification against such liabilities (other than the payment by the registrant of expenses incurred or paid by a director, officer or controlling person of the registrant in the successful defense of any action, suit or proceeding) is asserted by such director, officer or controlling person in connection with the securities being registered, the registrant will, unless in the opinion of its counsel the matter has been settled by controlling precedent, submit to a court of appropriate jurisdiction the question whether such indemnification by it is against public policy as expressed in the Act and will be governed by the final adjudication of such issue.
  
- (f) The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes to file, if necessary, an application for the purpose of determining the eligibility of the Trustee to act under subsection (a) of Section 310 of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939 in accordance with the rules and regulations prescribed by the Securities and Exchange Commission under Section 305(b)(2) of such Act.



Table of Contents**SIGNATURES**

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, the Registrant certifies that it has reasonable grounds to believe that it meets all of the requirements for filing on Form S-3 and has duly caused this Registration Statement to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized in Cincinnati, Ohio, as of the 29<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2017.

**MERIDIAN BIOSCIENCE, INC.**

By: /s/ Melissa A. Lueke  
Melissa A. Lueke,

Executive Vice President and

Chief Financial Officer

KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS, that each individual whose signature appears below constitutes and appoints Jack Kenny and Melissa A. Lueke, and each of them, his or her true and lawful attorneys-in-fact and agents, with full power of substitution, for him or her and in his or her name, place and stead, in any and all capacities, to sign any and all amendments (including post-effective amendments) to this Registration Statement, and to file the same, with all exhibits thereto and all documents in connection therewith, with the Securities and Exchange Commission, granting unto said attorneys-in-fact and agents full power and authority to do and perform each and every act and thing requisite and necessary to be done in and about the premises, as fully to all intents and purposes as he or she might or could do in person, hereby ratifying and confirming all that said attorneys-in-fact and agents, or his or their substitute or substitutes, may lawfully do or cause to be done by virtue hereof.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, this Registration Statement has been signed by the following persons in the capacities and on the dates indicated:

Signature	Title	Date
/s/ John A. Kraeutler John A. Kraeutler	Executive Chairman of the Board	November 29, 2017
/s/ Jack Kenny Jack Kenny	Chief Executive Officer and Director (Principal Executive Officer)	November 29, 2017
/s/ Melissa A. Lueke Melissa A. Lueke	Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer (Principal Financial and Accounting Officer)	November 29, 2017
/s/ James M. Anderson	Director	November 29, 2017

James M. Anderson

/s/ Dwight E. Ellingwood

Director

November 29, 2017

Dwight E. Ellingwood

/s/ John C. McIlwraith

Director

November 29, 2017

John C. McIlwraith

/s/ David C. Phillips

Director

November 29, 2017

David C. Phillips

II-7

**Table of Contents**

Signature	Title	Date
/s/ John M. Rice John M. Rice	Director	November 29, 2017
/s/ Catherine A. Sazdanoff Catherine A. Sazdanoff	Director	November 29, 2017

II-8