LIGAND PHARMACEUTICALS INC

Form 4

March 14, 2006

FORM 4

Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. *See* Instruction 1(b).

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

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

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

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person * MERTES TOD	2. Issuer Name **and** Ticker or Trading Symbol **LIGAND PHARMACEUTICALS INC [LGND]**	5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable)
(Last) (First) (Middle)	3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year) 03/10/2006	_____ Director _____ 10% Owner __X__ Officer (give title _____ Other (specify below) below) V-P, Controller & Treasurer
10275 SCIENCE CENTER DRIVE (Street)	4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)	6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line) _X_ Form filed by One Reporting Person ___ Form filed by More than One Reporting Person
SAN DIEGO, CA 92121		
(City) (State) (Zip)		

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

1.Title of Security (Instr. 3)	2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)		4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)			5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)
			Code	V	Amount	(A) or (D)	Price			

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

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

1. Title of Derivative Security	2. Conversion or Exercise	3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any	4. Transaction Code	5. Number of Derivative Securities	6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)	7. Title and Amount Underlying Securitie (Instr. 3 and 4)

(Instr. 3)	Price of Derivative Security		(Month/Day/Year)	(Instr. 8)	Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5)						
				Code	V	(A)	(D)	Date Exercisable	Expiration Date	Title	Amou or Numb of Sha
Employee Stock Option (right to buy)	$ 11.9	03/10/2006		A		20,000		09/10/2006[(1)]	03/10/2016	Common Stock	20,0

Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships			
	Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other
MERTES TOD 10275 SCIENCE CENTER DRIVE SAN DIEGO, CA 92121			V-P, Controller & Treasurer	

Signatures

By: Barbara J. Olson For: Tod G. Mertes	03/14/2006
**Signature of Reporting Person	Date

Explanation of Responses:

*   If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, *see* Instruction 4(b)(v).

**   Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. *See* 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

(1)   Grant to reporting person of options, exercisable over a 4-year period measured from the date of grant, 12-1/2% after six months, then 1/48th of the Option Shares per month thereafter. The date of grant is 3/10/06.

(2)   No price applies.

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