

Analyses of programs with terms different from those presented above may use a linear interpolation. For example, a four-year project can be evaluated with a rate equal to the average of the three-year and five-year rates. Programs with durations longer than 30 years may use the 30-year interest rate.

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Sunshine Act Meeting

Federal Register Citation of Previous Announcement: 69 FR 7988, February 20, 2004

STATUS: Closed meeting.

PLACE: 450 Fifth Street, NW., Washington, DC.

DATE AND TIME OF PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED MEETING: Wednesday, February 25, 2004, at 12 noon.

CHANGE IN THE MEETING: Cancellation of meeting.

The closed meeting scheduled for Wednesday, February 25, 2004, has been cancelled.

For further information please contact the Office of the Secretary at (202) 942-7070.

Dated: February 23, 2004.

Jonathan G. Katz,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 04-4360 Filed 2-24-04; 11:15 am]

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Securities Act of 1933; Release No. 8389/February 20, 2004]

[Securities Exchange Act of 1934; Release No. 49290/February 20, 2004]

Order Regarding Review of FASB Accounting Support Fee for 2004 Under Section 109 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002

The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (the "Act") establishes criteria that must be met in order for the accounting standards established by an accounting standard-setting body to be recognized as "generally accepted" for purposes of the federal securities laws. Section 109 of the Act provides that all of the budget of an accounting standard-setting body satisfying these criteria shall be payable from an annual accounting support fee assessed and collected against each issuer, as may be necessary or appropriate to pay for the budget and provide for the expenses of the standard setting body, and to provide for an

independent, stable source of funding, subject to review by the Commission. Under section 109(f), the annual accounting support fee shall not exceed the amount of the standard setter's "recoverable budget expenses." Section 109(h) amends section 13(b)(2) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to require issuers to pay the allocable share of a reasonable annual accounting support fee or fees, determined in accordance with section 109 of the Act.

On April 25, 2003, the Commission issued a policy statement concluding that the Financial Accounting Standards Board ("FASB") and its parent organization, the Financial Accounting Foundation ("FAF"), satisfied the criteria for an accounting standard-setting body under the Act, and recognizing the FASB's financial accounting and reporting standards as "generally accepted" under section 108 of the Act.¹ As a consequence of that recognition, the Commission undertook a review of the FASB's accounting support fee for calendar year 2004. In connection with its review, the Commission also reviewed the proposed budget for the FAF and the FASB for calendar year 2004.

Section 109 of the Act also provides that the standard setting body can have additional sources of revenue for its activities, such as earnings from sales of publications, provided that each additional source of revenue shall not jeopardize the actual or perceived independence of the standard setter. In this regard, the Commission also considered the interrelation of the operating budgets of the FAF, the FASB and the Government Accounting Standards Board ("GASB"), the FASB's sister organization, which sets accounting standards to be used by state and local government entities. The Commission has been advised by the FAF that neither the FAF, the FASB nor the GASB will accept contributions from the accounting profession.

After its review, the Commission determined that the 2004 annual accounting support fee for the FASB is consistent with section 109 of the Act. Accordingly,

It is ordered, pursuant to section 109 of the Act, that the FASB may act in accordance with this determination of the Commission.

By the Commission.

Margaret H. McFarland,
Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 04-4271 Filed 2-25-04; 8:45 am]

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Securities Act of 1933; Release No. 8390/February 20, 2004]

[Securities Exchange Act of 1934; Release No. 49291/February 20, 2004]

Order Approving Public Company Accounting Oversight Board Budget and Annual Accounting Support Fee for Calendar Year 2004

The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (the "Act") established the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board ("PCAOB") to oversee the audits of public companies and related matters, to protect investors, and to further the public interest in the preparation of informative, accurate and independent audit reports. The PCAOB is to accomplish these goals through registration of public accounting firms and standard setting, inspection, and disciplinary programs. Section 109 of the Act provides that the PCAOB shall establish a reasonable annual accounting support fee, as may be necessary or appropriate to establish and maintain the PCAOB. Section 109(h) amends section 13(b)(2) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to require issuers to pay the allocable share of a reasonable annual accounting support fee or fees, determined in accordance with section 109 of the Act. Under section 109(f), the aggregate annual accounting support fee shall not exceed the PCAOB's aggregate "recoverable budget expenses," which may include operating, capital and accrued items. Section 109(b) of the Act directs the PCAOB to establish a budget for each fiscal year in accordance with the PCAOB's internal procedures, subject to approval by the Commission.

The PCAOB adopted a budget for calendar year 2004 at an open meeting on November 25, 2003, and submitted that budget to the Commission for approval on November 26, 2003. In accordance with its responsibilities to oversee the PCAOB, the Commission has reviewed the budget proposed by the PCAOB for 2004 and its aggregate accounting support fee for 2004, which will fund the PCAOB's expenditures. During the course of that review, among other things, we reviewed and relied upon representations and supporting documentation from the PCAOB. The Commission did not identify any proposed disbursements in the budget that are not properly recoverable through the annual accounting support fee, and the Commission believes that the aggregate proposed 2004 annual accounting support fee does not exceed the PCAOB's aggregate recoverable

¹ Financial Reporting Release No. 70.

budget expenses for 2004. After its review, the Commission determined that the PCAOB's 2004 budget and annual accounting support fee are consistent with section 109 of the Act. Accordingly,

It is ordered, pursuant to section 109 of the act, that the PCAOB budget and annual accounting support fee for calendar year 2004 are approved.

By the Commission.

Margaret H. McFarland,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 04-4272 Filed 2-25-04; 8:45 am]

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-49292; File No. SR-BSE-2004-01]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change by the Boston Stock Exchange, Inc. Proposing to Initiate a Pilot Program that Allows the Listing of Strike Prices at One-Point Intervals for Certain Stocks Trading under \$20

February 20, 2004.

Pursuant to section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ("Act" or "Exchange Act"),¹ and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,² notice is hereby given that on February 19, 2004, the Boston Stock Exchange, Inc. ("BSE" or "Exchange") filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC" or "Commission") the proposed rule change as described in Items I and II below, which Items have been prepared by the Exchange. The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change from interested persons.

I. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Terms of Substance of the Proposed Rule Change

The BSE proposes to initiate a pilot program ("Pilot Program") that will allow for the listing of options on selected stocks trading below \$20 at one-point intervals. The text of the proposed rule change appears below. Additions are in *italics*.

* * * * *

RULES OF THE BOSTON STOCK EXCHANGE

RULES OF THE BOSTON OPTIONS EXCHANGE FACILITY

Trading of options contracts on BOX

Chapter IV Securities Traded on the Boston Options Exchange Facility

Sec. 6 Series of Options Contracts Open for Trading

(a)-(f) no change

The following rules are in effect until June 5, 2004

Supplementary Material to Section 6

.01 *The interval between strike prices of series of options on individual stocks may be \$2.50 or greater where the strike price is \$25 or less, provided however, that BOX may not list \$2.50 intervals below \$20 (e.g. \$12.50, \$17.50) for any class included within the \$1 Strike Price Pilot Program, as detailed below in Supplementary Material .02, if the addition of \$2.50 intervals would cause the class to have strike price intervals that are \$0.50 apart. Exceptions to the strike price intervals above are set forth in Supplementary Material .02 below.*

.02 *\$1 Strike Price Pilot Program:*
a. *The interval between strike prices of series of options on individual stocks may be \$1.00 or greater (" \$1 Strike Prices") provided the strike price is \$20 or less, but not less than \$3. The listing of \$1 strike prices shall be limited to option classes overlying no more than five (5) individual stocks (the " \$1 Strike Price Pilot Program") as specifically designated by BOXR. BOXR may list \$1 Strike Prices on any other option classes if those classes are specifically designated by other national securities exchanges that employ a similar \$1 Strike Price Pilot Program under their respective rules.*

b. *To be eligible for inclusion into the \$1 Strike Price Pilot Program, an underlying security must close below \$20 in the primary market on the previous trading day. After a security is added to the \$1 Strike Price Pilot Program, BOXR may list \$1 Strike Prices from \$3 to \$20 that are no more than \$5 from the closing price of the underlying on the preceding day. For example, if the underlying security closes at \$13, BOXR may list strike prices from \$8 to \$18. BOXR may not list series with \$1 intervals within \$0.50 of an existing \$2.50 strike price (e.g. \$12.50, \$17.50) in the same series. Additionally, for an option class selected for the \$1 Strike Price Pilot Program, BOXR may not list \$1 Strike Prices on any series having greater than five (5) months until expiration.*

c. *A security shall remain in the \$1 Strike Price Pilot Program until otherwise designated by BOXR. The \$1 Strike Price Pilot Program shall expire on June 5, 2004.*

II. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

In its filing with the Commission, the BSE included statements concerning the purpose of and basis for the proposed rule change and discussed any comments it received on the proposed rule change. The text of these statements may be examined at the places specified in Item III below. The BSE has prepared summaries, set forth in sections A, B, and C below, of the most significant aspects of such statements.

A. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

1. Purpose

The purpose of the proposed rule change is to amend a section of the Rules of the Boston Options Exchange (the "BOX Rules") relating to the interval between strike prices of series of options on individual stocks. Chapter IV, *Securities Traded on the Boston Options Exchange Facility*, Section 6, *Series of Contracts Open for Trading*, of the Box Rules establishes guidelines regarding the addition of series for trading on BOX. The BSE proposes to amend this section of the BOX Rules to implement a pilot program, which will operate until June 5, 2004, and which will allow Boston Options Exchange Regulation, LLC ("BOXR"), the wholly owned subsidiary of the BSE that has been delegated regulatory authority over BOX,³ to list options on up to five underlying equities trading below \$20 at one-point intervals and to list \$1 strike prices on any equity option included in the \$1 strike price pilot program of any other options exchange ("Pilot Program").

Pilot Program: The BSE notes that stock prices in general have dropped over the past few years, with many listings suffering severe declines. As a result, there has been a proliferation of stocks trading below \$20. Some of these stocks are among the most widely held and actively traded equity securities listed on the New York Stock Exchange, Inc., the American Stock Exchange LLC ("Amex"), and Nasdaq, including, for example, Cisco, Oracle, Lucent, JDS Uniphase, AT&T, and Motorola.

³ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 49065 (January 13, 2004) 69 FR 2768 (January 20, 2004).

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.