

DIME COMMUNITY BANCSHARES INC

Form 424B2

September 08, 2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2)**

**Registration No. 333-220175**

PROSPECTUS

\$250,000,000

**Debt Securities**

**Common Stock**

**Preferred Stock**

**Depository Shares**

**Warrants**

**Purchase Contracts**

**Units**

We may offer and sell from time to time up to \$250.0 million of unsecured debt securities, which may consist of notes, debentures, or other evidences of indebtedness; shares of common stock; shares of preferred stock; depository shares; purchase contracts; warrants to purchase other securities; and units consisting of any combination of the above securities. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities listed above. Each time we offer any securities pursuant to this prospectus, we will provide you with a prospectus supplement, and, if necessary, a pricing supplement, that will describe the specific amounts, prices and terms of the securities being offered. These supplements may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. To understand the terms of the securities offered, you should carefully read this prospectus with the applicable supplements, which together provide the specific terms of the securities we are offering.

Our common stock is traded on the Nasdaq National Market under the symbol "DCOM."

This prospectus may be used to offer and sell securities only if accompanied by the prospectus supplement and any applicable pricing supplement for those securities.

**You should read this prospectus and any supplements carefully before you invest. Investing in our securities involves a high degree of risk. See the sections entitled "Risk Factors," on page 6 of this prospectus, in any prospectus supplement and in the documents we file with the Securities and Exchange Commission that are incorporated in this prospectus by reference for a discussion of certain risks and uncertainties you should consider.**

**These securities are not deposits or obligations of a bank or savings association and are not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other governmental agency.**

**Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined that this prospectus or any prospectus supplement is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.**

**The date of this prospectus is September 6, 2017.**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

**IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT INFORMATION PRESENTED IN THIS PROSPECTUS AND THE ACCOMPANYING PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT**

We may provide information to you about the securities we offer in three separate documents that progressively provide more detail:

• this prospectus, which provides general information about Dime Community Bancshares, Inc. and the securities being registered, some of which may not apply to your securities;

• a prospectus supplement, which describes the terms of a particular issuance of securities, some of which may not apply to your securities and which may not include information relating to the prices of the securities being offered; and

• if necessary, a pricing supplement, which describes the pricing terms of your securities.

If the terms of your securities vary among the pricing supplement, the prospectus supplement and the prospectus, you should rely on the information in the following order of priority:

• the pricing supplement, if any;

• the prospectus supplement; and

• this prospectus.

We include cross-references in this prospectus and the prospectus supplement to captions in these materials where you can find further related discussions.

Unless indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, we have not taken any action that would permit us to publicly sell these securities in any jurisdiction outside the United States. If you are an investor outside the United States, you should inform yourself about and comply with any restrictions as to the offering of the securities and the distribution of this prospectus.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<u>ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS</u>	1
<u>CAUTIONARY NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS</u>	2
<u>WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION</u>	4
<u>INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE.</u>	5
<u>RISK FACTORS</u>	6
<u>OUR COMPANY.</u>	6
<u>CONSOLIDATED RATIOS OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES</u>	7
<u>USE OF PROCEEDS</u>	7
<u>REGULATION AND SUPERVISION</u>	7
<u>DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES</u>	9
<u>Debt Securities</u>	9
<u>Common Stock</u>	17
<u>Preferred Stock</u>	19
<u>Depository Shares</u>	22
<u>Warrants</u>	24
<u>Purchase Contracts</u>	25
<u>Units</u>	25
<u>GLOBAL SECURITIES</u>	26
<u>PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION</u>	27
<u>LEGAL OPINIONS</u>	28
<u>EXPERTS</u>	28

TABLE OF CONTENTS

**ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS**

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “SEC”) utilizing a “shelf” registration process. Under this shelf registration process, we may offer and sell, from time to time, the debt securities, common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares, warrants, purchase contracts, or units consisting of a combination of any of the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings, up to a total dollar amount of \$250.0 million. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities registered hereunder. Each time we offer these securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement and, if necessary, a pricing supplement, that will contain specific information about the terms of the offer. The prospectus supplement and any pricing supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus.

You should read this prospectus, the prospectus supplement and any pricing supplement together with the additional information described under the heading “Where You Can Find More Information.”

The information contained in this document speaks only as of the date of this document unless the information specifically indicates that another date applies. We have not authorized anyone to give any information or make any representation about us that is different from, or in addition to, those contained in this prospectus or in any of the materials that we have incorporated into this prospectus. If anyone does give you information of this sort, you should not rely on it.

If you are in a jurisdiction where offers to sell, or solicitations of offers to purchase, the securities offered by this document are unlawful, or if you are a person to whom it is unlawful to direct these types of activities, then the offer presented in this document does not extend to you. This document does not constitute an offer to sell, or a solicitation of an offer to buy, any securities in any jurisdiction to or from any person to whom it is unlawful to make any such offer or solicitation in such jurisdiction.

Unless otherwise indicated or unless the context requires otherwise, all references in this prospectus to “Dime Community Bancshares,” the “Company,” “we,” “us,” “our” or similar references mean Dime Community Bancshares, Inc., and references to the “Bank” mean Dime Community Bank.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

**CAUTIONARY NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS**

This prospectus, including the information incorporated by reference into this prospectus, contains a number of forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the “Exchange Act”). These statements may be identified by use of words such as “anticipate,” “believe,” “could,” “estimate,” “expect,” “intend,” “seek,” “may,” “outlook,” “plan,” “potential,” “project,” “should,” “will,” “would” and similar terms and phrases, including references to assumptions.

Forward-looking statements are based upon various assumptions and analyses made by Dime Community Bancshares in light of management’s experience and its perception of historical trends, current conditions and expected future developments, as well as other factors it believes appropriate under the circumstances. Although we believe that our plans, intentions and expectations as reflected in these forward-looking statements are reasonable, we can give no assurance that these plans, intentions or expectations will be achieved or realized. These statements are not guarantees of future performance and are subject to risks, uncertainties and other factors, many of which are beyond the Company’s control, that could cause actual conditions or results to differ materially from those expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. These factors include, without limitation, the following:

- general economic conditions, either nationally or locally in some or all areas in which the Company conducts business, or conditions in the securities markets or the banking industry, may be less favorable than the Company currently anticipates;
- changes in deposit flows, loan demand, real estate values or the quality and composition of its loan or securities portfolios may adversely affect the business of our wholly-owned banking subsidiary, Dime Community Bank;
- changes in interest rates may adversely affect our net income, mortgage banking income, and other future cash flows, or the market value of our assets, including our investment securities;
- environmental conditions may exist on properties we own, lease or mortgage;
- we may have difficulty attracting new customers or retaining existing customers;
- there may be increases in competitive pressure among financial institutions or from non-financial institutions;
- changes in accounting principles, policies or guidelines may cause the Company’s financial condition to be perceived differently;
- changes in corporate and/or individual income tax laws may adversely affect the Company’s business or financial condition;
- legislation or regulatory changes may adversely affect the Company’s business;
- risks related to our concentration in multifamily and commercial real estate loans;
- technological changes may be more difficult or expensive than the Company anticipates;
- an interruption or breach of security resulting in failures or disruptions in customer account management, general ledger, deposit, loan, or other systems may adversely affect our business and reputation;
- we may not be able to attract or retain key personnel;
- success or consummation of new business initiatives may be more difficult or expensive than the Company anticipates;
- litigation or other matters before regulatory agencies, whether currently existing or commencing in the future, may delay the occurrence or non-occurrence of events longer than the Company anticipates; and
- the timing and occurrence or non-occurrence of events may be subject to circumstances beyond the Company’s control.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

In addition, we routinely evaluate opportunities to expand through acquisitions and frequently conduct due diligence activities in connection with such opportunities. As a result, acquisition discussions and, in some cases, negotiations, may take place at any time, and acquisitions involving cash or our debt or equity securities may occur. We may not be able to successfully integrate any assets, liabilities, customers, systems and management personnel we may acquire into our operations, or to realize related revenue synergies and cost savings within expected time frames.

We assume no obligation for updating our forward-looking statements at any time. When considering these forward-looking statements, you should keep in mind these risks and uncertainties, as well as the other cautionary statements made in this prospectus and the prospectus supplements. You should not place undue reliance on any forward-looking statement, which speaks only as of the date made. You should refer to our periodic and current reports filed with the SEC for specific risks that could cause actual results to be significantly different from those expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements. See “Where You Can Find More Information” and “Risk Factors” below.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

**WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION**

This prospectus incorporates important business and financial information about Dime Community Bancshares from documents filed with the SEC, with which we file registration statements, periodic reports, proxy statements, and other information. Our SEC filings are available over the Internet, at no cost, from the SEC's website at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov) and from our website at [www.dime.com](http://www.dime.com). You may also read and copy any document we file by visiting the SEC's public reference room in Washington, D.C. The SEC's address in Washington, D.C. is 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information about the public reference room. You may also receive copies of documents filed with the SEC, including documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus, at no cost, by addressing your request to:

Dime Community Bancshares, Inc.  
Attn: Anthony J. Rose, Corporate Secretary  
300 Cadman Plaza West, 8th Floor  
Brooklyn, New York 11201

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the SEC. The registration statement contains more information than this prospectus regarding us, including certain exhibits and schedules. You can obtain a copy of the registration statement from the SEC at the address listed above or from the SEC's Internet site.

Except as specifically incorporated by reference into this prospectus, information on the websites listed above is not a part of this prospectus. You should rely only on the information contained in, or incorporated by reference into, this document. No one has been authorized to provide you with information that is different from that contained in, or incorporated by reference into, this document. This document is dated September 6, 2017, and you should assume that the information in this document is accurate only as of such date. You should assume that the information incorporated by reference into this document is accurate only as of the date of such incorporated document.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE**

The SEC allows us to incorporate information into this prospectus by reference to another document separately filed with the SEC. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be a part of this prospectus, except for any information that is superseded by information that is included directly in this document or in a more recent incorporated document. The information incorporated by reference contains information about us and our financial condition and is an important part of this prospectus.

This prospectus incorporates by reference the documents listed below that we have previously filed with the SEC.

SEC Filings	Period or Filing Date (as applicable)
Annual Report on Form 10-K (including portions of our Proxy Statement for our 2017 Annual Meeting of Stockholders filed on April 14, 2017, to the extent specifically incorporated by reference in such Form 10-K)	Year ended December 31, 2016
Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q	Quarters ended March 31, 2017 and June 30, 2017
Current Reports on Form 8-K (other than those portions furnished under Items 2.02 or 7.01 of Form 8-K)	January 6, 2017; January 30, 2017; April 19, 2017; April 28, 2017; May 26, 2017; June 13, 2017; July 17, 2017; and July 28, 2017
The description of our common stock set forth in the Registration Statement filed with the SEC pursuant to Section 12 of the Exchange Act, including any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating such description	October 13, 2015

In addition, we also incorporate by reference all future documents that we file with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act after the date of our initial registration statement relating to the securities covered by this prospectus until the completion of the distribution of such securities. These documents include periodic reports, such as annual reports on Form 10-K and quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, and current reports on Form 8-K (other than current reports furnished under Items 2.02 or 7.01 of Form 8-K), as well as proxy statements.

You can obtain any of the documents incorporated by reference in this document through us, or from the SEC through the SEC's Internet site at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov). Documents incorporated by reference are available from us without charge, excluding any exhibits to those documents, unless the exhibit is specifically incorporated by reference as an exhibit in this prospectus. You can obtain documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus from us by requesting them in writing or by telephone using the following contact information:

Dime Community Bancshares, Inc.  
 Attn: Anthony J. Rose, Corporate Secretary  
 300 Cadman Plaza West, 8th Floor  
 Brooklyn, New York 11201

In addition, we maintain a corporate website, [www.dime.com](http://www.dime.com). We make available, through our website, our annual reports on Form 10-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, current reports on Form 8-K, and any amendments to those reports filed or furnished pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, or the Exchange

Act, as soon as reasonably practicable after we electronically file such material with, or furnish it to, the SEC. This reference to our website is for the convenience of investors as required by the SEC and shall not be deemed to incorporate any information on the website into this Registration Statement.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### **RISK FACTORS**

Before making an investment decision, you should carefully consider the risks described under “Risk Factors” in the applicable prospectus supplement and in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, and in our updates to those Risk Factors in our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, together with all of the other information appearing in this prospectus or incorporated by reference into this prospectus, the prospectus supplement or any applicable pricing supplement, in light of your particular investment objectives and financial circumstances. In addition to those risk factors, there may be additional risks and uncertainties of which management is not aware or focused on or that management deems immaterial. Our business, financial condition or results of operations could be materially adversely affected by any of these risks. The trading price of our securities could decline due to any of these risks, and you may lose all or part of your investment.

### **OUR COMPANY**

Dime Community Bancshares, headquartered in the Brooklyn Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York, is a Delaware corporation. The Company was organized in 1996 and is registered as a savings and loan holding company with the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (the “Federal Reserve”) pursuant to section 10(l) of the Home Owners’ Loan Act, as amended (“HOLA”). The Company engages in commercial banking and financial services through its wholly-owned banking subsidiary, Dime Community Bank. The Company’s primary business is the ownership of the Bank. In 2004, the Company formed Dime Community Capital Trust I as a subsidiary, which issued \$72.2 million of 7.0% trust preferred securities, liquidation amount \$1,000 per security, \$70.7 million of which remained outstanding at June 30, 2017. On June 13, 2017, the Company completed an offering of \$115.0 million 4.50% fixed-to-floating rate subordinated debentures due June 15, 2027. On July 17, 2017, the Company completed the redemption of the \$70.7 million aggregate liquidation amount of the trust preferred securities.

As of June 30, 2017, the Company had consolidated total assets of \$6.26 billion, deposits of \$4.42 billion and total stockholders’ equity of \$580.4 million. The Company’s common stock is traded on the Nasdaq National Market under the symbol “DCOM.”

Dime Community Bank, a New York-chartered stock savings bank formerly known as The Dime Savings Bank of Williamsburgh, was founded in 1864 and operates 27 full service retail banking offices located in the New York City boroughs of Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx, and in Nassau County, New York. The Bank’s principal business is gathering deposits from customers within its market area and via the internet, and investing them primarily in multifamily residential, commercial real estate, mixed use, and, to a lesser extent, commercial and industrial loans, mortgage-backed securities, obligations of the U.S. government and government sponsored enterprises, and corporate debt and equity securities. The substantial majority of the Bank’s lending occurs in the greater New York City metropolitan area. The Bank has four active subsidiaries, including two real estate investment trusts that hold one- to four-family and multifamily residential and commercial real estate loans; Dime Insurance Agency, which engages in general insurance agency activities; and Boulevard Funding Corporation, which holds and manages real estate.

Our principal executive offices are located at 300 Cadman Plaza West, 8th Floor, Brooklyn, New York 11201, and our telephone number is (718) 782-6200. Our internet address is [www.dime.com](http://www.dime.com). The information contained on our website should not be considered part of this prospectus, and the reference to our website does not constitute incorporation by reference of the information contained on the website. Additional information about us and our subsidiaries is included in documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus. See “Where You Can Find More Information.”

TABLE OF CONTENTS**CONSOLIDATED RATIOS OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES**

Our consolidated ratios of earnings to fixed charges were as follows for the periods presented:

	Six Months Ended			Years ended December 31,				
	June 30,			2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Consolidated Ratios of Earnings to Fixed Charges	2017	2016	2016	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Including interest on deposits	2.27x	5.15x	3.48x	2.60x	2.50x	2.51x	1.77x	
Excluding interest on deposits	4.57x	10.50x	7.25x	4.11x	3.49x	3.58x	2.95x	

The ratio of earnings to fixed charges is calculated in accordance with SEC requirements and computed by adding income before taxes plus fixed charges and dividing that sum by fixed charges. A statement setting forth details of the computation of the ratios of earnings to fixed charges is included as Exhibit 12.1 to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. On June 13, 2017, the Company completed an offering of \$115.0 million 4.50% fixed-to-floating rate subordinated debentures due June 15, 2027. On July 17, 2017, the Company completed the redemption of its \$70.7 million aggregate liquidation amount of outstanding trust preferred securities.

**USE OF PROCEEDS**

The Company intends to use the net proceeds from the sale of the securities for general corporate purposes unless otherwise indicated in the prospectus supplement relating to a specific issuance of securities. The Company's general corporate purposes will likely include support for organic growth, and may also include, among other things, financing possible acquisitions of branches or other financial institutions, diversification into other banking-related businesses, extending credit to, or funding investments in, our subsidiaries, repaying, reducing or refinancing indebtedness, or repurchasing our outstanding common stock.

The precise amounts and the timing of our use of the net proceeds will depend upon market conditions, our subsidiaries' funding requirements, the availability of other funds and other factors. Until we use the net proceeds from the sale of any of the securities for general corporate purposes, we will use the net proceeds to reduce our indebtedness or for temporary investments. We expect that we will, on a recurrent basis, engage in additional financings as the need arises to finance our corporate strategies to support our growth, to fund our subsidiaries, or otherwise.

**REGULATION AND SUPERVISION**

The Company is subject to regulation and examination by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and, more specifically, the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia. The Bank has elected to be treated as a "savings association" under Section 10(l) of HOLA, for purposes of the regulation of the Company. Accordingly, the Company will be regulated as a savings and loan holding company by the Federal Reserve as long as the Bank continues to satisfy the requirements to remain a "qualified thrift lender" under HOLA. If the Bank fails to remain a qualified thrift lender, the Company must register with the Federal Reserve, and be treated as, a bank holding company. The Company does not expect that regulation as a bank holding company rather than a savings and loan holding company would be a significant change.

As a publicly held company, the Company is also required to file certain reports with, and otherwise comply with the rules and regulations of, both the SEC, under the federal securities laws, and the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia.

As a holding company for a bank, the Company's rights and the rights of our creditors and the holders of the securities we are offering under this prospectus to participate in the assets of any of our subsidiaries upon liquidation or reorganization will be subject to the prior claims of the subsidiaries' creditors, except to the extent that we ourselves may be a creditor with recognized claims.

In addition, dividends, loans and advances from the Bank to us are restricted by federal law.

The Bank is a New York chartered stock savings bank. The Bank's primary regulator is the New York State Department of Financial Services (the "NYDFS"), and the Bank's primary federal regulator is the FDIC, which regulates and examines state chartered banks that are not members of the Federal Reserve System. The FDIC also administers laws and regulations applicable to insured depository institutions.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Bank's deposit accounts are insured up to applicable limits by the FDIC under the Deposit Insurance Fund ("DIF"). The Bank is required to file reports with both the NYSDFS and the FDIC concerning its activities and financial condition, and to obtain regulatory approval prior to entering into certain transactions, such as mergers with, or acquisitions of, other depository institutions. Both the NYSDFS and the FDIC conduct periodic examinations to assess the Bank's safety and soundness and compliance with various regulatory requirements. This regulation and supervision establishes a comprehensive framework of activities in which a state-chartered savings bank may engage and is intended primarily for the protection of the DIF and depositors and generally is not intended for the protection of shareholders, investors or creditors other than insured depositors.

Our regulators possess significant discretion in connection with their supervisory and enforcement activities and examination policies, including policies with respect to the classification of assets and the establishment of adequate loan loss reserves for regulatory purposes. Any change in such policies or applicable legislation could have a material adverse impact on the operations of either the Bank or the Company.

For a discussion of the material elements of the regulatory framework applicable to savings and loan holding companies and their subsidiaries, and specific information relevant to us and the Bank, you should refer to our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2016, and any other subsequent reports filed by us with the SEC, which are incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE SECURITIES**

This prospectus contains a summary of the debt securities, common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares, warrants, purchase contracts, and units that may be offered under this prospectus. The following summaries are not meant to be a complete description of each security. The prospectus supplement and the pricing supplement, if applicable, contain the material terms and conditions for each security. You should read all of these documents as well as the documents filed as exhibits to or incorporated by reference to this registration statement. Capitalized terms used in this prospectus that are not defined will have the meanings given them in these documents.

#### **Description of Debt Securities**

##### General

We may issue senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities, either of which may be issued as convertible or exchangeable debt securities. This prospectus describes the general terms and conditions of the debt securities that we may offer and sell pursuant to this prospectus. When we offer to sell a particular series of debt securities, we will describe the specific terms of the securities in a prospectus supplement to this prospectus. The prospectus supplement will also indicate whether the general terms and provisions described in this prospectus apply to a particular series of debt securities. The terms and conditions of the debt securities of a series may be different in one or more respects from the terms and conditions described below. If so, those differences will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

We will issue the debt securities in one or more series pursuant to either a senior indenture between us and Wilmington Trust, National Association, as trustee (or such other trustee as identified in the applicable prospectus supplement), or a subordinated indenture between us and Wilmington Trust, National Association, as trustee (or such other trustee as identified in the applicable prospectus supplement). The following description of provisions of the indentures does not purport to be complete and is subject to, and qualified in its entirety by reference to, the indentures, each of which has been filed with the SEC as an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part. We urge you to read the indentures and any supplemental indenture or similar document that is filed, because they, and not this description, define your rights as holder of our debt securities. All capitalized terms have the meanings specified in the indentures.

Neither indenture limits the amount of debt securities that we may issue under the indenture. We may, without the consent of the holders of the debt securities of any series, issue additional debt securities ranking equally with, and otherwise similar in all respects to, the debt securities of the series (except for any differences in the issue price and, if applicable, the initial interest accrual date and interest payment date) so that those additional debt securities will be consolidated and form a single series with the debt securities of the series previously offered and sold; provided that if the additional debt securities are not fungible with the debt securities of the series previously offered or sold for U.S. federal income tax purposes, the additional debt securities will have a separate CUSIP or other identifying number. At the date of this prospectus, we had not issued any debt securities under either indenture.

Except for the limitations on consolidation, merger and sale of all or substantially all of our assets contained in the indentures, the terms of the indentures do not contain any covenants or other provisions designed to afford holders of any debt securities protection with respect to our operations, financial condition or transactions involving us. Neither indenture contains provisions that would afford holders of debt securities protection in the event of a sudden and significant decline in our credit quality or a takeover, recapitalization or highly leveraged or similar transaction. Accordingly, we could in the future enter into transactions that could increase the amount of indebtedness outstanding at that time or otherwise adversely affect our capital structure or credit rating.

The debt securities will be our direct unsecured general obligations. Neither indenture requires our subsidiaries to guarantee the debt securities. As a result, the holders of debt securities will generally have a junior position to claims of all creditors and preferred shareholders of our subsidiaries.

#### Senior Debt Securities

Senior Debt Securities will be issued under the senior debt indenture. Payment of the principal, premium, if any, and interest on the senior debt securities will rank equally in right of payment with all of our other unsecured senior debt.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Subordinated Debt Securities

Subordinated debt securities will be issued under the subordinated debt indenture. Payment of the principal, premium, if any, and interest on the subordinated debt securities will be subordinate and junior in priority of payment to prior payment in full of all of our senior indebtedness, including senior debt securities and other debt to the extent described in a prospectus supplement.

Unless otherwise stated in the applicable prospectus supplement, it is currently intended that the subordinated debt securities will qualify as Tier 2 Capital under the guidelines established by the Federal Reserve for savings and loan holding companies. The guidelines set forth specific criteria for subordinated debt to qualify as Tier 2 Capital. Among other things, the subordinated debt must:

- be unsecured;
- have an average maturity of at least five years;
- be subordinated in right of payment;
- not contain provisions permitting the holders of the debt to accelerate payment of principal prior to maturity except in the event of bankruptcy of the issuer;
- not contain provisions permitting the issuer of the debt to redeem the security prior to the maturity date without prior approval of the Federal Reserve; and
- not contain provisions that would adversely affect liquidity or unduly restrict management's flexibility to operate the organization, particularly in times of financial difficulty, such as limitations on additional secured or senior borrowings, sales or dispositions of assets or changes in control.

### Terms of Each Series of Debt Securities to be Provided Supplementally

A prospectus supplement and any supplemental indenture relating to any series of debt securities being offered will include specific terms relating to the offering. These terms will include some or all of the following:

- the form and title of the debt securities;
- whether the debt securities are senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities and the terms of subordination;
- the principal amount of the debt securities;
- the price(s), expressed as a percentage of the principal amount, at which we will sell the debt securities;
- the denominations in which the debt securities will be issued;
- the date(s) when principal payments are due on the debt securities;
- the interest rate(s) on the debt securities, which may be fixed or variable, per annum or otherwise, and the method used to determine the rate(s), the dates on which interest will begin to accrue and be payable, and any regular record date for the interest payable on any interest payment date;
- the place(s) where principal of, premium and interest on the debt securities will be payable;
- the currency or currencies of payment of principal or interest;
- the portion of the principal of the debt securities payable upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity date, if other than the entire principal amount;
- provisions governing redemption of the debt securities, including any redemption or purchase requirements pursuant to any sinking fund or analogous provisions or at the option of a holder of debt securities, and the redemption price and other detailed terms and provisions of such repurchase obligations;
- any right we may have to defer payments of interest by extending the dates payments are due and whether interest on those deferred amounts will be payable as well;

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

the terms, if any, upon which the debt securities are convertible into other securities of ours and the terms and conditions upon which any conversion will be effected, including the initial conversion price or rate, the conversion period and any other provisions in addition to or instead of those described in this prospectus;

- any additional or modified events of default from those described in this prospectus or in the indenture and any change in the acceleration provisions described in this prospectus or in the indenture;
- any additional or modified covenants from those described in this prospectus or in the applicable indenture; and
- any depositaries, interest rate calculation agents, exchange rate calculation agents or other agents with respect to the debt securities.

We may issue debt securities under the indentures as “discount securities,” which means they may be offered and sold at a discount below their stated principal amount. These debt securities, as well as other debt securities that are not issued at a discount, may, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, be treated as if they were issued with “original issue discount,” because of interest payment and other characteristics. Special U.S. federal income tax considerations applicable to debt securities issued with original issue discount will be described in more detail in any applicable prospectus supplement.

The applicable prospectus supplement will also set forth the securities exchange or quotation system on which debt securities are listed or quoted, if any.

### Provisions Contained in the Indentures

#### Governing Law

The indentures and the debt securities will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the laws of the State of New York.

#### Global Securities

We may issue the debt securities of a series in whole or in part in the form of one or more fully registered global securities that we will deposit with a depositary or with a nominee for a depositary identified in the applicable prospectus supplement and registered in the name of such depositary or nominee. In such case, we will issue one or more registered global securities denominated in an amount equal to the aggregate principal amount of all of the debt securities of the series to be issued and represented by such registered global security or securities. Unless and until it is exchanged in whole or in part for debt securities in definitive registered form, a registered global security may not be transferred except as a whole by the depositary for such registered global security to its nominee; by a nominee of the depositary to the depositary or another nominee of the depositary; or by the depositary or its nominee to a successor of the depositary or a nominee of the successor.

The prospectus supplement relating to a series of debt securities will describe the specific terms of the depositary arrangement with respect to any portion of such series represented by a registered global security.

We anticipate that the following provisions will apply to all depositary arrangements for debt securities:

- ownership of beneficial interests in a registered global security will be limited to persons that have accounts with the depositary for the registered global security, those persons being referred to as “participants,” or persons that may hold interests through participants;
- upon the issuance of a registered global security, the depositary for the registered global security will credit, on its book-entry registration and transfer system, the participants’ accounts with the respective principal amounts of the debt securities represented by the registered global security beneficially owned by the participants;

any dealers, underwriters, or agents participating in the distribution of the debt securities will designate the accounts to be credited; and

ownership of any beneficial interest in the registered global security will be shown on, and the transfer of any ownership interest will be effected only through, records maintained by the depository for the registered global security (with respect to interests of participants) and on the records of participants (with respect to interests of persons holding through participants).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The laws of some states may require that certain purchasers of securities take physical delivery of the securities in definitive form. These laws may limit the ability of those persons to own, transfer or pledge beneficial interests in registered global securities.

So long as the depository for a registered global security, or its nominee, is the registered owner of the registered global security, the depository or the nominee, as the case may be, will be considered the sole owner or holder of the debt securities represented by the registered global security for all purposes under the indenture. Except as set forth below, owners of beneficial interests in a registered global security:

- will not be entitled to have the debt securities represented by a registered global security registered in their names;
- will not receive or be entitled to receive physical delivery of the debt securities in the definitive form; and
- will not be considered the owners or holders of the debt securities under the indenture.

Accordingly, each person owning a beneficial interest in a registered global security must rely on the procedures of the depository for the registered global security and, if the person is not a participant, on the procedures of a participant through which the person owns its interest, to exercise any rights of a holder under the indenture.

We understand that under existing industry practices, if we request any action of holders or if an owner of a beneficial interest in a registered global security desires to give or take any action that a holder is entitled to give or take under the indenture, the depository for the registered global security would authorize the participants holding the relevant beneficial interests to give or take the action, and those participants would authorize beneficial owners owning through those participants to give or take the action or would otherwise act upon the instructions of beneficial owners holding through them.

We will make payments of principal and premium, if any, and interest, if any, on debt securities represented by a registered global security registered in the name of a depository or its nominee to the depository or its nominee, as the case may be, as the registered owners of the registered global security. None of us, the trustee or any other agent of us or the trustee will be responsible or liable for any aspect of the records relating to, or payments made on account of, beneficial ownership interests in the registered global security or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records relating to the beneficial ownership interests.

We expect that the depository for any debt securities represented by a registered global security, upon receipt of any payments of principal and premium, if any, and interest, if any, in respect of the registered global security, will immediately credit participants' accounts with payments in amounts proportionate to their respective beneficial interests in the registered global security as shown on the records of the depository. We also expect that standing customer instructions and customary practices will govern payments by participants to owners of beneficial interests in the registered global security held through the participants, as is now the case with the securities held for the accounts of customers in bearer form or registered in "street name." We also expect that any of these payments will be the responsibility of the participants.

If the depository for any debt securities represented by a registered global security is at any time unwilling or unable to continue as depository or ceases to be a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act, we will appoint an eligible successor depository. If we fail to appoint an eligible successor depository within 90 days, we will issue the debt securities in definitive form in exchange for the registered global security. In addition, we may at any time and in our sole discretion decide not to have any of the debt securities of a series represented by one or more registered global securities. In such event, we will issue debt securities of that series in a definitive form in exchange for all of the registered global securities representing the debt securities. The trustee will register any debt securities issued in definitive form in exchange for a registered global security in such name or names as the depository, based upon instructions from its participants, shall instruct the trustee.

Conversion or Exchange Rights

Debt securities that we issue may be convertible into or exchangeable for other securities or property of us. The terms and conditions of conversion or exchange will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. The terms will include, among others, the following:

• provisions regarding the ability of us or the holder to convert or exchange the debt securities;

12

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

the conversion or exchange price, and any events requiring adjustment to the conversion or exchange price;  
the conversion or exchange period; and  
provisions affecting conversion or exchange in the event of our redemption of the debt securities.  
Information Concerning the Indenture Trustee

Under provisions of the indentures and the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended (the “Trust Indenture Act”), if a trustee has or shall acquire a conflicting interest within the meaning of the Trust Indenture Act, the trustee shall either eliminate such interest or resign in the manner provided by the indentures. Any resignation will require the appointment of a successor trustee under the applicable indenture in accordance with its terms and conditions.

The trustee may resign with respect to one or more series of debt securities and a successor trustee may be appointed by us to act with respect to any such series. The trustee may be removed with respect to a series of debt securities by the Company in accordance with the terms of the Indenture, or by the holders of a majority of the aggregate principal amount of such series at any time.

Each indenture contains certain limitations on the right of the trustee thereunder, in the event that it becomes our creditor, to obtain payment of claims in some cases, or to realize on property received in respect of any such claim, as security or otherwise.

### No Individual Liability of Officers, Directors, Employees or Stockholders

The indentures provide that none of our officers, directors, employees or stockholders will have any liability for any of our obligations under the indentures or the debt securities or for any claim based on, inspect of, or by reason of such obligations or their creation. Each holder of debt securities, by accepting a debt security, waives and releases all such liability. The waiver and release are part of the consideration for the issuance of the debt securities.

### Legal Defeasance

We may deposit with the trustee, in trust, cash or U.S. government securities in an amount that, which through the payment of interest and principal in accordance with their terms, will provide, not later than one day before the due date of any payment of money, an amount in cash, which is sufficient to make all payments of principal and interest on, and any mandatory sinking fund payments in respect of, the debt securities of that series on the due dates for such payments in accordance with the terms of the indenture and those debt securities. If we make such a deposit, unless otherwise provided under the applicable series of debt securities, we will be discharged from any and all obligations in respect of the debt securities of such series (except for obligations relating to the transfer or exchange of debt securities and the replacement of stolen, lost or mutilated debt securities and relating to maintaining paying agencies and the treatment of funds held by paying agents and certain rights of the trustee and our obligations with respect thereto). However, this discharge may occur only if, among other things, we have delivered to the trustee a legal opinion stating that we have received from, or there has been published by, the U.S. Internal Revenue Service a ruling or, since the date of execution of the indenture, there has been a change in the applicable U.S. federal income tax law, in either case to the effect that, and, based thereon confirming that, the holders of the debt securities of that series will not recognize income, gain or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes as a result of the deposit, defeasance and discharge and will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on the same amounts and in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if the deposit, defeasance and discharge had not occurred.

### Covenant Defeasance

Under the indentures (and unless otherwise provided by the terms of the applicable series of debt securities), upon making the deposit and delivering the legal opinion described above under “—Legal Defeasance,” we will not need to

comply with certain the covenants, including those described below under “—Consolidation, Merger or Asset Sale,” as well as any additional covenants that may be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement, and any such noncompliance will not constitute a default or an event of default with respect to the debt securities of that series, or covenant defeasance.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

If we exercise our option to effect covenant defeasance with respect to any series of debt securities and the debt securities of that series are declared due and payable because of the occurrence of any event of default, the amounts on deposit with the trustee will be sufficient to pay amounts due on the debt securities of that series at the time of their stated maturity but may not be sufficient to pay amounts due on the debt securities of that series at the time of the acceleration resulting from the event of default. We will remain liable for those payments.

### Satisfaction and Discharge

We may discharge our obligations under either indenture and the debt securities of a series (except for certain surviving rights of the trustee and our obligations in connection therewith) if: (a) all outstanding debt securities of that series and all other outstanding debt securities issued under such indenture (i) have been delivered for cancellation, or (ii) (1) have become due and payable, (2) will become due and payable at their stated maturity within one year, (3) are to be called for redemption within one year under arrangements satisfactory to the trustee for the giving of notice and redemption by the trustee or (4) are deemed paid and discharged in a legal defeasance described above (and in the case of clauses (1), (2) and (3), we have irrevocably deposited with the trustee an amount sufficient to pay and discharge the principal of (and premium, if any), and interest on all outstanding debt securities and any other sums due on the stated maturity date or redemption date, as the case may be); (b) we have paid all other sums payable by us under such indenture; and (c) we have delivered an officers' certificate and opinion of counsel confirming.

### Consolidation, Merger or Asset Sale

The indentures provide that we may not consolidate with or merge with or into, or convey, transfer or lease all or substantially all of our properties and assets to any person, and we may not permit any other person to consolidate with or merge into us or to convey, transfer or lease all or substantially all of its properties and assets to us, unless the following conditions are satisfied:

we are the surviving person or the successor person (if not us) is a corporation organized and validly existing under the laws of any United States domestic jurisdiction and expressly assumes, by a supplemental indenture, our obligations on the debt securities and under such indenture; immediately after giving effect to such transaction, and treating any indebtedness that becomes an obligation of us or our subsidiaries as a result of such transaction as having been incurred by us or such subsidiary at the effective date of such transaction, no default or event of default under such indenture shall have occurred and be continuing; and we have complied with our obligations to deliver certain documentation to the applicable trustee, including an officers' certificate and opinion of counsel each stating that such proposed transaction and any supplemental indenture comply with such indenture

The remaining or acquiring person, association or entity will be substituted for us in the indentures with the same effect as if it had been an original party to the indentures. Thereafter, the successor may exercise our rights and powers under the indentures, in our name or in its own name. If we sell or transfer all or substantially all of our assets, we will be released from all our liabilities and obligations under any indenture and under the debt securities. If we lease all or substantially all of our assets, we will not be released from our obligations under the indentures.

### Events of Default and Remedies

For any series of debt securities, an event of default will include the following events:

default in the payment when due of any interest on any debt securities of that series, and continuance of such default for a period of 30 days (unless we deposit the entire amount of such payment with the trustee or with a paying agent prior to the expiration of such 30-day period);  
default in the payment when due of principal of any debt security of that series;

default in the deposit when due of any sinking fund payment in respect of any debt security of that series;

TABLE OF CONTENTS

default in the performance or breach of any other covenant or warranty in the indenture that applies to such series, which default continues (without such default or breach having been waived in accordance with the provisions of the indenture) for a period of 90 days after we have received written notice of the failure to perform in the manner specified in the indenture;

certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization involving us; and

any other event of default provided in the supplemental indenture under which we issue such series of debt securities.

An event of default for a particular series of debt securities does not necessarily constitute an event of default for any other series of debt securities issued under the indentures.

If an event of default with respect to any outstanding debt securities occurs and is continuing, then the trustee or the holders of 25% of the aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series may, by written notice to us (and to the trustee if given by the holders), accelerate the payment of the principal (or, if the debt securities of that series are discount securities, that portion of the principal amount as may be specified in the terms of that series) of and accrued and unpaid interest, if any, on all debt securities of that series. Such acceleration is automatic, without any notice required, in the case of an event of default resulting from certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization.

At any time after acceleration with respect to debt securities of any series, but before the trustee has obtained a court judgment or decree for payment of the amounts due, the holders of a majority of the aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series may rescind and annul the acceleration if all events of default, other than the non-payment of accelerated principal and interest, if any, with respect to debt securities of that series which have become due solely by such declaration of acceleration, have been cured or waived as provided in the indenture. The prospectus supplement relating to any series of debt securities that are discount securities will contain particular provisions relating to acceleration of a portion of the principal amount of such discount securities upon the occurrence of an event of default.

The indentures provide that the trustee will be under no obligation to exercise any rights or powers under such indenture at the request of any holder of outstanding debt securities unless the trustee is indemnified to its satisfaction against any loss, liability or expense. Subject to certain rights of the trustee, the holders of a majority of the aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series will have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the trustee or exercising any trust or power conferred on the trustee with respect to the debt securities of that series.

No holder of any debt security may institute any proceeding, judicial or otherwise, with respect to the indenture or for the appointment of a receiver or trustee, or for any remedy under the indenture, unless:

such holder has previously given written notice to the trustee of a continuing event of default with respect to the debt securities of that series;

the holders of not less than 25% of the aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series shall have made written request to the trustee to institute proceedings in respect of such event of default in its own name as trustee under the indenture;

such holder or holders have offered to the trustee security and indemnity satisfactory to the trustee against the costs, expenses, and liabilities to be incurred in complying with such request;

the trustee for 60 days after its receipt of such notice, request, and offer of security and indemnity has failed to institute any such proceeding; and

no direction inconsistent with such written request has been given to the trustee during such 60-day period by the holders of a majority of the aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the holder of any debt security will have an absolute and unconditional right to receive payment of the principal of, premium and any interest on that debt security on or after the due dates expressed in that

debt security and to institute suit for the enforcement of payment.

15

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Under the indentures we must furnish the trustee a statement as to compliance with such indenture within 120 days after the end of our fiscal year (beginning with the fiscal year ending immediately following the execution of such indenture). The indentures provide that, other than with respect to payment defaults, the trustee may withhold notice to the holders of debt securities of any series of a default or event of default if it in good faith determines that withholding notice is in the interests of the holders of those debt securities.

### Modification of Indentures

Each indenture provides that we and the trustee may, without the consent of the holders of our debt securities, enter into supplemental indentures to:

evidence the succession of another person to the Company as obligor under the indenture and the assumption by any such successor of the covenants and obligations of the Company in the indenture and debt securities, or evidence the addition or release of any guarantor in accordance with the indenture or any supplemental indenture;

add to the Company's covenants such further covenants, restrictions, conditions or provisions shall be for the protection of the holders of the debt securities and to make the occurrence, or the occurrence and continuance, of a default in any of such additional covenants, restrictions, conditions or provisions an event of default permitting the enforcement of all or any of the several remedies provided in the indenture, with such period of grace, if any, and subject to such conditions as such supplemental indenture may provide;

add to or change any of the provisions of the indenture to provide that bearer securities may be registrable as to principal, to change or eliminate any restrictions on the payment of principal of or any premium or interest on bearer securities or to permit or facilitate the issuance of securities in uncertificated form; provided that any such action shall not adversely affect the interests of the holders of debt securities of any series or any related coupons in any material respect;

surrender any right or power conferred upon the Company;

add or change any of the provisions of the indenture to such extent as shall be necessary to permit or facilitate the issuance of debt securities in uncertificated or global form;

provide for the acceptance of appointment by a successor trustee or facilitate the administration of the trust under the indenture by more than one trustee;

cure any ambiguity, defect or inconsistency in the indenture;

add any additional events of default (and if such events of default are to be for less than all series of debt securities, stating that such are expressly being included solely for the benefit of such series) for the benefit of the holders of the debt securities;

modify, eliminate or add to the provisions of the indenture, if the change or elimination (i) becomes effective only when there are no debt securities outstanding of any series created prior to the change or elimination that are entitled to the benefit of the changed or eliminated provision or (ii) shall not apply to the any debt securities outstanding at the time of such change or elimination;

establish the form of the debt securities of a series and to provide for the issuance of any other series of debt securities under the indenture;

comply with any requirements of the SEC in connection with the qualification of the indenture under the Trust Indenture Act;

modify, eliminate or add to the provisions of the indenture to such extent as shall be necessary to effect the qualification of the indenture under the Trust Indenture Act, or under any similar federal statute hereafter enacted, and to add to the indenture such other provisions as may be expressly permitted by the Trust Indenture Act, excluding certain provisions thereof; or

make any change that does not adversely affect the rights of any holder of debt securities of any series issued under the indenture.

Each indenture also provides that we and the trustee may, with the consent of the holders of not less than a majority of the aggregate principal amount of outstanding debt securities of all series of senior debt securities or



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

subordinated debt securities, as the case may be, then outstanding and affected thereby (voting as one class), add any provisions to, or change in any manner, eliminate or modify in any way the provisions of, the indenture or modify in any manner the rights of the holders of the debt securities. We and the trustee may not, however, without the consent of the holder of each outstanding debt security affected thereby:

reduce the percentage of the aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities, the consent of whose holders is required to amend or supplement the indenture or any supplemental indenture, waive compliance with certain provisions of the indenture or certain defaults and the consequences thereof under the indenture, or any change to such defaults which require such consent;

reduce the rate of or extend the time for payment of interest (including default interest) on any debt securities or any additional amounts owed thereon;

reduce the principal or change the stated maturity of any debt securities;

waive a default or event of default in the payment of the principal of, interest or any Additional Amounts, if any, on any debt securities (except a rescission of acceleration of the debt securities by the holders of at least a majority of the aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities and a waiver of the payment default that resulted from such acceleration);

make any change to certain provisions of the indenture relating to, among other things, holders' rights to receive payment of the principal of and interest on the debt securities and to institute suit for the enforcement of any such payment and waivers of past defaults;

make the principal of or interest, if any, on any debt securities or any Additional Amount with respect thereto payable in any currency other than that stated in the debt securities;

waive or change any redemption payment with respect to any debt securities; or

make any change to provisions of the indenture to remove any of the limitations in this paragraph upon us or the trustee.

### **Description of Common Stock**

The following summary contains a description of the general terms of our common stock. Each share of common stock has the same relative rights as, and is identical in all respects to, each other share of common stock. The rights of the holders of our common stock are governed by the Company's certificate of incorporation and by the Delaware General Corporation Law.

#### General

We are authorized to issue up to 125,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$0.01 per share. As of June 30, 2017, we had 53,614,924 shares issued and 37,675,379 shares of common stock outstanding. Our common stock is listed on the Nasdaq National Market under the symbol "DCOM."

When we issue shares of our common stock, the shares will be fully paid and nonassessable, which means the full purchase price of the shares will have been paid and holders of the shares will not be assessed any additional monies for the shares.

#### Dividends

We can pay dividends out of statutory surplus or from certain net profits if, as and when declared by our board of directors. The payment of dividends is subject to limitations that are imposed by law and applicable regulations. The holders of common stock are entitled to receive and share equally in such dividends as may be declared by the board of directors out of funds legally available therefor. Holders of any preferred stock that may be issued in the future may have a priority over the holders of common stock with respect to dividends.

## Voting Rights

Each holder of our common stock generally is entitled to one vote per share of common stock on all matters voted upon by our stockholders, including the election of directors, and does not have any right to cumulate votes in the election of directors.

17

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

However, our certificate of incorporation provides that any record owner of any outstanding common stock that is beneficially owned, directly or indirectly, by a person who beneficially owns in excess of 10% of the then-issued and outstanding shares of common stock (the “limit”) shall be entitled to cast only one one-hundredth of one vote per share for each share in excess of the limit. Beneficial ownership is determined pursuant to Rule 13d-3 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, and includes shares beneficially owned by such person or any of his or her “affiliates” (as defined in the certificate of incorporation), shares that such person or his or her affiliates have the right to acquire upon the exercise of conversion rights or options and shares as to which such person and his or her affiliates have or share investment or voting power, but shall not include (i) shares beneficially owned by any pension, profit-sharing, stock bonus, ESOP or other compensation plan maintained by us or the Bank, or by any trust or custodial arrangement established in connection with any such plan, which shares are not specifically allocated to a person’s personal account, or (ii) shares that are subject to a revocable proxy and that are not otherwise beneficially owned or deemed by us to be beneficially owned by such person and his or her affiliates. The certificate of incorporation further provides that this provision limiting voting rights may only be amended upon the vote of two-thirds of the votes eligible to be cast by holders of all outstanding shares of voting stock (after giving effect to the limitation on voting rights).

Additionally, under Federal Reserve regulations, a holder of 25% or more of a series of our voting securities, including our common stock, may be subject to regulation as a savings and loan holding company under HOLA or a bank holding company under the Bank Holding Company Act, depending on the nature of the holder. In addition, any savings and loan holding company may be required to obtain the prior approval of the Federal Reserve in order to acquire more than 5% of our common stock and any person other than a savings and loan holding company may be required to obtain the approval of the Federal Reserve to acquire 10% or more of that series. In addition, any company may be required to obtain the prior approval of the NYSDFS to acquire 10% or more of our common stock and may then be deemed a bank holding company for purposes of New York law.

### Liquidation Rights

In the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding-up, the holders of our common stock would be entitled to receive, after payment or provision for payment of all our debts and liabilities, all of our assets available for distribution. If preferred stock is issued, the holders thereof may have a priority over the holders of common stock in the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding-up.

### No Preemptive or Redemption Rights

Holders of our common stock are not entitled to preemptive rights with respect to any shares that may be issued. Our common stock is not subject to redemption.

### Certain Anti-Takeover Provisions

Our certificate of incorporation and bylaws contain a number of provisions that may be deemed to have the effect of discouraging or delaying attempts to gain control of us, including provisions (i) classifying the board of directors into three classes with each class to serve for three years with one class being elected annually; (ii) providing the board with the exclusive power to fix, from time to time, the size of the board; (iii) authorizing a majority vote of the directors then in office to fill vacancies on the board; (iv) providing that a director may be removed prior to the expiration of his or her term only for cause, upon the vote of 80% of the shares entitled to be voted in the election of directors; (v) allowing the board to give due consideration to constituencies other than our stockholders in evaluating acquisition or merger proposals; (vi) requiring the approval of the holders of at least 80% of our outstanding shares of voting stock to approve certain business combinations; (vii) prohibiting cumulative voting for any purpose; (viii) providing that any action required or permitted to be taken by our stockholders may be taken only at an annual or

special meeting and prohibiting stockholder action by written consent in lieu of a meeting; (ix) providing that special meetings of stockholders may be called only by the board of directors; and (x) providing that certain of the foregoing provisions may be amended only by the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the outstanding stock entitled to vote or by a majority of the authorized number of directors. The foregoing provisions could impede a change of control. In particular, classification of the board of directors has the effect of decreasing the number of directors that could be elected in a single year by any person who seeks to elect its designees to a majority of the seats on the board. Furthermore, allowing the board to consider non-stockholder constituencies may have the effect of increasing the board's discretion to reject acquisition or merger proposals.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Additionally, in certain instances, the issuance of authorized but unissued shares of common stock or preferred stock may have an anti-takeover effect. The authority of the board of directors to issue preferred stock with rights and privileges, including voting rights, as it may deem appropriate, may enable the board to prevent a change of control despite a shift in ownership of our common stock. In addition, the board's authority to issue additional shares of common stock may help deter or delay a change of control by increasing the number of shares needed to gain control.

### Transfer Agent

The transfer agent for the common stock is American Stock Transfer and Trust Company.

### Description of Preferred Stock

The following summary contains a description of the general terms of the preferred stock that we may issue pursuant to this prospectus. The specific terms of any series of preferred stock will be described in the prospectus supplement relating to that series of preferred stock. The terms of any series of preferred stock may differ from the terms described below. You should read the particular terms of any series of preferred stock we offer in any prospectus supplement relating to such series, together with the more detailed provisions of our certificate of incorporation and the certificate of designations with respect to each particular series of preferred stock, which will be filed as an exhibit to a document incorporated by reference into this prospectus. The prospectus supplement also will state whether any of the terms summarized below do not apply to the series of preferred stock being offered.

### General

We are authorized to issue up to 9,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$0.01 per share. As of June 30, 2017, we had no shares of preferred stock issued or outstanding.

Our certificate of incorporation permits our board of directors to authorize the issuance of preferred stock in one or more series, without stockholder action. The board of directors can fix the number of shares to be included in each such series, and the designation, powers, preferences, and rights of the shares of each such series and any qualifications, limitations or restrictions thereof. The board can determine the following:

- the voting powers, if any, of the holders of stock of such series in addition to any voting rights affirmatively required by law;
- the rights of shareholders in respect of dividends, including, without limitation, the rate or rates per annum and the time or times at which (or the formula or other method pursuant to which such rate or rates and such time or times may be determined) and conditions upon which the holders of stock of such series will be entitled to receive dividends and other distributions, and whether any such dividends will be cumulative or noncumulative and, if cumulative, the terms upon which such dividends will be cumulative;
- whether the stock of each such series will be redeemable by us at our option or the holder of the stock, and, if redeemable, the terms and conditions upon which the stock of such series may be redeemed;
- the amount payable and the rights or preferences to which the holders of the stock of such series will be entitled upon any voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding-up;
- the terms, if any, upon which shares of stock of such series will be convertible into, or exchangeable for, shares of stock of any other class or classes or of any other series of the same or any other class or classes, including the price or prices or the rate or rates of conversion or exchange and the terms of adjustment, if any; and
- any other designations, preferences, and relative, participating, optional or other special rights, and qualifications, limitations or restrictions thereof, so far as they are not inconsistent with the provisions of the certificate of incorporation and to the full extent now or hereafter permitted by the laws of the State of Delaware.

Prior to the issuance of any series of preferred stock, the board will adopt resolutions creating and designating the series as a series of preferred stock and a certificate of designations setting forth the preferences, rights, limitations and other terms of such series will be filed with the Secretary of State of Delaware. The preferred stock will, when issued, be fully paid and nonassessable.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

The preferred stock will have the dividend, liquidation, redemption and voting rights stated in this section unless the applicable prospectus supplement indicates otherwise. You should read the applicable prospectus supplement relating to the particular series of the preferred stock being offered for specific terms, including:

- the title, stated value and liquidation preferences of the preferred stock and the number of shares offered;
- the initial public offering price at which the preferred stock will be issued;
- the dividend rate(s) (or method of calculation), the dividend periods, the dates on which dividends shall be payable and whether these dividends will be cumulative or noncumulative and, if cumulative, the dates at which the dividends shall begin to cumulate;
- any redemption or sinking fund provisions; and
- any additional dividend, liquidation, redemption, sinking fund and other rights, preferences, privileges, limitations and restrictions.

In addition, unless the applicable prospectus supplement indicates otherwise, we will have the right to “reopen” a previous issue of a series of preferred stock by issuing additional preferred stock of such series.

We may, at our option, with respect to any series of the preferred stock, elect to offer fractional interests in shares of preferred stock, which we call depositary shares. See “Description of Depositary Shares” below.

### Rank

With respect to the payment of dividends and the priority of payments upon liquidation, winding up and dissolution, unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, each series of preferred stock generally will rank senior to all classes of common stock and equally with each other series of preferred stock. The rights of holders of shares of each series of preferred stock will be subordinate to those of our general creditors.

### Dividends

The holders of the preferred stock of each series will be entitled to receive cash dividends out of funds legally available, when, as and if, declared by the board of directors or a duly authorized committee of the board, at the rates and on the dates stated in the applicable prospectus supplement. These rates may be fixed, or variable, or both. If the dividend rate is variable, the applicable prospectus supplement will describe the formula used to determine the dividend rate for each dividend period. We will pay dividends to the holders of record as they appear on our stock books on the record dates determined by the board or an authorized committee of the board. Unless the applicable prospectus supplement indicates otherwise, dividends on any series of preferred stock will be cumulative.

The board will not declare and pay a dividend on any of our stock ranking as to dividends, equal with or junior to the preferred stock unless full dividends on the preferred stock have been declared and paid (or declared and sufficient money set aside for payment).

Until dividends are paid in full or declared and set aside for payment on any series of preferred stock ranking equal with the preferred stock as to dividends:

- we will declare all dividends pro rata among the preferred stock of each series, so that the amount of dividends declared per share on each series will have the same relationship to each other that accrued dividends per share on each series of preferred stock and other preferred stock bear to each other;
- other than the pro rata dividends, we will not declare or pay or set aside for payment dividends, or declare or make any other distribution on any security ranking junior to or equal with the preferred stock offered under this prospectus as to dividends or at liquidation (except dividends or distributions paid for in shares of, or options, warrants or rights

to subscribe or purchase shares of securities ranking junior to or equal with the preferred stock as to dividends and at liquidation); and we will not redeem, purchase or otherwise acquire for any consideration (or have any monies paid to or set aside in a sinking fund) any securities ranking junior to or equal with the preferred stock as to dividends or at liquidation (except by conversion into or exchange for our stock which ranks junior to the preferred stock as to dividends and at liquidation).

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

We will not pay interest, or money in lieu of interest, for any dividend payments on any series of the preferred stock that are in arrears.

### Rights Upon Liquidation

If we voluntarily or involuntarily liquidate, dissolve or wind up our business, the holders of shares of each series of preferred stock and any other securities that have rights equal to that series of preferred stock under these circumstances, will be entitled to receive out of our assets that are available for distribution to stockholders:

• liquidation distributions in the amount stated in the applicable prospectus supplement; and  
• all accrued and unpaid dividends (whether or not earned or declared), before any distribution to holders of common stock or of any securities ranking junior to the series of preferred stock.

Neither the sale of all or any part of our property and business, nor our merger into or consolidation with any other corporation, nor the merger or consolidation of any other corporation with or into us, will be deemed to be a dissolution, liquidation or winding up.

If our assets are insufficient to pay all amounts to which holders of preferred stock are entitled, we will make no distribution on the preferred stock or on any other securities ranking equal to the preferred stock unless we make a pro rata distribution to those holders. After we pay the full amount of the liquidation distribution to which the holders are entitled, the holders will have no right or claim to any of our remaining assets.

Because we are a holding company, our rights, the rights of our creditors and of our stockholders, including the holders of the preferred stock offered by this prospectus, to participate in the assets of any subsidiary upon the subsidiary's liquidation or recapitalization may be subject to the prior claims of the subsidiary's creditors except to the extent that we may ourselves be a creditor with recognized claims against the subsidiary.

### Redemption

A series of the preferred stock may be redeemable, in whole or in part, at our option, and may be subject to mandatory redemption under a sinking fund or otherwise as described in the applicable prospectus supplement. The preferred stock that we redeem will be restored to the status of authorized but unissued shares of preferred stock which we may issue in the future.

If a series of preferred stock is subject to mandatory redemption, the applicable prospectus supplement will specify the number of shares that we will redeem in each year and the redemption price per share together with an amount equal to all accrued and unpaid dividends on those shares to the redemption date. The applicable prospectus supplement will state whether the redemption price can be paid in cash or other property. If the redemption price is to be paid only from the net proceeds of issuing our capital stock, the terms of the series of preferred stock may provide that, if the capital stock has not been issued or if the net proceeds are not sufficient to pay the full redemption price then due, the shares relating to series of the preferred stock shall automatically and mandatorily be converted into shares of our capital stock under the conversion provisions of the applicable prospectus supplement.

If fewer than all of the outstanding shares of any series of the preferred stock are to be redeemed, the redemption will be made in a manner that the 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.

## Voting Rights

Holders of preferred stock generally will not have voting rights except in certain limited circumstances, although the board of directors may provide voting rights for any newly created series of preferred stock that may be issued in the future. The holders of shares of preferred stock will have no voting rights, except as otherwise stated in the applicable prospectus supplement; as otherwise stated in the applicable prospectus supplement; or as required by applicable law.

Under Federal Reserve regulations, if the holders of any series of preferred stock become entitled to vote for the election of directors, that series may then be considered a class of voting securities. A holder of 25% or more

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

of a series may then be subject to regulation as a savings and loan holding company under HOLA or a bank holding company under the Bank Holding Company Act, depending on the nature of the holder. In addition, at the time that the series are deemed a class of voting securities, any savings and loan holding company may be required to obtain the prior approval of the Federal Reserve in order to acquire more than 5% of that series and any person other than a savings and loan holding company may be required to obtain the approval of the Federal Reserve to acquire 10% or more of that series. In addition, at the time that the series are deemed a class of voting securities, any company may be required to obtain the prior approval of the NYSDFS to acquire 10% or more of that series and may then be deemed a bank holding company for purposes of New York law.

### Conversion or Exchange Rights

The terms on which shares of preferred stock of any series may be converted into or exchanged for another class or series of securities will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

### Transfer Agent

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.

## **Description of Depositary Shares**

### General

We may, at our option, elect to offer depositary shares, which represent an interest in fractional shares of preferred stock, rather than full shares of preferred stock. If we do, we will issue to the public receipts, called depositary receipts, for depositary shares, each of which will represent a fraction, to be described in the prospectus supplement, of a share of a particular series of preferred stock.

The shares of any series of preferred stock represented by depositary shares will be deposited with a depositary named in the prospectus supplement. Unless otherwise provided in the prospectus supplement, each owner of a depositary share will be entitled, in proportion to the applicable fractional interest in a share of preferred stock represented by the depositary share, to all the rights and preferences of the preferred stock represented by the depositary share. Those rights include dividend, voting, redemption, conversion and liquidation rights.

### Dividends and Other Distributions

The depositary will distribute all cash dividends or other cash distributions received in respect of the preferred stock to the record holders of depositary shares in proportion to the numbers of depositary shares owned by those holders.

If there is a distribution other than in cash, the depositary will distribute property received by it to the record holders of depositary shares, unless the depositary determines that it is not feasible to make the distribution. If this occurs, the depositary may, with our approval, sell the property and distribute the net proceeds from the sale to the holders.

### Withdrawal of Stock

Unless the related depositary shares have been previously called for redemption, upon surrender of the depositary receipts at the office of the depositary, the holder of the depositary shares will be entitled to delivery, at the office of the depositary to or upon his or her order, of the number of whole shares of the preferred stock and any money or other property represented by the depositary shares. If the depositary receipts delivered by the holder evidence a

number of depositary shares in excess of the number of depositary shares representing the number of whole shares of preferred stock to be withdrawn, the depositary will deliver to the holder at the same time a new depositary receipt evidencing the excess number of depositary shares. In no event will the depositary deliver fractional shares of preferred stock upon surrender of depositary receipts.

#### Redemption of Depositary Shares

Whenever we redeem shares of preferred stock held by the depositary, the depositary will redeem as of the same redemption date the number of depositary shares representing shares of the preferred stock so redeemed, so long as we have paid in full to the depositary the redemption price of the preferred stock to be redeemed plus an

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

amount equal to any accumulated and unpaid dividends on the preferred stock to the date fixed for redemption. The redemption price per depositary share will be equal to the redemption price and any other amounts per share payable on the preferred stock multiplied by the fraction of a share of preferred stock represented by one depositary share. If less than all the depositary shares are to be redeemed, the depositary shares to be redeemed will be selected by lot or pro rata or by any other equitable method as may be determined by the depositary.

After the date fixed for redemption, depositary shares called for redemption will no longer be deemed to be outstanding and all rights of the holders of depositary shares will cease, except the right to receive the moneys payable upon redemption and any money or other property to which the holders of the depositary shares were entitled upon redemption upon surrender to the depositary of the depositary receipts evidencing the depositary shares.

### Voting the Depositary Shares

Upon receipt of notice of any meeting at which the holders of the preferred stock are entitled to vote, the depositary will mail the information contained in the notice of meeting to the record holders of the depositary receipts relating to that preferred stock. The record date for the depositary receipts relating to the preferred stock will be the same date as the record date for the preferred stock. Each record holder of the depositary shares on the record date will be entitled to instruct the depositary as to the exercise of the voting rights pertaining to the number of shares of preferred stock represented by that holder's depositary shares. The depositary will endeavor, insofar as practicable, to vote the number of shares of preferred stock represented by the depositary shares in accordance with those instructions, and we will agree to take all action which may be deemed necessary by the depositary in order to enable the depositary to do so. The depositary will not vote any shares of preferred stock except to the extent it receives specific instructions from the holders of depositary shares representing that number of shares of preferred stock.

### Charges of Depositary

We will pay all transfer and other taxes and governmental charges arising solely from the existence of the depositary arrangements. We will pay charges of the depositary in connection with the initial deposit of the preferred stock and any redemption of the preferred stock. Holders of depositary receipts will pay other transfer and other taxes and governmental charges and such other charges as are expressly provided in the deposit agreement to be for their accounts.

### Resignation and Removal of Depositary

The depositary may resign at any time by delivering to us notice of its election to do so, and we may remove the depositary at any time. Any resignation or removal of the depositary will take effect upon our appointment of a successor depositary and its acceptance of such appointment. The successor depositary must be appointed within 60 days after delivery of the notice of resignation or removal and must be a bank or trust company having its principal office in the United States and having a combined capital and surplus of at least \$50,000,000.

### Notices

The depositary will forward to holders of depositary receipts all notices, reports and other communications, including proxy solicitation materials received from us, which are delivered to the depositary and which we are required to furnish to the holders of the preferred stock.

### Limitation of Liability

Neither we nor the depositary will be liable if either of us is prevented or delayed by law or any circumstance beyond our control in performing our obligations. Our obligations and those of the depositary will be limited to performance in good faith of our and their duties thereunder. We and the depositary will not be obligated to prosecute or defend any legal proceeding in respect of any depositary shares or preferred stock unless satisfactory indemnity is furnished. We and the depositary may rely upon written advice of counsel or accountants, on information provided by persons presenting preferred stock for deposit, holders of depositary receipts or other persons believed to be competent and on documents believed to be genuine.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### **Description of Warrants**

We may issue warrants to purchase debt securities, preferred stock, depositary shares or common stock. We may offer warrants separately or together with one or more additional warrants, debt securities, preferred stock, depositary shares or common stock, or any combination of those securities in the form of units, as described in the appropriate prospectus supplement. If we issue warrants as part of a unit, the accompanying prospectus supplement will specify whether those warrants may be separated from the other securities in the unit prior to the warrants' expiration date. Below is a description of certain general terms and provisions of the warrants that we may offer. Further terms of the warrants will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

The applicable prospectus supplement will contain, where applicable, the following terms of and other information relating to the warrants:

- the specific designation and aggregate number of, and the price at which we will issue, the warrants;
- the currency or currency units in which the offering price, if any, and the exercise price are payable;
- the date on which the right to exercise the warrants will begin and the date on which that right will expire or, if you may not continuously exercise the warrants throughout that period, the specific date or dates on which you may exercise the warrants;
- any applicable anti-dilution provisions;
- any applicable redemption or call provisions;
- the circumstances under which the warrant exercise price may be adjusted;
- whether the warrants will be issued in fully registered form or bearer form, in definitive or global form or in any combination of these forms, although, in any case, the form of a warrant included in a unit will correspond to the form of the unit and of any security included in that unit;
- any applicable material U.S. federal income tax consequences;
- the identity of the warrant agent for the warrants and of any other depositaries, execution or paying agents, transfer agents, registrars or other agents;
- the proposed listing, if any, of the warrants or any securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants on any securities exchange;
- the designation and terms of the debt securities, preferred stock, depositary shares or common stock purchasable upon exercise of the warrants;
- the designation, aggregate principal amount, currency and terms of the debt securities that may be purchased upon exercise of the warrants;
- if applicable, the designation and terms of the debt securities, preferred stock, depositary shares or common stock with which the warrants are issued and the number of warrants issued with each security;
- if applicable, the date from and after which the warrants and the related debt securities, preferred stock, depositary shares or common stock will be separately transferable;
- the principal amount of debt securities, the number of shares of preferred stock, the number of depositary shares or the number of shares of common stock purchasable upon exercise of a warrant and the price at which those shares may be purchased;
- if applicable, the minimum or maximum amount of the warrants that may be exercised at any one time;
- information with respect to book-entry procedures, if any;
- the anti-dilution provisions of the warrants, if any;
- any redemption or call provisions;

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

whether the warrants are to be sold separately or with other securities as parts of units; and any additional terms of the warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the warrants.

### **Description of Purchase Contracts**

We may issue purchase contracts, including purchase contracts issued as part of a unit with one or more other securities, for the purchase or sale of our debt securities, preferred stock, depositary shares or common stock. The price of our debt securities or price per share of common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares, as applicable, may be fixed at the time the purchase contracts are issued or may be determined by reference to a specific formula contained in the purchase contracts. We may issue purchase contracts in such amounts and in as many distinct series as we wish.

The applicable prospectus supplement may contain, where applicable, the following information about the purchase contracts issued under it:

whether the purchase contracts obligate the holder to purchase or sell, or both, our debt securities, common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares, as applicable, and the nature and amount of each of those securities, or method of determining those amounts;

whether the purchase contracts are to be prepaid or not;

whether the purchase contracts are to be settled by delivery, or by reference or linkage to the value, performance or level of our common stock or preferred stock;

any acceleration, cancellation, termination or other provisions relating to the settlement of the purchase contracts;

U.S. federal income tax considerations relevant to the purchase contracts; and

whether the purchase contracts will be issued in fully registered global form.

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the terms of any purchase contracts. The preceding description and any description of purchase contracts in the applicable prospectus supplement does not purport to be complete and is subject to and is qualified in its entirety by reference to the purchase contract agreement and, if applicable, collateral arrangements and depositary arrangements relating to such purchase contracts.

### **Description of Units**

We may issue units comprised of two or more of the other securities described in 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.

The applicable prospectus supplement may describe:

the designation and 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 provisions for the issuance, payment, settlement, transfer or exchange of the units or of the securities comprising the units;

the terms of the unit agreement governing the units;

U.S. federal income tax considerations relevant to the units; and

whether the units will be issued in fully registered or global form.

The preceding description and any description of units in the applicable prospectus supplement does not purport to be complete and is subject to and is qualified in its entirety by reference to the form of unit agreement which will be filed with the SEC in connection with the offering of such units, and, if applicable, collateral arrangements and depositary

arrangements relating to such units.

25

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### **GLOBAL SECURITIES**

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, securities other than common stock may be issued in the form of one or more global certificates, or “global securities,” registered in the name of a depository or its nominee. Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, the depository will be DTC and the securities will be registered in the name of Cede & Co. No person that acquires a beneficial interest in those securities will be entitled to receive a certificate representing that person’s interest in the securities except as described herein or in the applicable prospectus supplement. Unless and until definitive securities are issued under the limited circumstances described below, all references to actions by holders of securities issued in global form will refer to actions taken by DTC upon instructions from its participants, and all references to payments and notices to holders will refer to payments and notices to DTC or Cede & Co., as the registered holder of these securities.

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 Exchange Act. DTC holds securities that DTC participants deposit with DTC. DTC also facilitates the settlement among DTC participants of securities transactions, such as transfers and pledges, in deposited securities through electronic computerized book-entry changes in DTC participants’ accounts, thereby eliminating the need for physical movement of certificates. DTC participants include securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies and clearing corporations, and may include other organizations. DTC is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation, or DTCC. DTCC, in turn, is owned by a number of DTC’s participants and subsidiaries of DTCC as well as by the New York Stock Exchange, Inc., the American Stock Exchange, LLC and the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. Indirect access to the DTC system also is available to others such as banks, brokers, dealers and trust companies that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a participant, either directly or indirectly. The rules applicable to DTC and DTC participants are on file with the SEC.

Persons that are not participants or indirect participants but desire to purchase, sell or otherwise transfer ownership of, or other interests in, securities may do so only through participants and indirect participants. Under a book-entry format, holders may experience some delay in their receipt of payments, as such payments will be forwarded by our designated agent to Cede & Co., as nominee for DTC. DTC will forward such payments to its participants, who will then forward them to indirect participants or holders. Holders will not be recognized by the relevant registrar, transfer agent, trustee or warrant agent as registered holders of the securities entitled to the benefits of our certificate of incorporation or the applicable indenture, warrant agreement or other applicable security. Beneficial owners that are not participants will be permitted to exercise their rights only indirectly through and according to the procedures of participants and, if applicable, indirect participants.

Under the rules, regulations and procedures creating and affecting DTC and its operations as currently in effect, DTC will be required to make book-entry transfers of securities among participants and to receive and transmit payments to participants. DTC rules require participants and indirect participants with which beneficial securities owners have accounts to make book-entry transfers and receive and transmit payments on behalf of their respective account holders.

Because DTC can act only on behalf of participants, who in turn act only on behalf of participants or indirect participants, and certain banks, trust companies and other persons approved by it, the ability of a beneficial owner of securities issued in global form to pledge such securities to persons or entities that do not participate in the DTC system may be limited due to the unavailability of physical certificates for these securities.

DTC will take any action permitted to be taken by a registered holder of any securities under our certificate of incorporation or the relevant indenture, warrant agreement, or other applicable security only at the direction of one or

more participants to whose accounts with DTC such securities are credited.

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, a global security will be exchangeable for the relevant definitive securities registered in the names of persons other than DTC or its nominee only if:

- DTC notifies us that it is unwilling or unable to continue as depository for that global security or if DTC ceases to be a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act when DTC is required to be so registered;

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

we execute and deliver to the relevant registrar, transfer agent, trustee and/or warrant agent an order complying with the requirements of the applicable indenture, warrant agreement, or other security that the global security will be exchangeable for definitive securities in registered form; or there has occurred and is continuing a default in the payment of any amount due in respect of the securities or, in the case of debt securities, an event of default or an event that, with the giving of notice or lapse of time, or both, would constitute an event of default with respect to these debt securities. Any global security that is exchangeable under the preceding sentence will be exchangeable for securities registered in such names as DTC directs.

Upon the occurrence of any event described in the preceding paragraph, DTC is generally required to notify all participants of the availability of definitive securities. Upon DTC surrendering the global security representing the securities and delivery of instructions for re-registration, the registrar, transfer agent, trustee or warrant agent, as the case may be, will reissue the securities as definitive securities, and then such persons will recognize the holders of such definitive securities as registered holders of securities entitled to the benefits of our certificate of incorporation or the relevant indenture, warrant agreement or other security.

Redemption notices will be sent to Cede & Co. as the registered holder of the global securities. If less than all of a series of securities are being redeemed, DTC will determine the amount of the interest of each direct participant to be redeemed in accordance with its then current procedures.

Except as described above, the global security may not be transferred except as a whole by DTC to a nominee of DTC or by a nominee of DTC to DTC or another nominee of DTC or to a successor depository we appoint. Except as described above, DTC may not sell, assign, transfer or otherwise convey any beneficial interest in a global security evidencing all or part of any securities unless the beneficial interest is in an amount equal to an authorized denomination for these securities.

The information in this section concerning DTC and DTC's book-entry system has been obtained from sources that we believe to be accurate, but we assume no responsibility for the accuracy thereof. None of us, any trustees, any registrar and transfer agent or any warrant agent, or any agent of any of them, will have any responsibility or liability for any aspect of DTC's or any participant's records relating to, or for payments made on account of, beneficial interests in a global security, or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records relating to such beneficial interests.

Secondary trading in notes and debentures of corporate issuers is generally settled in clearing-house or next-day funds. In contrast, beneficial interests in a global security, in some cases, may trade in the DTC's same-day funds settlement system, in which secondary market trading activity in those beneficial interests would be required by DTC to settle in immediately available funds. There is no assurance as to the effect, if any, that settlement in immediately available funds would have on trading activity in such beneficial interests. Also, settlement for purchases of beneficial interests in a global security upon the original issuance of the security may be required to be made in immediately available funds.

## **PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION**

We may sell our securities through underwriters or dealers, directly to purchasers, through agents, or through any combination thereof.

Each time that we use this prospectus to sell our securities, we will also provide a prospectus supplement that contains the specific terms of the offering. The prospectus supplement will set forth the terms of the offering of such stock, including:

the name or names of any underwriters, dealers or agents and the type and amounts of securities underwritten or purchased by each of them;  
the public offering price of the securities and the proceeds to us and any discounts, commissions or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers; and  
any public offering price and any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers may be changed from time to time.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

If underwriters are used 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, including negotiated transactions, at a fixed public offering price or at varying prices determined at the time of sale. 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. The prospectus supplement will name any agent involved in the offer or sale of our securities and any commissions we pay to them. Generally, any agent will be acting on a best efforts basis for the period of its appointment.

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

Agents and underwriters may be entitled to indemnification by us against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or to contribution with respect to payments which the agents or underwriters may be required to make in respect thereof. Agents and underwriters may be customers of, engage in transactions with, or perform services for us in the ordinary course of business.

We may enter into derivative transactions with third parties, or sell securities not covered by this prospectus to third parties in privately negotiated transactions. If the applicable prospectus supplement indicates in connection with those derivatives then the third parties may sell securities covered by this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, including in short sale transactions. If so, the third party may use securities pledged by us or borrowed from us or others to settle those sales or to close out any related open borrowings of stock, and may use securities received from us in settlement of those derivatives to close out any related open borrowings of securities. The third party in such sale transactions will be an underwriter and will be identified in the applicable prospectus supplement (or a post-effective amendment).

## **LEGAL OPINIONS**

The validity of the securities offered hereby will be passed upon for us by Luse Gorman, PC, Washington, D.C.

## **EXPERTS**

The consolidated financial statements of Dime Community Bancshares, Inc. as of December 31, 2016 and 2015, and for each of the three years in the period ended December 31, 2016, and the effectiveness of Dime Community Bancshares, Inc.'s internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2016, have been audited by Crowe Horwath LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in their report appearing in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2016 and incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements have been so incorporated in reliance upon the report of such firm given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.