

not influenced by considerations about the sale of fund shares.

Based on information filed with the Commission by funds, Commission staff estimates that there are approximately 7837 mutual fund portfolios that have at least one share class subject to a rule 12b-1 plan.¹ However, many of these portfolios are part of an affiliated group of funds, or mutual fund family, that is overseen by a common board of directors. Although the board must review and approve the rule 12b-1 plan for each fund separately, we have allocated the costs and hourly burden related to rule 12b-1 based on the number of fund families that have at least one fund that charges rule 12b-1 fees, rather than on the total number of mutual fund portfolios that individually have a rule 12b-1 plan.² Based on information filed with the Commission, the staff estimates that there are approximately 330 fund families with common boards of directors that have at least one fund with a rule 12b-1 plan.

Based on previous conversations with fund representatives, Commission staff estimates that for each of the 330 mutual fund families with a portfolio that has a rule 12b-1 plan, the average annual burden of complying with the rule is 425 hours. This estimate takes into account the time needed to prepare quarterly reports to the board of directors, the board's consideration of those reports, and the board's initial or annual consideration of whether to continue the plan.³ We therefore estimate that the total hourly burden per year for all funds to comply with current information collection requirements under rule 12b-1, is 140,250 hours (330 fund families × 425 hours per fund family = 140,250 hours).

If a currently operating fund seeks to (i) adopt a new rule 12b-1 plan or (ii) materially increase the amount it spends for distribution under its rule 12b-1

¹ This estimate is based on information from the Commission's NSAR database.

² This allocation is based on previous conversations with fund representatives on how fund boards comply with the requirements of rule 12b-1. Despite this allocation of hourly burdens and costs, the number of annual responses each year will continue to depend on the number of fund portfolios with rule 12b-1 plans rather than the number of fund families with rule 12b-1 plans. The staff estimates that the number of annual responses per fund portfolio will be four per year (quarterly, with the annual reviews taking place at one of the quarterly intervals). Thus, we estimate that funds will make 31,348 responses (7837 fund portfolios × 4 responses per fund portfolio = 31,348 responses) each year.

³ We do not estimate any costs or time burden related to the recordkeeping requirements in rule 12b-1, as funds are either required to maintain these records pursuant to other rules or would keep these records in any case as a matter of business practice.

plan, rule 12b-1 requires that the fund obtain shareholder approval. As a consequence, the fund will incur the cost of a proxy.⁴ Based on previous conversations with fund representatives, Commission staff estimates that approximately three funds per year prepare a proxy in connection with the adoption or material amendment of a rule 12b-1 plan. Funds typically hire outside legal counsel and proxy solicitation firms to prepare, print, and mail such proxies. The staff further estimates that the cost of each fund's proxy is \$34,372. Thus the total annual cost burden of rule 12b-1 to the fund industry is \$103,116 (3 funds requiring a proxy × \$34,372 per proxy).

The estimate of average burden hours is made solely for the purposes of the Paperwork Reduction Act, and is not derived from a comprehensive or even a representative survey or study of the costs of Commission rules and forms.

The collections of information required by Rule 12b-1 are necessary to obtain the benefits of the rule. Notices to the Commission will not be kept confidential. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid control number.

Written comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the Commission's estimate of the burden of the collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Consideration will be given to comments and suggestions submitted in writing within 60 days of this publication.

Please direct your written comments to Pamela Dyson, Director/Chief Information Officer, Securities and Exchange Commission, C/O Remi Pavlik-Simon, 100 F Street NE., Washington, DC 20549; or send an email to: PRA_Mailbox@sec.gov.

⁴ In general, a fund adopts a rule 12b-1 plan before it begins operations. Therefore, the fund is not required to obtain the approval of its public shareholders because the fund's shares have not yet been offered to the public.

Dated: April 15, 2015.

Brent J. Fields,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2015-08992 Filed 4-17-15; 8:45 am]

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-74724; File No. SR-BX-2015-017]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change by NASDAQ OMX BX, Inc. Relating to Member Application

April 14, 2015.

Pursuant to section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ("Act"),¹ and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,² notice is hereby given that on April 8, 2015, NASDAQ OMX BX, Inc. ("BX" or "Exchange") filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC" or "Commission") the proposed rule change as described in Items I, II, and III, below, which Items have been prepared by the Exchange. The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change from interested persons.

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

BX proposes to amend Rule 1013 titled "New Member Application" to include an expedited application process for firms that are already approved members of NASDAQ OMX PHLX LLC ("PHLX").

The text of the proposed rule change is available on the Exchange's Web site at <http://nasdaqomxbx.cchwallstreet.com>, at the principal office of the Exchange, and at the Commission's Public Reference Room.

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

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

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

the most significant aspects of such statements.

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

1. Purpose

The purpose of the proposed rule change is to amend BX Rule 1013(a)(5), entitled Applicants That Are Members of an Association or Another Exchange, to permit an expedited review for new member applications seeking BX membership provided those applicants are approved members of PHLX.

Specifically, Exchange Rule 1013(a)(5)(C) currently permits the Exchange to accept applicants that gained membership at Financial Industry Regulatory Authority ("FINRA") or The NASDAQ Stock Market LLC ("NASDAQ") when considering a BX new member application. Applicants who are approved members of FINRA or NASDAQ are eligible for an abbreviated waive-in application eliminating the submission and review of duplicative supplemental material that has already been submitted and reviewed in connection with a FINRA or NASDAQ new member application.

At this time, the Exchange proposes to extend the abbreviated application process already in place for approved FINRA and/or NASDAQ members to PHLX members. The Exchange notes that the PHLX qualifications are the same as those applicable to BX membership requirements. PHLX approved members seeking BX membership will be required to submit a fully executed Waive-In Membership Application and Membership Agreement but will not be required to submit any duplicative documentation that was previously provided as part of the PHLX application. These PHLX members would still be required to provide additional information if there has been a material change in status from its original application with PHLX. Applicants will be required to attest that the information provided as part of previously conducted new membership review remains complete and accurate.

The Exchange also proposes to amend language in section (C) of this rule to further harmonize the application with the current NASDAQ application by updating the title of the BX membership application from "Short Form" to "Waive-in" and deleting unnecessary language that does not appear in the corresponding NASDAQ rule. The application is attached as Exhibit 3.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that its proposal is consistent with section 6(b) of the Act³ in general, and furthers the objectives of section 6(b)(5) of the Act⁴ in particular, in that it is designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices, to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to foster cooperation and coordination with persons engaged in facilitating transactions in securities, to remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system and, in general, to protect investors and the public interest.

Today, the BX Membership Department performs similar functions when reviewing new member applications for BX, NASDAQ and PHLX.⁵ The Membership Department reviews: Applicant business plans, clearing arrangements, FOCUS reports, organizational charts, and written supervisory procedures for applicants desiring membership in any of the aforementioned markets. These membership requirements include, but are not limited to, review of registration as a Broker Dealer with the Commission, a net capital review, qualification of associated persons and examining written supervisory procedures. The same material is considered for each new member review conducted by FINRA on behalf of BX.

This proposed amendment is consistent with its current practices today when reviewing applications for members of NASDAQ and FINRA. BX proposes this rule change to harmonize its affiliated exchanges' rules to provide applicants similar application procedures for each of its markets. The PHLX new member review process is consistent with the BX new member review process. Applicants that are members of PHLX should be eligible for the waive-in process when seeking membership on BX similar to current waive-in opportunities available today for NASDAQ and FINRA members.

The proposed rule change would eliminate the duplicate review for prospective BX applicants that were approved for membership by PHLX. The waive-in process will promote efficiency with respect to the

Exchange's membership review process and reduce the burden on applicants that have already been approved for membership on PHLX by reducing the duplicative information and documentation required to be provided to the Exchange for these members. As a result, Exchange staff will be able to focus its regulatory efforts on reviewing any material changes or new information that may affect the applicant's eligibility for Exchange membership.

This proposed rule change does not affect the protection of investors as BX will maintain the vigorous membership review that is conducted today when reviewing PHLX member applications.

B. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on competition not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. The proposed waive-in process for approved PHLX members will not impose any burden on competition, but rather it will remove unnecessary burdens that currently exist for PHLX member applicants seeking BX membership. The proposal will eliminate the redundant review process for PHLX members that currently does not exist for FINRA and NASDAQ members applying to become BX members.

C. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Comments on the Proposed Rule Change Received From Members, Participants, or Others

No written comments were either solicited or received.

III. Date of Effectiveness of the Proposed Rule Change and Timing for Commission Action

Because the foregoing proposed rule change does not significantly affect the protection of investors or the public interest; does not impose any significant burden on competition; and by its terms does not become operative for 30 days from the date on which it was filed, or such shorter time as the Commission may designate, it has become effective pursuant to section 19(b)(3)(A)⁶ of the Act and Rule 19b-4(f)(6) thereunder.⁷

At any time within 60 days of the filing of the proposed rule change, the Commission summarily may temporarily suspend such rule change if it appears to the Commission that such action is: Necessary or appropriate in the public interest; for the protection of

³ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

⁴ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

⁵ Today, FINRA conducts the new member application reviews for NASDAQ and BX pursuant to a 17d-2 and Regulatory Services Agreement. These application reviews are administered by FINRA and subject to BX's final review and decision. PHLX maintains a separate new member application review that is conducted by NASDAQ and not FINRA.

⁶ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

⁷ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

investors; or otherwise in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. If the Commission takes such action, the Commission shall institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule should be approved or disapproved.

IV. Solicitation of Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views and arguments concerning the foregoing, including whether the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

Electronic Comments

- Use the Commission’s Internet comment form (<http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>); or
- Send an email to rule-comments@sec.gov. Please include File Number SR–BX–2015–017 on the subject line.

Paper Comments

- Send paper comments in triplicate to Brent J. Fields, Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street NE., Washington, DC 20549–1090.

All submissions should refer to File Number SR–BX–2015–017. This file number should be included on the subject line if email is used. To help the Commission process and review your comments more efficiently, please use only one method. The Commission will post all comments on the Commission’s Internet Web site (<http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>). Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for Web site viewing and printing in the Commission’s Public Reference Room, 100 F Street NE., Washington, DC 20549, on official business days between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Copies of such filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. All comments received will be posted without change; the Commission does not edit personal identifying information from submissions. You should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. All submissions should refer to File Number SR–BX–2015–017 and should be submitted on or before May 11, 2015.

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.⁸

Brent J. Fields,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2015–08940 Filed 4–17–15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8011–01–P

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

[Disaster Declaration #14259 and #14260]; [RHODE ISLAND Disaster #RI–00013]

Administrative Declaration of a Disaster for the State of Rhode Island

AGENCY: U.S. Small Business Administration.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This is a notice of an Administrative declaration of a disaster for the State of Rhode Island dated 04/06/2015.

Incident: Condo Fire.

Incident Period: 03/11/2015.

DATES: *Effective:* 04/06/2015.

Physical Loan Application Deadline Date: 06/05/2015.

Economic Injury (EIDL) Loan Application Deadline Date: 01/06/2016.

ADDRESSES: Submit completed loan applications to: U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: A. Escobar, Office of Disaster Assistance, U.S. Small Business Administration, 409 3rd Street SW., Suite 6050, Washington, DC 20416.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given that as a result of the Administrator’s disaster declaration, applications for disaster loans may be filed at the address listed above or other locally announced locations.

The following areas have been determined to be adversely affected by the disaster:

Primary Counties: Kent.

Contiguous Counties:

Rhode Island: Bristol, Providence, Washington.

Connecticut: New London, Windham.

The Interest Rates are:

	Percent
<i>For Physical Damage:</i>	
Homeowners With Credit Available Elsewhere	3.625
Homeowners Without Credit Available Elsewhere	1.813
Businesses With Credit Available Elsewhere	6.000

⁸ 17 CFR 200.30–3(a)(12).

	Percent
Businesses Without Credit Available Elsewhere	4.000
Non-Profit Organizations With Credit Available Elsewhere	2.625
Non-Profit Organizations Without Credit Available Elsewhere	2.625
<i>For Economic Injury:</i>	
Businesses & Small Agricultural Cooperatives Without Credit Available Elsewhere	4.000
Non-Profit Organizations Without Credit Available Elsewhere	2.625

The number assigned to this disaster for physical damage is 14259 5 and for economic injury is 14260 0.

The States which received an EIDL Declaration # are Rhode Island, Connecticut.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Numbers 59002 and 59008)

Dated: April 6, 2015.

Maria Contreras-Sweet,
Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2015–08968 Filed 4–17–15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8025–01–P

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

April 17, 2015 [Disaster Declaration #14266 and #14267]

New York Disaster #NY–00158

AGENCY: U.S. Small Business Administration.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This is a notice of an Administrative declaration of a disaster for the State of New York dated 04/09/2015.

Incident: Apartment Building Fire.

Incident Period: 03/06/2015.

Effective Date: 04/09/2015.

Physical Loan Application Deadline Date: 06/08/2015.

Economic Injury (EIDL) Loan Application Deadline Date: 01/11/2016.

ADDRESSES: Submit completed loan applications to: U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: A. Escobar, Office of Disaster Assistance, U.S. Small Business Administration, 409 3rd Street SW., Suite 6050, Washington, DC 20416.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given that as a result of the Administrator’s disaster declaration, applications for disaster loans may be filed at the address listed above or other locally announced locations.

The following areas have been determined to be adversely affected by the disaster: