

Main Street Capital CORP
Form 10-K
March 11, 2011

Use these links to rapidly review the document

[TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

[Item 8. Financial Statements and Supplementary Data](#)

[PART IV](#)

[Table of Contents](#)

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

Form 10-K

(Mark One)

**ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d)
OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**

For the fiscal year ended December 31, 2010

OR

**TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d)
OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**

For the transition period from **to**
Commission File Number: 001-33723

Main Street Capital Corporation

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Maryland

*(State or other jurisdiction
of incorporation or organization)*

41-2230745

*(I.R.S. Employer
Identification No.)*

77056

(Zip Code)

**1300 Post Oak Boulevard, Suite 800
Houston, TX**

(Address of principal executive offices)

(713) 350-6000

(Registrant's telephone number, including area code)

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:

| Title of Each Class | Name of Each Exchange on Which Registered |
|--|--|
| Common Stock, par value \$0.01 per share | New York Stock Exchange |

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act:

Edgar Filing: Main Street Capital CORP - Form 10-K

None

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act. Yes No

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Act. Yes No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days. Yes No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Web site, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files). Yes No

Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendment to this Form 10-K.

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

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

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act). Yes No

The aggregate market value of the registrant's common stock held by non-affiliates of the registrant as of June 30, 2010, was approximately \$184.0 million based upon the last sale price for the registrant's common stock on that date.

The number of outstanding common shares of the registrant as of March 9, 2011 was 18,881,544.

DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

Portions of the registrants' definitive Proxy Statement for its 2010 Annual Meeting of Stockholders, to be filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, are incorporated by reference in this Annual Report on Form 10-K in response to Part III.

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--|-------------|
| <u>PART I</u> | |
| <u>Item 1.</u> <u>Business</u> | <u>1</u> |
| <u>Item 1A.</u> <u>Risk Factors</u> | <u>20</u> |
| <u>Item 1B.</u> <u>Unresolved Staff Comments</u> | <u>36</u> |
| <u>Item 2.</u> <u>Properties</u> | <u>36</u> |
| <u>Item 3.</u> <u>Legal Proceedings</u> | <u>36</u> |
| <u>Item 4.</u> <u>Reserved</u> | <u>36</u> |
| <u>PART II</u> | |
| <u>Item 5.</u> <u>Market for Registrant's Common Equity, Related Stockholder Matters and Issuer Purchases of Equity Securities</u> | <u>37</u> |
| <u>Item 6.</u> <u>Selected Financial Data</u> | <u>42</u> |
| <u>Item 7.</u> <u>Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations</u> | <u>44</u> |
| <u>Item 7A.</u> <u>Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures About Market Risk</u> | <u>62</u> |
| <u>Item 8.</u> <u>Financial Statements and Supplementary Data</u> | <u>64</u> |
| <u>Item 9.</u> <u>Changes in and Disagreements with Accountants on Accounting and Financial Disclosure</u> | <u>118</u> |
| <u>Item 9A.</u> <u>Controls and Procedures</u> | <u>118</u> |
| <u>Item 9B.</u> <u>Other Information</u> | <u>118</u> |
| <u>PART III</u> | |
| <u>Item 10.</u> <u>Directors, Executive Officers and Corporate Governance</u> | <u>118</u> |
| <u>Item 11.</u> <u>Executive Compensation</u> | <u>119</u> |
| <u>Item 12.</u> <u>Security Ownership of Certain Beneficial Owners and Management and Related Stockholder Matters</u> | <u>119</u> |
| <u>Item 13.</u> <u>Certain Relationships and Related Transactions, and Director Independence</u> | <u>119</u> |
| <u>Item 14.</u> <u>Principal Accountant Fees and Services</u> | <u>119</u> |
| <u>PART IV</u> | |
| <u>Item 15.</u> <u>Exhibits and Financial Statement Schedules</u> | <u>120</u> |
| <u>Signatures</u> | <u>123</u> |

Table of Contents

CAUTIONARY STATEMENT CONCERNING FORWARD LOOKING STATEMENTS

This Annual Report on Form 10-K contains forward-looking statements regarding the plans and objectives of management for future operations. Any such forward-looking statements may involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors which may cause our actual results, performance or achievements to be materially different from future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by any forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements, which involve assumptions and describe our future plans, strategies and expectations, are generally identifiable by use of the words "may," "will," "should," "expect," "anticipate," "estimate," "believe," "intend" or "project" or the negative of these words or other variations on these words or comparable terminology. These forward-looking statements are based on assumptions that may be incorrect, and we cannot assure you that the projections included in these forward-looking statements will come to pass. Our actual results could differ materially from those expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements as a result of various factors, including the factors discussed in Item 1A entitled "Risk Factors" in Part I of this Annual Report on Form 10-K and elsewhere in this Annual Report on Form 10-K. Other factors that could cause actual results to differ materially include changes in the economy and future changes in laws or regulations and conditions in our operating areas.

We have based the forward-looking statements included in this Annual Report on Form 10-K on information available to us on the date of this Annual Report on Form 10-K, and we assume no obligation to update any such forward-looking statements, unless we are required to do so by applicable law. However, you are advised to consult any additional disclosures that we may make directly to you or through reports that we in the future may file with the SEC, including subsequent annual reports on Form 10-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q and current reports on Form 8-K.

PART I

Item 1. Business

ORGANIZATION

Main Street Capital Corporation ("MSCC") was formed on March 9, 2007 for the purpose of (i) acquiring 100% of the equity interests of Main Street Mezzanine Fund, LP ("MSMF") and its general partner, Main Street Mezzanine Management, LLC ("MSMF GP"), (ii) acquiring 100% of the equity interests of Main Street Capital Partners, LLC (the "Investment Manager"), (iii) raising capital in an initial public offering, which was completed in October 2007 (the "IPO"), and (iv) thereafter operating as an internally managed business development company ("BDC") under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (the "1940 Act"). MSMF is licensed as a Small Business Investment Company ("SBIC") by the United States Small Business Administration ("SBA") and the Investment Manager acts as MSMF's manager and investment adviser. Because the Investment Manager, which employs all of the executive officers and other employees of MSCC, is wholly owned by us, we do not pay any external investment advisory fees, but instead we incur the net operating costs associated with employing investment and portfolio management professionals through the Investment Manager. The IPO and related transactions discussed above were consummated in October 2007 and are collectively termed the "Formation Transactions."

On January 7, 2010, MSCC consummated transactions (the "Exchange Offer") to exchange 1,239,695 shares of its common stock for approximately 88% of the total dollar value of the limited partner interests in Main Street Capital II, LP ("MSC II" and, together with MSMF, the "Funds"). Pursuant to the terms of the Exchange Offer, 100% of the membership interests in the general partner of MSC II, Main Street Capital II GP, LLC ("MSC II GP"), were also transferred to MSCC for no consideration. MSC II commenced operations in January 2006, is an investment fund that operates as an SBIC, and is also managed by the Investment Manager. The Exchange Offer and related transactions, including the transfer of the MSC II GP interests, are collectively termed the "Exchange Offer Transactions" (see Note J to the consolidated financial statements). As of December 31, 2010, an approximately 12% minority ownership in the total dollar value of the MSC II limited partnership interests remained outstanding, including

Table of Contents

approximately 5% owned by affiliates of MSCC. We have submitted an exemptive relief application to the SEC to permit us to acquire the approximately 5% ownership in the total dollar value of the MSC II limited partnership interests held by affiliates of MSCC. There can be no assurance that we will obtain the exemptive relief or that if we do obtain such relief it will be obtained on the terms we have outlined in our request.

MSCC has direct or indirect subsidiaries that have elected to be taxable entities (the "Taxable Subsidiaries"). The primary purpose of these entities is to hold certain investments that generate "pass through" income for tax purposes. The Taxable Subsidiaries are each taxed at their normal corporate tax rates based on their taxable income.

Unless otherwise noted or the context otherwise indicates, the terms "we," "us," "our" and "Main Street" refer to MSCC and its subsidiaries, including the Funds and the Taxable Subsidiaries.

As part of the Formation Transactions, the Investment Manager, which employs all of the executive officers and other employees of MSCC, became a wholly owned subsidiary of MSCC. However, the Investment Manager is accounted for as a portfolio investment of Main Street, since the Investment Manager is not a registered investment company and since it conducts a significant portion of its investment management activities for parties outside of MSCC and its consolidated subsidiaries. The portfolio investment in the Investment Manager is accounted for using fair value accounting, with the fair value determined by MSCC and approved, in good faith, by MSCC's Board of Directors. MSCC's valuation of the Investment Manager is based upon the discounted net cash flows from third party recurring management, consulting and advisory fees. For more information on the Investment Manager, see "Note D Wholly Owned Investment Manager" to our consolidated financial statements.

In connection with the Formation Transactions, MSCC entered into a support services agreement with the Investment Manager. The agreement requires the Investment Manager to manage the day-to-day operational and investment activities of Main Street. The Investment Manager generally incurs all normal operating and administrative expenses, except those specifically required to be borne by MSCC, which principally include costs that are specific to MSCC's status as a publicly traded entity. The expenses paid by the Investment Manager include the cost of salaries and related benefits, rent, equipment and other administrative costs required for Main Street's day-to-day operations.

The Investment Manager is reimbursed for its expenses associated with providing operational and investment management services to MSCC and its subsidiaries. Each quarter, as part of the support services agreement, MSCC makes payments to cover all expenses incurred by the Investment Manager, less amounts the Investment Manager receives from third party management, consulting and advisory fees.

CORPORATE INFORMATION

Our principal executive offices are located at 1300 Post Oak Boulevard, Suite 800, Houston, Texas 77056. We maintain a Web site on the Internet at www.mainstcapital.com. We make available free of charge on our Web site our annual reports on Form 10-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, current reports on Form 8-K, and all amendments to those reports as soon as reasonably practicable after such material is electronically filed with or furnished to the Securities and Exchange Commission. You may read and copy any materials we file with the SEC at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, NE, Washington, DC 20549. You may obtain information regarding the Public Reference Room by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. Information contained on our Web site is not incorporated by reference into this Annual Report on Form 10-K, and you should not consider that information to be part of this Annual Report on Form 10-K.

OVERVIEW OF OUR BUSINESS

We are a principal investment firm primarily focused on providing customized debt and equity financing to lower middle market ("LMM") companies, which we generally define as companies with annual revenues between \$10 million and \$100 million that operate in diverse industries. We invest primarily in secured debt instruments, equity investments, warrants and other securities of LMM companies based in the United States.

Table of Contents

Our principal investment objective is to maximize our portfolio's total return by generating current income from our debt investments and capital appreciation from our equity and equity-related investments, including warrants, convertible securities and other rights to acquire equity securities in a portfolio company. Our LMM portfolio investments generally range in size from \$3 million to \$20 million.

We seek to fill the current financing gap for LMM businesses, which, historically, have had more limited access to financing from commercial banks and other traditional sources. Given the current credit environment, we believe the limited access to financing for LMM companies is even more pronounced. The underserved nature of the lower middle market creates the opportunity for us to meet the financing needs of LMM companies while also negotiating favorable transaction terms and equity participations. Our ability to invest across a company's capital structure, from senior secured loans to equity securities, allows us to offer portfolio companies a comprehensive suite of financing solutions, or "one stop" financing. Providing customized, "one stop" financing solutions has become even more relevant to our LMM portfolio companies in the current credit environment. We generally seek to partner directly with entrepreneurs, management teams and business owners in making our investments. Main Street believes that its LMM investment strategy has a lower correlation to the broader debt and equity markets.

We typically seek to work with entrepreneurs, business owners and management teams to provide customized financing for strategic acquisitions, business expansion and other growth initiatives, ownership transitions and recapitalizations. In structuring transactions, we seek to protect our rights, manage our risk and create value by: (i) providing financing at lower leverage ratios; (ii) generally taking first priority liens on assets; and (iii) providing significant equity incentives for management teams of our portfolio companies. We prefer negotiated deals to widely conducted auctions because we believe widely conducted auction transactions often have higher execution risk and can result in potential conflicts among creditors and lower returns due to more aggressive valuation multiples and leverage ratios.

As of December 31, 2010, Main Street had debt and equity investments in 44 LMM portfolio companies. Approximately 77% of our total LMM portfolio investments at cost, excluding our 100% equity interest in the Investment Manager, were in the form of debt investments and 91% of such debt investments at cost were secured by first priority liens on the assets of our LMM portfolio companies. As of December 31, 2010, Main Street had a weighted average effective yield on its LMM debt investments of 14.5%. Weighted average yields are computed using the effective interest rates for all debt investments at December 31, 2010, including amortization of deferred debt origination fees and accretion of original issue discount. At December 31, 2010, we had equity ownership in approximately 91% of our LMM portfolio companies and the average fully diluted equity ownership in those portfolio companies was approximately 33%.

In addition to our investment strategy of investing in LMM companies, we opportunistically pursue investments in privately placed debt securities. Our private placement investment portfolio primarily consists of direct or secondary private placements of interest-bearing securities in companies that are generally larger in size than the LMM companies included in our investment portfolio. As of December 31, 2010, we had privately placed portfolio investments in 16 companies collectively totaling approximately \$67.1 million in fair value with a total cost basis of approximately \$65.6 million. The weighted average revenues for the 16 privately placed portfolio company investments was approximately \$352 million. All of our privately placed portfolio investments were in the form of debt investments and 71% of such debt investments at cost were secured by first priority liens on portfolio company assets. The weighted average effective yield on our privately placed portfolio debt investments was approximately 12.5% as of December 31, 2010.

The level of new portfolio investment activity will fluctuate from period to period based upon our view of the current economic fundamentals, our ability to identify new investment opportunities that meet our investment criteria, and our ability to consummate identified opportunities. The level of new investment activity, and associated interest and fee income, will directly impact future investment income. In addition, the level of dividends paid by portfolio companies and the portion of our portfolio debt investments on non-accrual status will directly impact future investment income. While we intend to grow our portfolio and our investment income over the long-term, our growth and our operating results may be more limited during

Table of Contents

depressed economic periods. However, we intend to appropriately manage our cost structure and liquidity position based on applicable economic conditions and our investment outlook. The level of realized gains or losses and unrealized appreciation or depreciation will also fluctuate depending upon portfolio activity and the performance of our individual portfolio companies. The changes in realized gains and losses and unrealized appreciation or depreciation could have a material impact on our operating results.

Our investments are made through both MSCC and the Funds. MSCC and the Funds share the same investment strategies and criteria in the lower middle market, although they are subject to different regulatory regimes. See " Regulation." An investor's return in MSCC will depend, in part, on the Funds' investment returns as MSMF is a wholly owned subsidiary of MSCC and as MSC II is a majority owned subsidiary of MSCC.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

During January 2011, we closed an expansion of our three-year credit facility (the "Credit Facility") from \$85 million to \$100 million. The \$15 million increase in total commitments pursuant to an accordion feature under the Credit Facility relates to a new lender relationship which further diversifies the Main Street lending group to a total of six participants. The accordion feature of the Credit Facility allows us to seek up to \$150 million of total commitments from new or existing lenders on the same terms and conditions as the existing commitments. The increase in total commitments under the Credit Facility provides us with access to additional financing capacity in support of our future investment and operational activities.

During January 2011, Main Street closed LMM portfolio investments in Pegasus Research Group, LLC (dba Televerde ("Televerde")), and in Van Gilder Insurance Corporation ("Van Gilder"). Main Street's \$7.5 million investment in Televerde represents a combination of debt and equity capital invested in the company in order to support the recapitalization and growth financing of the company. Televerde is headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona and provides sales-lead services to Fortune 500 IT hardware and software companies. Main Street's \$10.7 million investment in Van Gilder represents a combination of debt and equity capital invested in the company in order to refinance certain debt obligations and provide additional liquidity for the company's ongoing operations. Van Gilder is headquartered in Denver, Colorado and provides a full spectrum of insurance brokerage services including business insurance, employee benefits, risk management and personal insurance services.

During February 2011, Main Street completed a LMM portfolio investment in Principle Environmental, LLC ("Principle"). Main Street's \$7.5 million investment in Principle represents a combination of debt and equity capital invested in the company in order to support the recapitalization of the company, as well as to provide additional financing for future growth. Principle primarily serves the oil and gas and transportation industries, and is the leading provider of noise abatement services in the Marcellus Shale oil and gas basin. The company is headquartered in Weatherford, Texas with additional facilities in Pennsylvania.

BUSINESS STRATEGIES

Our principal investment objective is to maximize our portfolio's total return by generating current income from our debt investments and realizing capital appreciation from our equity and equity-related investments, including warrants, convertible securities and other rights to acquire equity securities in a portfolio company. We have adopted the following business strategies to achieve our investment objective:

Delivering Customized Financing Solutions in the Lower Middle Market. We believe our ability to provide a broad range of customized financing solutions to LMM companies sets us apart from other capital providers that focus on providing a limited number of financing solutions. We offer to our LMM portfolio companies customized debt financing solutions with equity components that are tailored to the facts and circumstances of each situation. Our ability to invest across a company's capital structure, from senior secured loans to subordinated debt to equity securities, allows us to offer our LMM portfolio companies a comprehensive suite of financing solutions, or "one-stop" financing.

Table of Contents

Focusing on Established Companies. We generally invest in companies with established market positions, experienced management teams and proven revenue streams. Those companies generally possess better risk-adjusted return profiles than newer companies that are building management or are in the early stages of building a revenue base. In addition, established companies generally provide opportunities for capital appreciation.

Leveraging the Skills and Experience of Our Investment Team. Our investment team has significant experience in lending to and investing in companies. The members of our investment team have broad investment backgrounds, with prior experience at private investment funds, investment banks and other financial services companies, and currently include eight certified public accountants and one chartered financial analyst. The expertise of our investment team in analyzing, valuing, structuring, negotiating and closing transactions should provide us with competitive advantages by allowing us to consider customized financing solutions and non-traditional and complex structures.

Investing Across Multiple Industries. We seek to maintain a portfolio of investments that is appropriately balanced among various companies, industries, geographic regions and end markets. This portfolio balance is intended to mitigate the potential effects of negative economic events for particular companies, regions and industries.

Capitalizing on Strong Transaction Sourcing Network. Our investment team seeks to leverage its extensive network of referral sources for portfolio company investments. We have developed a reputation in our marketplace as a responsive, efficient and reliable source of financing, which has created a growing stream of proprietary deal flow for us.

Benefiting from Lower, Fixed, Long-Term Cost of Capital. The SBIC licenses held by the Funds have allowed them to issue SBA-guaranteed debentures. SBA-guaranteed debentures carry long-term fixed rates that are generally lower than rates on comparable bank and other debt. Because lower cost SBA leverage is, and will continue to be, a significant part of our capital base through the Funds, our relative cost of debt capital should be lower than many of our competitors. In addition, the SBIC leverage that we receive through the Funds represents a stable, long-term component of our capital structure with proper matching of duration and cost compared to our portfolio investments.

INVESTMENT CRITERIA

Our investment team has identified the following investment criteria that it believes are important in evaluating prospective portfolio companies. Our investment team uses these criteria in evaluating investment opportunities. However, not all of these criteria have been, or will be, met in connection with each of our investments.

Proven Management Team with Meaningful Equity Stake. We look for operationally-oriented management with direct industry experience and a successful track record. In addition, we expect the management team of each portfolio company to have meaningful equity ownership in the portfolio company to better align our respective economic interests. We believe management teams with these attributes are more likely to manage the companies in a manner that both protects our debt investment and enhances the value of our equity investment.

Established Companies with Positive Cash Flow. We seek to invest in established companies with sound historical financial performance. We typically focus on LMM companies that have historically generated EBITDA ("Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortization") of \$1 million to \$10 million and commensurate levels of free cash flow. We also opportunistically pursue investments in privately placed debt securities in companies that are generally larger in size than LMM companies. We generally do not invest in start-up companies or companies with speculative business plans.

Defensible Competitive Advantages/Favorable Industry Position. We primarily focus on companies having competitive advantages in their respective markets and/or operating in industries with barriers to entry, which may help to protect their market position and profitability.

Table of Contents

Exit Alternatives. We exit our debt investments primarily through the repayment of our investment from internally generated cash flow of the portfolio company and/or refinancing. In addition, we seek to invest in companies whose business models and expected future cash flows may provide alternate methods of repaying our investment, such as through a strategic acquisition by other industry participants or a recapitalization.

PORTFOLIO INVESTMENTS

Main Street's portfolio investments, as used herein, refers to all of Main Street's LMM portfolio investments, privately placed portfolio investments, and our investment in the Investment Manager and excludes all "Marketable securities and idle funds investments." Main Street's LMM portfolio investments principally consist of secured debt, equity warrants and direct equity investments in privately held LMM companies. Main Street's privately placed portfolio investments consist of debt investments in middle market businesses that are generally larger in size than the portfolio companies within the LMM portfolio.

Debt Investments

Historically, we have made LMM debt investments principally in the form of single tranche debt. Single tranche debt financing involves issuing one debt security that blends the risk and return profiles of both secured and subordinated debt. We believe that single tranche debt is more appropriate for many LMM companies given their size in order to reduce structural complexity and potential conflicts among creditors.

Our LMM debt investments generally have terms of three to seven years, with limited required amortization prior to maturity, and provide for monthly or quarterly payment of interest at fixed interest rates generally between 12% and 14% per annum, payable currently in cash. In some instances, we have provided floating interest rates for a portion of a single tranche debt security. In addition, certain LMM debt investments may have a form of interest that is not paid currently but is accrued and added to the loan balance and paid at maturity. We refer to this as payment-in-kind or PIK interest. We typically structure our LMM debt investments with the maximum seniority and collateral that we can reasonably obtain while seeking to achieve our total return target. In most cases, our LMM debt investment will be collateralized by a first priority lien on substantially all the assets of the portfolio company. As of December 31, 2010, 91% of our LMM debt investments at cost were secured by first priority liens on the assets of LMM portfolio companies.

In addition to seeking a senior lien position in the capital structure of our LMM portfolio companies, we seek to limit the downside potential of our LMM investments by negotiating covenants that are designed to protect our LMM investments while affording our portfolio companies as much flexibility in managing their businesses as is reasonable. Such restrictions may include affirmative and negative covenants, default penalties, lien protection, change of control or change of management provisions, key-man life insurance, guarantees, equity pledges, personal guaranties, where appropriate, and put rights. In addition, we typically seek board representation or observation rights in all of our LMM portfolio companies.

While we will continue to focus our LMM investments primarily on single tranche debt investments, we also anticipate structuring some of our debt investments as mezzanine loans. We anticipate that these mezzanine loans will be primarily junior secured or unsecured, subordinated loans that provide for relatively high fixed interest rates that will provide us with significant current interest income. These loans typically will have interest-only payments in the early years, with amortization of principal deferred to the later years of the mezzanine loan term. Typically, our mezzanine loans will have maturities of three to five years. We will generally target fixed interest rates of 12% to 14%, payable currently in cash for our mezzanine loan investments with higher targeted total returns from equity warrants, direct equity investments or PIK interest.

In addition to our LMM debt investment strategy, we opportunistically pursue investments in privately placed debt securities. This private placement investment portfolio primarily consists of direct or secondary private placements of interest-bearing securities in companies that are generally larger in size than the LMM companies included in our investment portfolio. As of December 31, 2010, all of our privately placed

Table of Contents

portfolio investments were in the form of debt investments and 71% of such debt investments at cost were secured by first priority liens on portfolio company assets.

Warrants

In connection with our LMM debt investments, we have historically received equity warrants to establish or increase our equity interest in the LMM portfolio company. Warrants we receive in connection with a LMM debt investment typically require only a nominal cost to exercise, and thus, as a LMM portfolio company appreciates in value, we may achieve additional investment return from this equity interest. We typically structure the warrants to provide provisions protecting our rights as a minority-interest holder, as well as secured or unsecured put rights, or rights to sell such securities back to the LMM portfolio company, upon the occurrence of specified events. In certain cases, we also may obtain registration rights in connection with these equity interests, which may include demand and "piggyback" registration rights.

Direct Equity Investments

We also will seek to make direct equity investments in situations where it is appropriate to align our interests with key management and stockholders, and to allow for some participation in the appreciation in the enterprise values of our LMM portfolio companies. We usually make our direct equity investments in connection with debt investments. In addition, we may have both equity warrants and direct equity positions in some of our LMM portfolio companies. We seek to maintain fully diluted equity positions in our LMM portfolio companies of 5% to 50%, and may have controlling equity interests in some instances. We have a value orientation toward our direct equity investments and have traditionally been able to purchase our equity investments at reasonable valuations.

INVESTMENT PROCESS

Our investment committee is responsible for all aspects of our investment process. The current members of our investment committee are Vincent D. Foster, our Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Todd A. Reppert, our President and Chief Financial Officer, and David Magdol, Senior Vice President. Mr. Magdol replaced Curtis Hartman, Senior Vice President, in this revolving seat on the investment committee effective January 1, 2011 and will serve through 2011. Our investment strategy involves a "team" approach, whereby potential transactions are screened by several members of our investment team before being presented to the investment committee. Our investment committee meets on an as needed basis depending on transaction volume. Our investment committee generally categorizes our investment process into seven distinct stages:

Deal Generation/Origination

Deal generation and origination is maximized through long-standing and extensive relationships with industry contacts, brokers, commercial and investment bankers, entrepreneurs, services providers such as lawyers, financial advisors, and accountants, as well as current and former portfolio companies and investors. Our investment team has focused its deal generation and origination efforts on LMM and middle market companies. We have developed a reputation as a knowledgeable, reliable and active source of capital and assistance in this market.

Screening

During the screening process, if a transaction initially meets our investment criteria, we will perform preliminary due diligence, taking into consideration some or all of the following information:

a comprehensive financial model based on quantitative analysis of historical financial performance, projections and pro forma adjustments to determine the estimated internal rate of return;

a brief industry and market analysis; importing direct industry expertise from other portfolio companies or investors;

Table of Contents

preliminary qualitative analysis of the management team's competencies and backgrounds;

potential investment structures and pricing terms; and

regulatory compliance.

Upon successful screening of a proposed LMM transaction, the investment team makes a recommendation to our investment committee. If our investment committee concurs with moving forward on the proposed LMM transaction, we typically issue a non-binding term sheet to the company. For middle market companies, the initial term sheet is typically issued by the borrower.

Term Sheet

The non-binding term sheet will include the key economic terms based upon our analysis performed during the screening process as well as a proposed timeline and our qualitative expectation for the transaction. While the term sheet is non-binding, for LMM investments, we typically receive an expense deposit in order to move the transaction to the due diligence phase. Upon execution of a term sheet we begin our formal due diligence process.

Due Diligence

Due diligence on a proposed investment is performed by a minimum of two members of our investment team, whom we refer to collectively as the deal team, and certain external resources, who together conduct due diligence to understand the relationships among the prospective portfolio company's business plan, operations and financial performance. Our due diligence review includes some or all of the following:

site visits with management and key personnel;

detailed review of historical and projected financial statements;

operational reviews and analysis;

interviews with customers and suppliers;

detailed evaluation of company management, including background checks;

review of material contracts;

in-depth industry, market, and strategy analysis; and

review by legal, environmental or other consultants, if applicable.

During the due diligence process, significant attention is given to sensitivity analyses and how the company might be expected to perform given downside, "base-case" and upside scenarios. In certain cases, we may decide not to make an investment based on the results of the diligence process.

Table of Contents

Document and Close

Upon completion of a satisfactory due diligence review, the deal team presents the findings and a recommendation to our investment committee. The presentation contains information which can include, but is not limited to, the following:

company history and overview;

transaction overview, history and rationale, including an analysis of transaction strengths and risks;

analysis of key customers and suppliers and key contracts;

a working capital analysis;

an analysis of the company's business strategy;

a management and key equity investor background check and assessment;

third-party accounting, legal, environmental or other due diligence findings;

investment structure and expected returns;

anticipated sources of repayment and potential exit strategies;

pro forma capitalization and ownership;

an analysis of historical financial results and key financial ratios;

sensitivities to management's financial projections; and

detailed reconciliations of historical to pro forma results.

If any adjustments to the transaction terms or structures are proposed by the investment committee, such changes are made and applicable analyses updated. Approval for the transaction must be made by the affirmative vote from a majority of the members of the investment committee. Upon receipt of transaction approval, we will re-confirm regulatory compliance, process and finalize all required legal documents, and fund the investment.

Post-Investment

We continuously monitor the status and progress of the portfolio companies. We generally offer managerial assistance to our portfolio companies, giving them access to our investment experience, direct industry expertise and contacts. The same deal team that was involved in the investment process will continue its involvement in the portfolio company post-investment. This provides for continuity of knowledge and allows the deal team to maintain a strong business relationship with key management of our portfolio companies for post-investment assistance and monitoring purposes. As part of the monitoring process of LMM portfolio investments, the deal team will analyze monthly and quarterly

Edgar Filing: Main Street Capital CORP - Form 10-K

financial statements versus the previous periods and year, review financial projections, meet and discuss issues or opportunities with management, attend board meetings and review all compliance certificates and covenants. While we maintain limited involvement in the ordinary course operations of our LMM portfolio companies, we maintain a higher level of involvement in non-ordinary course financing or strategic activities and any non-performing scenarios. We also monitor the performance of our private placement portfolio investments; however, due to the larger size and sophistication of these middle market companies, it is not necessary to have as much direct management interface.

We use an internally developed investment rating system to characterize and monitor our expected level of returns on each of our investments.

Investment Rating 1 represents a portfolio company that is performing in a manner which significantly exceeds expectations and projections;

Edgar Filing: Main Street Capital CORP - Form 10-K

Table of Contents

Investment Rating 2 represents a portfolio company that, in general, is performing above expectations;

Investment Rating 3 represents a portfolio company that is generally performing in accordance with expectations;

Investment Rating 4 represents a portfolio company that is underperforming expectations. Investments with such a rating require increased Main Street monitoring and scrutiny; and

Investment Rating 5 represents a portfolio company that is significantly underperforming. Investments with such a rating require heightened levels of monitoring and scrutiny by us and involve the recognition of significant unrealized depreciation on such investment.

All new portfolio investments receive an initial 3 rating.

The following table shows the distribution of our portfolio investments (excluding the investment in our affiliated Investment Manager) on the 1 to 5 investment rating scale at fair value as of December 31, 2010 and 2009:

| Investment Rating | December 31, 2010 | | December 31, 2009 | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Investments at Fair Value | Percentage of Total Portfolio | Investments at Fair Value | Percentage of Total Portfolio |
| | (dollars in thousands) | | | |
| 1 | \$ 52,147 | 15.0% | \$ 14,509 | 10.3% |
| 2 | 153,408 | 44.2% | 59,116 | 42.0% |
| 3 | 122,249 | 35.3% | 57,578 | 40.9% |
| 4 | 17,705 | 5.1% | 9,000 | 6.4% |
| 5 | 1,250 | 0.4% | 500 | 0.4% |
| Totals | \$ 346,759 | 100.0% | \$ 140,703 | 100.0% |

Based upon our investment rating system, the weighted average rating of our portfolio as of December 31, 2010 and 2009 was approximately 2.3 and 2.4, respectively. As of December 31, 2010 and 2009, we had two and three investments, respectively, on non-accrual status comprising approximately 2.6% and 1.1%, respectively, of the total portfolio investments at fair value for each year then ended (excluding Main Street's investment in the Investment Manager).

Exit Strategies/Refinancing

While we generally exit most investments through the refinancing or repayment of our debt and redemption of our equity positions, we typically assist our LMM portfolio companies in developing and planning exit opportunities, including any sale or merger of our portfolio companies. We may also assist in the structure, timing, execution and transition of the exit strategy. The refinancing or repayment of private placement debt investments typically does not require our assistance due to the additional resources available to these larger, middle market companies.

DETERMINATION OF NET ASSET VALUE AND PORTFOLIO VALUATION PROCESS

We determine the net asset value per share of our common stock on a quarterly basis. The net asset value per share is equal to our total assets minus liabilities and any noncontrolling interests outstanding divided by the total number of shares of common stock outstanding.

Our business plan calls for us to invest primarily in illiquid securities issued by private, LMM companies as well as privately placed debt securities issued by private, middle market companies that are generally larger in size than the LMM companies. These portfolio investments may be subject to restrictions on resale and will generally have no established trading market. As a result, we determine in good faith the fair value of our portfolio investments pursuant to a valuation policy in accordance with the Financial Accounting Standards Board ("FASB") Accounting Standards Codification ("Codification" or "ASC") 820, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures* ("ASC 820") and a valuation process approved by our Board of Directors and

Table of Contents

in accordance with the 1940 Act. We review external events, including private mergers, sales and acquisitions involving comparable companies, and include these events in the valuation process. Our valuation policy is intended to provide a consistent basis for determining the fair value of the portfolio.

For valuation purposes, control investments are composed of equity and debt securities for which we have a controlling interest in the portfolio company or have the ability to nominate a majority of the portfolio company's board of directors. Market quotations are generally not readily available for our control investments. As a result, we determine the fair value of control investments using a combination of market and income approaches. Under the market approach, we will typically use the enterprise value methodology to determine the fair value of these investments. The enterprise value is the fair value at which an enterprise could be sold in a transaction between two willing parties, other than through a forced or liquidation sale. Typically, private companies are bought and sold based on multiples of earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization ("EBITDA"), cash flows, net income, revenues, or in limited cases, book value. There is no single methodology for estimating enterprise value. For any one portfolio company, enterprise value is generally described as a range of values from which a single estimate of enterprise value is derived. In estimating the enterprise value of a portfolio company, we analyze various factors, including the portfolio company's historical and projected financial results. We allocate the enterprise value to investments in order of the legal priority of the investments. We will also use the income approach to determine the fair value of these securities, based on projections of the discounted future free cash flows that the portfolio company or the debt security will likely generate. The valuation approaches for our control investments estimate the value of the investment if we were to sell, or exit, the investment, assuming the highest and best use of the investment by market participants. In addition, these valuation approaches consider the value associated with our ability to control the capital structure of the portfolio company, as well as the timing of a potential exit.

For valuation purposes, non-control LMM investments are composed of debt and equity securities for which we do not have a controlling interest in the portfolio company, or the ability to nominate a majority of the portfolio company's board of directors. Market quotations for our non-control LMM investments are generally not readily available. For our non-control LMM investments, we use a combination of the market and income approaches to value our equity investments and the income approach to value our debt instruments. For non-control LMM debt investments, we determine the fair value primarily using a yield approach that analyzes the discounted cash flows of interest and principal for the debt security, as set forth in the associated loan agreements, as well as the financial position and credit risk of each of these portfolio investments. Our estimate of the expected repayment date of a LMM debt security is generally the legal maturity date of the instrument, as we generally intend to hold our loans to maturity. The yield analysis considers changes in leverage levels, credit quality, portfolio company performance and other factors. We will use the value determined by the yield analysis as the fair value for that security; however, because of our general intent to hold our loans to maturity, the fair value will not exceed the face amount of the LMM debt security. A change in the assumptions that we use to estimate the fair value of our LMM debt securities using the yield analysis could have a material impact on the determination of fair value. If there is deterioration in credit quality or a debt security is in workout status, we may consider other factors in determining the fair value of a LMM debt security, including the value attributable to the debt security from the enterprise value of the portfolio company or the proceeds that would most likely be received in a liquidation analysis.

For valuation purposes, all of our private placement portfolio investments are non-control investments and are composed of direct or secondary purchases of interest-bearing securities for which we do not have a controlling interest in the portfolio company, or the ability to nominate a majority of the portfolio company's board of directors. We primarily use observable inputs to determine the fair value of these investments through obtaining third party quotes or other independent pricing.

Due to the inherent uncertainty in the valuation process, our estimate of fair value for our LMM investments may differ materially from the values that would have been used had a ready market for the securities existed. In addition, changes in the market environment, portfolio company performance and other events that may occur over the lives of the investments may cause the gains or losses ultimately realized on

Table of Contents

these investments to be materially different than the valuations currently assigned. We determine the fair value of each individual investment and record changes in fair value as unrealized appreciation or depreciation.

As described below, we undertake a multi-step valuation process each quarter in connection with determining the fair value of our investments, with our Board of Directors having final responsibility for overseeing, reviewing and approving, in good faith, our estimate of the fair value of each individual investment.

Our quarterly valuation process will begin with each LMM portfolio company or investment being initially valued by the deal team responsible for the portfolio investment;

Preliminary valuation conclusions will then be reviewed and discussed with senior management;

An independent valuation firm engaged by the Board of Directors will perform certain mutually agreed limited procedures that we have identified and asked them to perform on a selection of our final LMM portfolio company valuation conclusions;

The fair value determination for our privately placed debt investments generally consists of observable inputs;

The Audit Committee of our Board of Directors will review the preliminary valuations, and the deal team will consider and assess, as appropriate, any changes that may be required to the preliminary valuation to address any comments provided by the Audit Committee; and

The Board of Directors will assess the valuations and will ultimately approve the fair value of each investment in our portfolio in good faith.

As part of the internal valuation process, in arriving at estimates of fair value for LMM portfolio companies, Main Street, among other things, consults with a nationally recognized independent advisor. The nationally recognized independent advisor is generally consulted relative to each LMM portfolio investment at least once in every calendar year, and for new LMM portfolio companies, at least once in the twelve-month period subsequent to the initial investment. In certain instances, Main Street may determine that it is not cost-effective, and as a result is not in its stockholders' best interest, to consult with the nationally recognized independent advisor on one or more LMM portfolio companies. Such instances include, but are not limited to, situations where the fair value of Main Street's investment in a LMM portfolio company is determined to be insignificant relative to the total investment portfolio. Main Street consulted with its independent advisor in arriving at Main Street's determination of fair value on a total of 34 portfolio companies, including 33 LMM portfolio companies and our affiliated Investment Manager, for the year ended December 31, 2010, representing approximately 79% of the total LMM portfolio and affiliated Investment Manager investments at fair value as of December 31, 2010. Main Street consulted with its independent advisor relative to Main Street's determination of fair value on 8, 10, 8, and 8 portfolio investments for the quarters ended March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31, 2010, respectively. The Board of Directors of Main Street has the final responsibility for reviewing and approving, in good faith, Main Street's estimate of the fair value for the investments.

Determination of fair value involves subjective judgments and estimates. The notes to our financial statements will refer to the uncertainty with respect to the possible effect of such valuations, and any change in such valuations, on our financial statements.

COMPETITION

We compete for investments with a number of investment funds (including private equity funds, mezzanine funds, BDCs, and other SBICs), as well as traditional financial services companies such as commercial banks and other sources of financing. Many of the entities that compete with us have greater financial and managerial resources. We believe we are able to be competitive with these entities primarily on the basis of our focus toward the underserved lower middle market, the experience and contacts of our

Table of Contents

management team, our responsive and efficient investment analysis and decision-making processes, our comprehensive suite of customized financing solutions and the investment terms we offer.

We believe that some of our competitors make senior secured loans, junior secured loans and subordinated debt investments with interest rates and returns that are comparable to or lower than the rates and returns that we target. Therefore, we do not seek to compete primarily on the interest rates and returns that we offer to potential portfolio companies. For additional information concerning the competitive risks we face, see "Risk Factors We may face increasing competition for investment opportunities."

EMPLOYEES

As of December 31, 2010, we had 18 employees, each of whom was employed by the Investment Manager. These employees include investment and portfolio management professionals, operations professionals and administrative staff. As necessary, we will hire additional investment professionals and administrative personnel. All of our employees are located in our Houston, Texas office.

REGULATION

Regulation as a Business Development Company

We have elected to be regulated as a BDC under the 1940 Act. The 1940 Act contains prohibitions and restrictions relating to transactions between BDCs and their affiliates, principal underwriters and affiliates of those affiliates or underwriters. The 1940 Act requires that a majority of the members of the board of directors of a BDC be persons other than "interested persons," as that term is defined in the 1940 Act. In addition, the 1940 Act provides that we may not change the nature of our business so as to cease to be, or to withdraw our election as, a BDC unless approved by a majority of our outstanding voting securities.

The 1940 Act defines "a majority of the outstanding voting securities" as the lesser of (i) 67% or more of the voting securities present at a meeting if the holders of more than 50% of our outstanding voting securities are present or represented by proxy or (ii) more than 50% of our voting securities.

Qualifying Assets

Under the 1940 Act, a BDC may not acquire any asset other than assets of the type listed in Section 55(a) of the 1940 Act, which are referred to as qualifying assets, unless, at the time the acquisition is made, qualifying assets represent at least 70% of the company's total assets. The principal categories of qualifying assets relevant to our business are any of the following:

- (1) Securities purchased in transactions not involving any public offering from the issuer of such securities, which issuer (subject to certain limited exceptions) is an eligible portfolio company (as defined below), or from any person who is, or has been during the preceding 13 months, an affiliated person of an eligible portfolio company, or from any other person, subject to such rules as may be prescribed by the SEC.
- (2) Securities of any eligible portfolio company that we control.
- (3) Securities purchased in a private transaction from a U.S. issuer that is not an investment company or from an affiliated person of the issuer, or in transactions incident thereto, if the issuer is in bankruptcy and subject to reorganization or if the issuer, immediately prior to the purchase of its securities was unable to meet its obligations as they came due without material assistance other than conventional lending or financing arrangements.
- (4) Securities of an eligible portfolio company purchased from any person in a private transaction if there is no ready market for such securities and we already own 60% of the outstanding equity of the eligible portfolio company.

Edgar Filing: Main Street Capital CORP - Form 10-K

Table of Contents

- (5) Securities received in exchange for or distributed on or with respect to securities described in (1) through (4) above, or pursuant to the exercise of warrants or rights relating to such securities.
- (6) Cash, cash equivalents, U.S. government securities or high-quality debt securities maturing in one year or less from the time of investment.

In addition, a BDC must have been organized and have its principal place of business in the United States and must be operated for the purpose of making investments in the types of securities described in (1), (2) or (3) above.

An eligible portfolio company is defined in the 1940 Act as any issuer which:

- (a) is organized under the laws of, and has its principal place of business in, the United States;
- (b) is not an investment company (other than a small business investment company wholly owned by the BDC) or a company that would be an investment company but for certain exclusions under the 1940 Act; and
- (c) satisfies any of the following:
 - (i) does not have any class of securities that is traded on a national securities exchange or has a class of securities listed on a national securities exchange but has an aggregate market value of outstanding voting and non-voting common equity of less than \$250 million;
 - (ii) is controlled by a BDC or a group of companies including a BDC and the BDC has an affiliated person who is a director of the eligible portfolio company; or
 - (iii) is a small and solvent company having total assets of not more than \$4 million and capital and surplus of not less than \$2 million.

Managerial Assistance to Portfolio Companies

In order to count portfolio securities as qualifying assets for the purpose of the 70% test, we must either control the issuer of the securities or must offer to make available to the issuer of the securities (other than small and solvent companies described above) significant managerial assistance; except that, where we purchase such securities in conjunction with one or more other persons acting together, one of the other persons in the group may make available such managerial assistance. Making available managerial assistance means, among other things, any arrangement whereby the BDC, through its directors, officers or employees, offers to provide, and, if accepted, does so provide, significant guidance and counsel concerning the management, operations or business objectives and policies of a portfolio company.

Marketable Securities and Idle Funds Investments

Pending investment in "qualifying assets," as described above, our investments may consist of cash, cash equivalents, U.S. government securities, short-term investments in secured debt investments, independently rated debt investments, and diversified bond funds, which we refer to, collectively, as marketable securities and idle funds investments, so that 70% of our assets are qualifying assets.

Senior Securities

We are permitted, under specified conditions, to issue multiple classes of debt and one class of stock senior to our common stock if our asset coverage, as defined in the 1940 Act, is at least equal to 200% of all debt and/or senior stock immediately after each such issuance. In addition, while any senior securities remain outstanding (other than senior securities representing indebtedness issued in consideration of a privately arranged loan which is not intended to be publicly distributed), we must make provisions to prohibit any distribution to our stockholders or the repurchase of such securities or shares unless we meet the applicable asset coverage ratios at the time of the distribution or repurchase. We may also borrow amounts up to 5% of the value of our total assets for temporary or emergency purposes without regard to asset coverage. For a

Table of Contents

discussion of the risks associated with leverage, see "Risk Factors – Risks Relating to Our Business and Structure," including, without limitation, " Because we borrow money, the potential for gain or loss on amounts invested in us is magnified and may increase the risk of investing in us."

In January 2008, we received an exemptive order from the SEC to exclude debt securities issued by MSMF from the asset coverage requirements of the 1940 Act as applicable to Main Street. The exemptive order provides for the exclusion of all debt securities issued by MSMF, including the \$85 million of currently outstanding debt related to its participation in the SBIC program. This exemptive order provides us with expanded capacity and flexibility in obtaining future sources of capital for our investment and operational objectives. We expect to have similar relief from the SEC with respect to SBIC debt securities issued by MSC II, including the \$95 million of currently outstanding debt related to its participation in the SBIC program.

Common Stock

We are not generally able to issue and sell our common stock at a price below net asset value per share. We may, however, sell our common stock, warrants, options or rights to acquire our common stock, at a price below the current net asset value of the common stock if our board of directors determines that such sale is in our best interests and that of our stockholders, and our stockholders approve such sale. In any such case, the price at which our securities are to be issued and sold may not be less than a price which, in the determination of our board of directors, closely approximates the market value of such securities (less any distributing commission or discount). A proposal, approved by our stockholders at our June 2010 annual meeting of stockholders, authorizes us to sell shares of our common stock below the then current net asset value per share of our common stock in one or more offerings for a period of one year ending on June 9, 2011. We would need similar future approval from our stockholders to issue shares below the then current net asset value per share any time after the expiration of the current approval. On June 17, 2008, our stockholders approved another proposal that authorizes us to issue securities to subscribe to, convert to, or purchase shares of our common stock in one or more offerings. We may also make rights offerings to our stockholders at prices per share less than the net asset value per share, subject to applicable requirements of the 1940 Act. See "Risk Factors – Risks Relating to Our Business and Structure – Stockholders may incur dilution if we sell shares of our common stock in one or more offerings at prices below the then current net asset value per share of our common stock or issue securities to subscribe to, convert to or purchase shares of our common stock."

Code of Ethics

We have adopted a code of ethics pursuant to Rule 17j-1 under the 1940 Act that establishes procedures for personal investments and restricts certain personal securities transactions. Personnel subject to the code may invest in securities for their personal investment accounts, including securities that may be purchased or held by us, so long as such investments are made in accordance with the code's requirements.

Proxy Voting Policies and Procedures

We vote proxies relating to our portfolio securities in a manner in which we believe is consistent with the best interest of our stockholders. We review on a case-by-case basis each proposal submitted to a stockholder vote to determine its impact on the portfolio securities held by us. Although we generally vote against proposals that we expect would have a negative impact on our portfolio securities, we may vote for such a proposal if there exists compelling long-term reasons to do so.

Table of Contents

Our proxy voting decisions are made by the deal team which is responsible for monitoring each of our investments. To ensure that our vote is not the product of a conflict of interest, we require that: (i) anyone involved in the decision-making process to disclose to our chief compliance officer any potential conflict of which he or she is aware and any contact that he or she has had with any interested party regarding a proxy vote and (ii) employees involved in the decision making process or vote administration are prohibited from revealing how we intend to vote on a proposal in order to reduce any attempted influence from interested parties.

Stockholders may obtain information, without charge, regarding how we voted proxies with respect to our portfolio securities by making a written request for proxy voting information to: Chief Compliance Officer, 1300 Post Oak Boulevard, Suite 800, Houston, Texas 77056.

Other 1940 Act Regulations

We may also be prohibited under the 1940 Act from knowingly participating in certain transactions with our affiliates without the prior approval of our Board of Directors who are not interested persons and, in some cases, prior approval by the SEC. In June 2008, we received an exemptive order from the SEC to permit co-investments in portfolio companies among Main Street and certain of its affiliates, including MSC II, subject to certain conditions of the order.

We are required to provide and maintain a bond issued by a reputable fidelity insurance company to protect us against larceny and embezzlement. Furthermore, as a BDC, we are prohibited from protecting any director or officer against any liability to us or our stockholders arising from willful misfeasance, bad faith, gross negligence or reckless disregard of the duties involved in the conduct of such person's office.

We are required to adopt and implement written policies and procedures reasonably designed to prevent violation of the federal securities laws, review these policies and procedures annually for their adequacy and the effectiveness of their implementation, and to designate a chief compliance officer to be responsible for administering the policies and procedures.

We may be periodically examined by the SEC for compliance with the 1940 Act.

Small Business Investment Company Regulations

Each of the Funds is licensed by the SBA to operate as a SBIC under Section 301(c) of the Small Business Investment Act of 1958. As a part of the Formation Transactions, MSMF became a wholly owned subsidiary of MSCC, and continues to hold its SBIC license. MSMF initially obtained its SBIC license in September 2002. As part of the Exchange Offer Transactions, MSC II became a majority owned subsidiary of MSCC and continues to hold its license. MSC II initially obtained its SBIC license in January 2006.

SBICs are designed to stimulate the flow of private equity capital to eligible small businesses. Under SBIC regulations, SBICs may make loans to eligible small businesses, invest in the equity securities of such businesses and provide them with consulting and advisory services. Each of the Funds has typically invested in secured debt, acquired warrants and/or made equity investments in qualifying small businesses.

Under present SBIC regulations, eligible small businesses generally include businesses that (together with their affiliates) have a tangible net worth not exceeding \$18 million and have average annual net income after federal income taxes not exceeding \$6 million (average net income to be computed without benefit of any carryover loss) for the two most recent fiscal years. In addition, an SBIC must devote 20% of its investment activity to "smaller" concerns as defined by the SBA. A smaller concern generally includes businesses that have a tangible net worth not exceeding \$6 million and have average annual net income after federal income taxes not exceeding \$2 million (average net income to be computed without benefit of any net carryover loss) for the two most recent fiscal years. SBIC regulations also provide alternative size standard criteria to determine eligibility for designation as an eligible small business or smaller concern, which criteria depend on the primary industry in which the business is engaged and are based on such factors as the number of employees and gross revenue. However, once an SBIC has invested in a company, it may continue to make

Table of Contents

follow on investments in the company, regardless of the size of the portfolio company at the time of the follow on investment, up to the time of the portfolio company's initial public offering.

The SBA prohibits an SBIC from providing funds to small businesses for certain purposes, such as relending and investment outside the United States, to businesses engaged in a few prohibited industries, and to certain "passive" (non-operating) companies. In addition, without prior SBA approval, an SBIC may not invest an amount equal to more than approximately 30% of the SBIC's regulatory capital in any one portfolio company and its affiliates.

The SBA places certain limitations on the financing terms of investments by SBICs in portfolio companies (such as limiting the permissible interest rate on debt securities held by an SBIC in a portfolio company). Although prior regulations prohibited an SBIC from controlling a small business concern except in limited circumstances, regulations adopted by the SBA in 2002 now allow an SBIC to exercise control over a small business for a period of seven years from the date on which the SBIC initially acquires its control position. This control period may be extended for an additional period of time with the SBA's prior written approval.

The SBA restricts the ability of an SBIC to lend money to any of its officers, directors and employees or to invest in affiliates thereof. The SBA also prohibits, without prior SBA approval, a "change of control" of an SBIC or transfers that would result in any person (or a group of persons acting in concert) owning 10% or more of a class of equity for a licensed SBIC. A "change of control" is any event which would result in the transfer of the power, direct or indirect, to direct the management and policies of an SBIC, whether through ownership, contractual arrangements or otherwise.

An SBIC (or group of SBICs under common control) may generally have outstanding debentures guaranteed by the SBA in amounts up to twice the amount of the privately-raised funds of the SBIC(s). Debentures guaranteed by the SBA have a maturity of ten years, require semi-annual payments of interest, do not require any principal payments prior to maturity, and, historically, were subject to certain prepayment penalties. Those prepayment penalties no longer apply as of September 2006. As of December 31, 2010, we, through the Funds, had issued \$180 million of SBA-guaranteed debentures, which had an annual weighted average interest rate of approximately 5.2%.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 enacted in February 2009 (the "Stimulus Bill") contains several provisions applicable to SBIC funds, including the Funds. One of the key SBIC-related provisions included in the Stimulus Bill increased the maximum amount of combined SBIC leverage (or SBIC leverage cap) to \$225 million for affiliated SBIC funds. The prior maximum amount of SBIC leverage available to affiliated SBIC funds was approximately \$137 million. Since the increase in the SBIC leverage cap applies to affiliated SBIC funds, Main Street is required to allocate such increased borrowing capacity between the Funds. Subsequent to the Exchange Offer, Main Street now has access to a combined incremental \$45 million in SBIC leverage capacity, subject to the required capitalization of each of the Funds, in addition to the \$180 million of existing SBIC leverage.

SBICs must invest idle funds that are not being used to make loans in investments permitted under SBIC regulations in the following limited types of securities: (i) direct obligations of, or obligations guaranteed as to principal and interest by, the United States government, which mature within 15 months from the date of the investment; (ii) repurchase agreements with federally insured institutions with a maturity of seven days or less (and the securities underlying the repurchase obligations must be direct obligations of or guaranteed by the federal government); (iii) certificates of deposit with a maturity of one year or less, issued by a federally insured institution; (iv) a deposit account in a federally insured institution that is subject to a withdrawal restriction of one year or less; (v) a checking account in a federally insured institution; or (vi) a reasonable petty cash fund.

SBICs are periodically examined and audited by the SBA's staff to determine their compliance with SBIC regulations and are periodically required to file certain financial information and other documents with the SBA.

Table of Contents

Neither the SBA nor the U.S. government or any of its agencies or officers has approved any ownership interest to be issued by us or any obligation that we or any of our subsidiaries may incur.

Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and Sarbanes-Oxley Act Compliance

We are subject to the reporting and disclosure requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the "Exchange Act"), including the filing of quarterly, annual and current reports, proxy statements and other required items. In addition, we are subject to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, which imposes a wide variety of regulatory requirements on publicly-held companies and their insiders. For example:

pursuant to Rule 13a-14 of the Exchange Act, our Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer are required to certify the accuracy of the financial statements contained in our periodic reports;

pursuant to Item 307 of Regulation S-K, our periodic reports are required to disclose our conclusions about the effectiveness of our disclosure controls and procedures;

pursuant to Rule 13a-15 of the Exchange Act, our management is required to prepare a report regarding its assessment of our internal control over financial reporting, and our independent registered public accounting firm separately audits our internal control over financial reporting; and

pursuant to Item 308 of Regulation S-K and Rule 13a-15 of the Exchange Act, our periodic reports must disclose whether there were significant changes in our internal control over financial reporting or in other factors that could significantly affect these controls subsequent to the date of their evaluation, including any corrective actions with regard to significant deficiencies and material weaknesses.

The New York Stock Exchange Corporate Governance Regulations

The New York Stock Exchange ("NYSE") has adopted corporate governance regulations that listed companies must comply with. We believe we are in compliance with such corporate governance listing standards. We intend to monitor our compliance with all future listing standards and to take all necessary actions to ensure that we stay in compliance.

Taxation as a Regulated Investment Company

MSCC has elected to be treated for federal income tax purposes as a regulated investment company ("RIC") under Subchapter M of the Internal Revenue Code (the "Code") commencing October 2, 2007. As a RIC, we generally do not have to pay corporate-level federal income taxes on any income that we distribute to our stockholders as dividends. To qualify as a RIC, we must, among other things, meet certain source-of-income and asset diversification requirements (as described below). In addition, in order to obtain RIC tax treatment, we must distribute to our stockholders, for each taxable year, at least 90% of our "investment company taxable income," which is generally our net ordinary income plus the excess of realized net short-term capital gains over realized net long-term capital losses (the "Annual Distribution Requirement").

For any taxable year in which we qualify as a RIC and satisfy the Annual Distribution Requirement, we will not be subject to federal income tax on the portion of our income we distribute (or are deemed to distribute) to stockholders. We will be subject to U.S. federal income tax at the regular corporate rates on any income or capital gains not distributed (or deemed distributed) to our stockholders.

We will be subject to a 4% nondeductible federal excise tax on certain undistributed income unless we distribute in a timely manner an amount at least equal to the sum of (1) 98% of our net ordinary income for each calendar year, (2) 98% of our capital gain net income for the one-year period ending October 31 in that calendar year and (3) any income recognized, but not distributed, in preceding years (the "Excise Tax Avoidance Requirement"). Dividends declared and paid by us in a year will generally differ from taxable income for that year as such dividends may include the distribution of current year taxable income, less amounts carried over into the following year, and the distribution of prior year taxable income carried over

Edgar Filing: Main Street Capital CORP - Form 10-K

Table of Contents

into and distributed in the current year. For amounts we carry over into the following year, we will be required to pay the 4% excise tax based on 98% of our annual taxable income in excess of distributions for the year.

In order to qualify as a RIC for federal income tax purposes, we must, among other things:

continue to qualify as a BDC under the 1940 Act at all times during each taxable year;

derive in each taxable year at least 90% of our gross income from dividends, interest, payments with respect to certain securities, loans, gains from the sale of stock or other securities, net income from certain "qualified publicly traded partnerships," or other income derived with respect to our business of investing in such stock or securities (the "90% Income Test"); and

diversify our holdings so that at the end of each quarter of the taxable year:

at least 50% of the value of our assets consists of cash, cash equivalents, U.S. Government securities, securities of other RICs, and other securities if such other securities of any one issuer do not represent more than 5% of the value of our assets or more than 10% of the outstanding voting securities of the issuer; and

no more than 25% of the value of our assets is invested in the securities, other than U.S. government securities or securities of other RICs, of one issuer, of two or more issuers that are controlled, as determined under applicable Code rules, by us and that are engaged in the same or similar or related trades or businesses or of certain "qualified publicly traded partnerships" (collectively, the "Diversification Tests").

In order to comply with the 90% Income Test, we formed the Taxable Subsidiaries as wholly owned taxable subsidiaries of MSCC and MSC II, for the primary purpose of permitting us to own equity interests in portfolio companies which are "pass through" entities for tax purposes. Absent the taxable status of the Taxable Subsidiaries, a portion of the gross income from such portfolio companies would flow directly to us for purposes of the 90% Income Test. To the extent such income did not consist of income derived from securities, such as dividends and interest, it could jeopardize our ability to qualify as a RIC and, therefore cause us to incur significant federal income taxes. The Taxable Subsidiaries are consolidated with Main Street for GAAP purposes, and the portfolio investments held by the Taxable Subsidiaries are included in our consolidated financial statements. The Taxable Subsidiaries are not consolidated with Main Street for income tax purposes and may generate income tax expense as a result of their ownership of the portfolio investments. This income tax expense, if any, is reflected in our Consolidated Statement of Operations.

We may be required to recognize taxable income in circumstances in which we do not receive cash. For example, if we hold debt obligations that are treated under applicable tax rules as having original issue discount (such as debt instruments issued with warrants), we must include in income each year a portion of the original issue discount that accrues over the life of the obligation, regardless of whether cash representing such income is received by us in the same taxable year. We may also have to include in income other amounts that we have not yet received in cash, such as PIK interest and deferred loan origination fees that are paid after origination of the loan or are paid in non-cash compensation such as warrants or stock. Because any original issue discount or other amounts accrued will be included in our investment company taxable income for the year of accrual, we may be required to make a distribution to our stockholders in order to satisfy the Annual Distribution Requirement, even though we will not have received any corresponding cash amount.

Table of Contents

Although we do not presently expect to do so, we are authorized to borrow funds and to sell assets in order to satisfy distribution requirements. However, under the 1940 Act, we are not permitted to make distributions to our stockholders in certain circumstances while our debt obligations and other senior securities are outstanding unless certain "asset coverage" tests are met. See " Regulation Regulation as a Business Development Company Senior Securities." Moreover, our ability to dispose of assets to meet our distribution requirements may be limited by (1) the illiquid nature of our portfolio and/or (2) other requirements relating to our status as a RIC, including the Diversification Tests. If we dispose of assets in order to meet the Annual Distribution Requirement or the Excise Tax Avoidance Requirement, we may make such dispositions at times that, from an investment standpoint, are not advantageous.

Pursuant to a revenue procedure issued by the Internal Revenue Service, or the IRS, the IRS has indicated that it will treat distributions from certain publicly traded RICs (including business development companies) that are paid part in cash and part in stock as dividends that would satisfy the RIC's annual distribution requirements. In order to qualify for such treatment, the revenue procedure requires that at least 10% of the total distribution be paid in cash and that each stockholder have a right to elect to receive its entire distribution in cash. If too many stockholders elect to receive cash, each stockholder electing to receive cash must receive a proportionate share of the cash to be distributed (although no stockholder electing to receive cash may receive less than 10% of such stockholder's distribution in cash). This revenue procedure applies to distributions declared on or before December 31, 2012, with respect to taxable years ended on or before December 31, 2011.

Investment Adviser Regulations

We are also subject to regulation under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, as amended (the "Advisers Act"). The Advisers Act establishes, among other things, recordkeeping and reporting requirements, disclosure requirements, limitations on transactions between the adviser's account and an advisory client's account, limitations on transactions between the accounts of advisory clients, and general anti-fraud prohibitions. We will also be examined by the SEC from time to time for compliance with the Advisers Act.

Item 1A. Risk Factors

Investing in our common stock involves a number of significant risks. In addition to the other information contained in this Annual Report on Form 10-K, investors should consider carefully the following information before making an investment in our common stock. The risks set out below are not the only risks we face. Additional risks and uncertainties not presently known to us or not presently deemed material by us might also impair our operations and performance. If any of the following events occur, our business, financial condition and results of operations could be materially and adversely affected.

RISKS RELATING TO ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The current state of the economy and financial markets increases the likelihood of adverse effects on our financial position and results of operations. Continued economic adversity could impair our portfolio companies' financial positions and operating results and affect the industries in which we invest, which could, in turn, harm our operating results.

The broader economic fundamentals of the United States economy remain at relatively depressed levels. Unemployment levels remain elevated and consumer fundamentals remain depressed, which has led to significant reductions in spending by both consumers and businesses. In the event that the United States economy remains depressed, it is likely that the financial results of small- to mid-sized companies, like those in which we invest, could experience deterioration or limited growth from current levels, which could ultimately lead to difficulty in meeting their debt service requirements and an increase in defaults. In addition, the end markets for certain of our portfolio companies' products and services have experienced negative economic trends. We have seen reduced operating results at several portfolio companies due to the general economic difficulties, and the trend of reduced operating results may continue into 2011.

Table of Contents

Consequently, we can provide no assurance that the performance of certain of our portfolio companies will not be negatively impacted by these economic or other conditions, which could also have a negative impact on our future results.

Although we have been able to secure access to additional liquidity, including our \$100 million investment credit facility and the increase in available leverage through the SBIC program as part of the 2009 Stimulus Bill, the current uncertainty in the debt and in the equity capital markets provides no assurance that debt or equity capital will be available to us in the future on favorable terms, or at all.

RISKS RELATING TO OUR BUSINESS AND STRUCTURE

Our investment portfolio is and will continue to be recorded at fair value, with our Board of Directors having final responsibility for overseeing, reviewing and approving, in good faith, our estimate of fair value and, as a result, there is and will continue to be uncertainty as to the value of our portfolio investments.

Under the 1940 Act, we are required to carry our portfolio investments at market value or, if there is no readily available market value, at fair value as determined by us with our Board of Directors having final responsibility for overseeing, reviewing and approving, in good faith, our estimate of fair value. Typically, there is not a public market for the securities of the privately held companies in which we have invested and will generally continue to invest. As a result, we value these securities quarterly at fair value based on inputs from management, a third party independent valuation firm and our audit committee and with the oversight, review and approval of our Board of Directors.

The determination of fair value and consequently, the amount of unrealized gains and losses in our portfolio, are to a certain degree, subjective and dependent on a valuation process approved by our Board of Directors. Certain factors that may be considered in determining the fair value of our investments include external events, such as private mergers, sales and acquisitions involving comparable companies. Because such valuations, and particularly valuations of private securities and private companies, are inherently uncertain, may fluctuate over short periods of time and may be based on estimates, our determinations of fair value may differ materially from the values that would have been used if a ready market for these securities existed. Due to this uncertainty, our fair value determinations may cause our net asset value on a given date to materially understate or overstate the value that we may ultimately realize on one or more of our investments. As a result, investors purchasing our common stock based on an overstated net asset value would pay a higher price than the value of our investments might warrant. Conversely, investors selling shares during a period in which the net asset value understates the value of our investments will receive a lower price for their shares than the value of our investments might warrant.

Our financial condition and results of operations depends on our ability to effectively manage and deploy capital.

Our ability to achieve our investment objective of maximizing our portfolio's total return by generating current income from our debt investments and capital appreciation from our equity and equity-related investments, including warrants, convertible securities and other rights to acquire equity securities in a portfolio company, depends on our ability to effectively manage and deploy capital, which depends, in turn, on our investment team's ability to identify, evaluate and monitor, and our ability to finance and invest in, companies that meet our investment criteria.

Accomplishing our investment objective on a cost-effective basis is largely a function of our investment team's handling of the investment process, its ability to provide competent, attentive and efficient services and our access to investments offering acceptable terms. In addition to monitoring the performance of our existing investments, members of our investment team are also called upon, from time to time, to provide managerial assistance to some of our portfolio companies. These demands on their time may distract them or slow the rate of investment.

Table of Contents

Even if we are able to grow and build upon our investment operations, any failure to manage our growth effectively could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects. The results of our operations will depend on many factors, including the availability of opportunities for investment, readily accessible short and long-term funding alternatives in the financial markets and economic conditions. Furthermore, if we cannot successfully operate our business or implement our investment policies and strategies as described herein, it could negatively impact our ability to pay dividends.

We may face increasing competition for investment opportunities.

We compete for investments with other investment funds (including private equity funds, mezzanine funds, BDCs, and other SBICs), as well as traditional financial services companies such as commercial banks and other sources of funding. Many of our competitors are substantially larger and have considerably greater financial, technical and marketing resources than we do. For example, some competitors may have a lower cost of capital and access to funding sources that are not available to us, including from federal government agencies. In addition, some of our competitors may have higher risk tolerances or different risk assessments than we have. These characteristics could allow our competitors to consider a wider variety of investments, establish more relationships and offer better pricing and more flexible structuring than we are able to do. We may lose investment opportunities if we do not match our competitors' pricing, terms and structure. If we are forced to match our competitors' pricing, terms and structure, we may not be able to achieve acceptable returns on our investments or may bear substantial risk of capital loss. A significant part of our competitive advantage stems from the fact that the market for investments in LMM companies is underserved by traditional commercial banks and other financing sources. A significant increase in the number and/or the size of our competitors in this target market could force us to accept less attractive investment terms. Furthermore, many of our competitors have greater experience operating under, or are not subject to, the regulatory restrictions that the 1940 Act imposes on us as a BDC.

We are dependent upon our key investment personnel for our future success.

We depend on the members of our investment team, particularly Vincent D. Foster, Todd A. Reppert, Rodger A. Stout, Curtis L. Hartman, Dwayne L. Hyzak and David L. Magdol, for the identification, review, final selection, structuring, closing and monitoring of our investments. These employees have significant investment expertise and relationships that we rely on to implement our business plan. Although we have entered into a non-compete agreement with Mr. Foster, we have no guarantee that he or any other employees will remain employed with us. If we lose the services of these individuals, we may not be able to operate our business as we expect, and our ability to compete could be harmed, which could cause our operating results to suffer.

Our success depends on attracting and retaining qualified personnel in a competitive environment.

Our growth will require that we retain new investment and administrative personnel in a competitive market. Our ability to attract and retain personnel with the requisite credentials, experience and skills depends on several factors including, but not limited to, our ability to offer competitive wages, benefits and professional growth opportunities. Many of the entities, including investment funds (such as private equity funds and mezzanine funds) and traditional financial services companies, with which we compete for experienced personnel have greater resources than we have.

The competitive environment for qualified personnel may require us to take certain measures to ensure that we are able to attract and retain experienced personnel. Such measures may include increasing the attractiveness of our overall compensation packages, altering the structure of our compensation packages through the use of additional forms of compensation, or other steps. The inability to attract and retain experienced personnel would have a material adverse effect on our business.

Table of Contents

Our business model depends to a significant extent upon strong referral relationships, and our inability to maintain or develop these relationships, as well as the failure of these relationships to generate investment opportunities, could adversely affect our business.

We expect that members of our management team will maintain their relationships with intermediaries, financial institutions, investment bankers, commercial bankers, financial advisors, attorneys, accountants, consultants and other individuals within our network, and we will rely to a significant extent upon these relationships to provide us with potential investment opportunities. If our management team fails to maintain its existing relationships or develop new relationships with sources of investment opportunities, we will not be able to grow our investment portfolio. In addition, individuals with whom members of our management team have relationships are not obligated to provide us with investment opportunities, and, therefore, there is no assurance that such relationships will generate investment opportunities for us.

We have a limited operating history as a BDC and as a RIC.

The 1940 Act imposes numerous constraints on the operations of BDCs. Prior to the completion of the IPO, we did not operate, and our management team had no experience operating, as a BDC under the 1940 Act or as a RIC under Subchapter M of the Code. As a result, we have limited operating results under these regulatory frameworks that can demonstrate either their effect on our business or our ability to manage our business under these frameworks. Our management team's limited experience in managing a portfolio of assets under such constraints may hinder our ability to take advantage of attractive investment opportunities and, as a result, achieve our investment objective. Furthermore, any failure to comply with the requirements imposed on BDCs by the 1940 Act could cause the SEC to bring an enforcement action against us. If we do not remain a BDC, we might be regulated as a registered closed-end investment company under the 1940 Act, which would further decrease our operating flexibility.

Regulations governing our operation as a BDC will affect our ability to, and the way in which we raise additional capital.

Our business will require capital to operate and grow. We may acquire such additional capital from the following sources:

Senior Securities. We may issue debt securities or preferred stock and/or borrow money from banks or other financial institutions, which we refer to collectively as senior securities. As a result of issuing senior securities, we will be exposed to additional risks, including the following:

Under the provisions of the 1940 Act, we are permitted, as a BDC, to issue senior securities only in amounts such that our asset coverage, as defined in the 1940 Act, equals at least 200% immediately after each issuance of senior securities. If the value of our assets declines, we may be unable to satisfy this test. If that happens, we will be prohibited from issuing debt securities or preferred stock and/or borrowing money from banks or other financial institutions until such time as we satisfy this test.

Any amounts that we use to service our debt or make payments on preferred stock will not be available for dividends to our common stockholders.

It is likely that any senior securities or other indebtedness we issue will be governed by an indenture or other instrument containing covenants restricting our operating flexibility. Additionally, some of these securities or other indebtedness may be rated by rating agencies, and in obtaining a rating for such securities and other indebtedness, we may be required to abide by operating and investment guidelines that further restrict operating and financial flexibility.

We and, indirectly, our stockholders will bear the cost of issuing and servicing such securities and other indebtedness.

Preferred stock or any convertible or exchangeable securities that we issue in the future may have rights, preferences and privileges more favorable than those of our common stock, including separate

Table of Contents

voting rights and could delay or prevent a transaction or a change in control to the detriment of the holders of our common stock.

Additional Common Stock. We are not generally able to issue and sell our common stock at a price below net asset value per share. We may, however, sell our common stock, warrants, options or rights to acquire our common stock, at a price below the current net asset value of the common stock if our Board of Directors determines that such sale is in the best interests of our stockholders, and our stockholders approve such sale. See " Stockholders may incur dilution if we sell shares of our common stock in one or more offerings at prices below the then current net asset value per share of our common stock or issue securities to subscribe to, convert to or purchase shares of our common stock" for a discussion of proposals approved by our stockholders that permit us to issue shares of our common stock below net asset value. We may also make rights offerings to our stockholders at prices per share less than the net asset value per share, subject to applicable requirements of the 1940 Act. If we raise additional funds by issuing more common stock or senior securities convertible into, or exchangeable for, our common stock, the percentage ownership of our stockholders at that time would decrease, and they may experience dilution. Moreover, we can offer no assurance that we will be able to issue and sell additional equity securities in the future, on favorable terms or at all.

The Funds are licensed by the SBA, and therefore subject to SBA regulations.

MSMF, our wholly owned subsidiary, and MSC II, our majority-owned subsidiary, are licensed to act as small business investment companies and are regulated by the SBA. The SBA also places certain limitations on the financing terms of investments by SBICs in portfolio companies and prohibits SBICs from providing funds for certain purposes or to businesses in a few prohibited industries. Compliance with SBA requirements may cause the Funds to forego attractive investment opportunities that are not permitted under SBA regulations.

Further, the SBA regulations require that a licensed SBIC be periodically examined and audited by the SBA to determine its compliance with the relevant SBA regulations. The SBA prohibits, without prior SBA approval, a "change of control" of an SBIC or transfers that would result in any person (or a group of persons acting in concert) owning 10% or more of a class of capital stock of a licensed SBIC. If the Funds fail to comply with applicable SBIC regulations, the SBA could, depending on the severity of the violation, limit or prohibit its use of debentures, declare outstanding debentures immediately due and payable, and/or limit it from making new investments. In addition, the SBA can revoke or suspend a license for willful or repeated violation of, or willful or repeated failure to observe, any provision of the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 or any rule or regulation promulgated thereunder. Such actions by the SBA would, in turn, negatively affect us.

Because we borrow money, the potential for gain or loss on amounts invested in us is magnified and may increase the risk of investing in us.

Borrowings, also known as leverage, magnify the potential for gain or loss on invested equity capital. As we use leverage to partially finance our investments, you will experience increased risks of investing in our common stock. We, through the Funds, issue debt securities guaranteed by the SBA and sold in the capital markets. As a result of its guarantee of the debt securities, the SBA has fixed dollar claims on the assets of the Funds that are superior to the claims of our common stockholders. We may also borrow from banks and other lenders, including under the \$85 million investment credit facility we entered into during 2010 and expanded to \$100 million during January 2011. See "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations – Capital Resources" for a discussion regarding our investment credit facility. If the value of our assets increases, then leveraging would cause the net asset value attributable to our common stock to increase more sharply than it would have had we not leveraged. Conversely, if the value of our assets decreases, leveraging would cause net asset value to decline more sharply than it otherwise would have had we not leveraged our business. Similarly, any increase in our income in excess of interest payable on the borrowed funds would cause our net investment income to increase more than it would without the

Table of Contents

leverage, while any decrease in our income would cause net investment income to decline more sharply than it would have had we not borrowed. Such a decline could negatively affect our ability to pay common stock dividends. Leverage is generally considered a speculative investment technique.

As of December 31, 2010, we, through the Funds, had \$180 million of outstanding indebtedness guaranteed by the SBA, which had a weighted average annualized interest cost of approximately 5.2% (exclusive of deferred financing costs). The debentures guaranteed by the SBA have a maturity of ten years and require semi-annual payments of interest. We will need to generate sufficient cash flow to make required interest payments on the debentures. If we are unable to meet the financial obligations under the debentures, the SBA, as a creditor, will have a superior claim to the assets of the Funds over our stockholders in the event we liquidate or the SBA exercises its remedies under such debentures as the result of a default by us. In addition, as of December 31, 2010, we had \$39 million outstanding under the Credit Facility. Borrowings under the Credit Facility bear interest, subject to our election, on a per annum basis equal to (i) the applicable LIBOR rate plus 2.50% or (ii) the applicable base rate plus 1.50%. Main Street pays unused commitment fees of 0.375% per annum on the average unused lender commitments under the Credit Facility. If we are unable to meet the financial obligations under the Credit Facility, the Credit Facility lending group will have a superior claim to the assets of MSCC and its subsidiaries (excluding the assets of the Funds) over our stockholders in the event we liquidate or the lending group exercises its remedies under the Credit Facility as the result of a default by us.

Illustration. The following table illustrates the effect of leverage on returns from an investment in our common stock assuming various annual returns, net of expenses. The calculations in the table below are hypothetical and actual returns may be higher or lower than those appearing below.

Assumed Return on Our Portfolio(1)
(net of expenses)

| | (10.0)% | (5.0)% | 0.0% | 5.0% | 10.0% |
|--|---------|---------|--------|------|-------|
| Corresponding net return to common stockholder | (22.2)% | (13.2)% | (4.2)% | 4.8% | 13.7% |

(1) Assumes \$448.9 million in total assets, \$219.0 million in debt outstanding, \$250.0 million in net assets, and an average cost of funds of 4.8%. Actual interest payments may be different.

Our ability to achieve our investment objective may depend in part on our ability to access additional leverage on favorable terms by issuing debentures guaranteed by the SBA, through the Funds, or by borrowing from banks or insurance companies, and there can be no assurance that such additional leverage can in fact be achieved.

We may experience fluctuations in our quarterly results.

We could experience fluctuations in our quarterly operating results due to a number of factors, including our ability or inability to make investments in companies that meet our investment criteria, the interest rate payable on the debt securities we acquire, the level of portfolio dividend and fee income, the level of our expenses, variations in and the timing of the recognition of realized and unrealized gains or losses, the degree to which we encounter competition in our markets and general economic conditions. As a result of these factors, results for any period should not be relied upon as being indicative of performance in future periods.

Our Board of Directors may change our operating policies and strategies without prior notice or stockholder approval, the effects of which may be adverse.

Our Board of Directors has the authority to modify or waive our current operating policies, investment criteria and strategies without prior notice and without stockholder approval. We cannot predict the effect any changes to our current operating policies, investment criteria and strategies would have on our business, net

Table of Contents

asset value, operating results and value of our stock. However, the effects might be adverse, which could negatively impact our ability to pay you dividends and cause you to lose all or part of your investment.

We will be subject to corporate-level income tax if we are unable to qualify as a RIC under Subchapter M of the Code.

To maintain RIC tax treatment under the Code, we must meet the following annual distribution, income source and asset diversification requirements:

The annual distribution requirement for a RIC will be satisfied if we distribute to our stockholders on an annual basis at least 90% of our net ordinary income and realized net short-term capital gains in excess of realized net long-term capital losses, if any. Depending on the level of taxable income earned in a tax year, we may choose to carry forward taxable income in excess of current year distributions into the next tax year and pay a 4% excise tax on such income. Any such carryover taxable income must be distributed through a dividend declared prior to filing the final tax return related to the year which generated such taxable income. For more information regarding tax treatment, see "Business Regulation Taxation as a Regulated Investment Company." Because we use debt financing, we are subject to certain asset coverage ratio requirements under the 1940 Act and are (and may in the future become) subject to certain financial covenants under loan and credit agreements that could, under certain circumstances, restrict us from making distributions necessary to satisfy the distribution requirement. If we are unable to obtain cash from other sources, we could fail to qualify for RIC tax treatment and thus become subject to corporate-level income tax.

The source income requirement will be satisfied if we obtain at least 90% of our income for each year from distributions, interest, gains from the sale of stock or securities or similar sources.

The asset diversification requirement will be satisfied if we meet certain asset diversification requirements at the end of each quarter of our taxable year. To satisfy this requirement, at least 50% of the value of our assets must consist of cash, cash equivalents, U.S. Government securities, securities of other RICs, and other acceptable securities; and no more than 25% of the value of our assets can be invested in the securities, other than U.S. government securities or securities of other RICs, of one issuer, of two or more issuers that are controlled, as determined under applicable Code rules, by us and that are engaged in the same or similar or related trades or businesses or of certain "qualified publicly traded partnerships."

Failure to meet these requirements may result in our having to dispose of certain investments quickly in order to prevent the loss of RIC status. Because most of our investments will be in private companies, and therefore will be relatively illiquid, any such dispositions could be made at disadvantageous prices and could result in substantial losses. Moreover, if we fail to maintain RIC tax treatment for any reason and are subject to corporate income tax, the resulting corporate taxes could substantially reduce our net assets, the amount of income available for distribution and the amount of our distributions.

We may not be able to pay you dividends, our dividends may not grow over time, and a portion of dividends paid to you may be a return of capital.

We intend to pay monthly dividends to our stockholders out of assets legally available for distribution. We cannot assure you that we will achieve investment results that will allow us to pay a specified level of cash dividends, previously projected dividends for future periods, or year-to-year increases in cash dividends. Our ability to pay dividends might be adversely affected by, among other things, the impact of one or more of the risk factors described herein. In addition, the inability to satisfy the asset coverage test applicable to us as a BDC could limit our ability to pay dividends. All dividends will be paid at the discretion of our Board of Directors and will depend on our earnings, our financial condition, maintenance of our RIC status, compliance with applicable BDC regulations, each of the Funds' compliance with applicable SBIC regulations and such other factors as our Board of Directors may deem relevant from time to time. We cannot assure you that we will pay dividends to our stockholders in the future.

Table of Contents

When we make monthly distributions, we will be required to determine the extent to which such distributions are paid out of current or accumulated earnings, recognized capital gains or capital. To the extent there is a return of capital, investors will be required to reduce their basis in our stock for federal tax purposes. In the future, our distributions may include a return of capital.

We may have difficulty paying our required distributions if we recognize income before or without receiving cash representing such income.

For federal income tax purposes, we will include in income certain amounts that we have not yet received in cash, such as original issue discount, which may arise if we receive warrants in connection with the origination of a loan or possibly in other circumstances, or contractual payment-in-kind, or PIK, interest, which represents contractual interest added to the loan balance and due at the end of the loan term. Such original issue discounts or increases in loan balances as a result of contractual PIK arrangements will be included in income before we receive any corresponding cash payments. We also may be required to include in income certain other amounts that we will not receive in cash. Approximately 6.4% of our total investment income for the year ended December 31, 2010 was attributable to paid in kind interest.

Since, in certain cases, we may recognize income before or without receiving cash representing such income, we may have difficulty meeting the annual distribution requirement necessary to maintain RIC tax treatment under the Code. Accordingly, we may have to sell some of our investments at times and/or at prices we would not consider advantageous, raise additional debt or equity capital or forgo new investment opportunities for this purpose. If we are not able to obtain cash from other sources, we may fail to qualify for RIC tax treatment and thus become subject to corporate-level income tax. For additional discussion regarding the tax implications of a RIC, please see "Business Regulation Taxation as a Regulated Investment Company."

We may in the future choose to pay dividends in our own stock, in which case you may be required to pay tax in excess of the cash you receive.

We may distribute taxable dividends that are payable in part in our stock. Under an IRS revenue procedure, up to 90% of any such taxable dividend declared on or before December 31, 2012 with respect to taxable years ended on or before December 31, 2011 could be payable in our stock. Where the IRS revenue procedure is not currently applicable, the IRS has also issued private letter rulings on cash and stock dividends paid by RICs and real estate investment trusts using a 20% cash standard (and, more recently, the 10% cash standard of the above-referenced IRS revenue procedure) if certain requirements are satisfied. Taxable stockholders receiving such dividends will be required to include the full amount of the dividend as ordinary income (or as long-term capital gain to the extent such distribution is properly designated as a capital gain dividend) to the extent of our current and accumulated earnings and profits for United States federal income tax purposes. As a result, a U.S. stockholder may be required to pay tax with respect to such dividends in excess of any cash received. If a U.S. stockholder sells the stock it receives as a dividend in order to pay this tax, the sales proceeds may be less than the amount included in income with respect to the dividend, depending on the market price of our stock at the time of the sale. Furthermore, with respect to non-U.S. stockholders, we may be required to withhold U.S. tax with respect to such dividends, including in respect of all or a portion of such dividend that is payable in stock. In addition, if a significant number of our stockholders determine to sell shares of our stock in order to pay taxes owed on dividends, it may put downward pressure on the trading price of our stock.

Each of the Funds, as an SBIC, may be unable to make distributions to us that will enable us to meet or maintain RIC status, which could result in the imposition of an entity-level tax.

In order for us to continue to qualify for RIC tax treatment and to minimize corporate-level taxes, we will be required to distribute substantially all of our net ordinary income and net capital gain income, including income from certain of our subsidiaries, which includes the income from the Funds. We will be partially dependent on the Funds for cash distributions to enable us to meet the RIC distribution

Table of Contents

requirements. The Funds may be limited by the Small Business Investment Act of 1958, and SBIC regulations governing SBICs, from making certain distributions to us that may be necessary to enable us to maintain our status as a RIC. We may have to request a waiver of the SBA's restrictions for the Funds to make certain distributions to maintain our eligibility for RIC status. We cannot assure you that the SBA will grant such waiver and if the Funds are unable to obtain a waiver, compliance with the SBIC regulations may result in loss of RIC tax treatment and a consequent imposition of an entity-level tax on us.

Because we intend to distribute substantially all of our income to our stockholders to maintain our status as a RIC, we will continue to need additional capital to finance our growth, and regulations governing our operation as a BDC will affect our ability to, and the way in which we, raise additional capital.

In order to satisfy the requirements applicable to a RIC and to minimize corporate-level taxes, we intend to distribute to our stockholders substantially all of our net ordinary income and net capital gain income. We may carry forward excess undistributed taxable income into the next year, net of the 4% excise tax. Any such carryover taxable income must be distributed through a dividend declared prior to filing the final tax return related to the year which generated such taxable income. As a BDC, we generally are required to meet an asset coverage ratio, as defined in the 1940 Act, of at least 200% immediately after each issuance of senior securities. This requirement limits the amount that we may borrow. Because we will continue to need capital to grow our investment portfolio, this limitation may prevent us from incurring debt and require us to raise additional equity at a time when it may be disadvantageous to do so.

While we expect to be able to borrow and to issue additional debt and equity securities, we cannot assure you that debt and equity financing will be available to us on favorable terms, or at all. In addition, as a BDC, we generally are not permitted to issue equity securities priced below net asset value without stockholder approval. If additional funds are not available to us, we could be forced to curtail or cease new investment activities, and our net asset value could decline.

Stockholders may incur dilution if we sell shares of our common stock in one or more offerings at prices below the then current net asset value per share of our common stock or issue securities to subscribe to, convert to or purchase shares of our common stock.

The 1940 Act prohibits us from selling shares of our common stock at a price below the current net asset value per share of such stock, with certain exceptions. One such exception is prior stockholder approval of issuances below net asset value provided that our Board of Directors makes certain determinations. At our 2010 annual meeting of stockholders, our stockholders approved a proposal that authorizes us to sell shares of our common stock below the then current net asset value per share of our common stock in one or more offerings for a period of one year ending on the earlier of June 11, 2011 or the date of our 2011 annual meeting of stockholders. Continued access to this exception will require approval of similar proposals at future stockholder meetings. At our 2009 annual meeting of stockholders, our stockholders also approved a proposal to authorize us to issue securities to subscribe to, convert to, or purchase shares of our common stock in one or more offerings. Any decision to sell shares of our common stock below the then current net asset value per share of our common stock or securities to subscribe to, convert to, or purchase shares of our common stock would be subject to the determination by our Board of Directors that such issuance is in our and our stockholders' best interests.

If we were to sell shares of our common stock below net asset value per share, such sales would result in an immediate dilution to the net asset value per share. This dilution would occur as a result of the sale of shares at a price below the then current net asset value per share of our common stock and a proportionately greater decrease in a stockholder's interest in our earnings and assets and voting interest in us than the increase in our assets resulting from such issuance. In addition, if we issue securities to subscribe to, convert to or purchase shares of common stock, the exercise or conversion of such securities would increase the number of outstanding shares of our common stock. Any such exercise would be dilutive on the voting power

Table of Contents

of existing stockholders, and could be dilutive with regard to dividends and our net asset value, and other economic aspects of the common stock.

Because the number of shares of common stock that could be so issued and the timing of any issuance is not currently known, the actual dilutive effect cannot be predicted; however, the example below illustrates the effect of dilution to existing stockholders resulting from the sale of common stock at prices below the net asset value of such shares.

Illustration: Example of Dilutive Effect of the Issuance of Shares Below Net Asset Value. Assume that Company XYZ has 1,000,000 total shares outstanding, \$15,000,000 in total assets and \$5,000,000 in total liabilities. The net asset value per share of the common stock of Company XYZ is \$10.00. The following table illustrates the reduction to net asset value, or NAV, and the dilution experienced by Stockholder A following the sale of 40,000 shares of the common stock of Company XYZ at \$9.50 per share, a price below its NAV per share.

| | Prior to Sale Below NAV | Following Sale Below NAV | Percentage Change |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Reduction to NAV | | | |
| Total Shares Outstanding | 1,000,000 | 1,040,000 | 4.0% |
| NAV per share | \$ 10.00 | \$ 9.98 | (0.2)% |
| Dilution to Existing Stockholder | | | |
| Shares Held by Stockholder A | 10,000 | 10,000(1) | 0.0% |
| Percentage Held by Stockholder A | 1.00% | 0.96% | (3.8)% |
| Total Interest of Stockholder A in NAV | \$ 100,000 | \$ 99,808 | (0.2)% |

(1) Assumes that Stockholder A does not purchase additional shares in the sale of shares below NAV.

Changes in laws or regulations governing our operations may adversely affect our business or cause us to alter our business strategy.

We, the Funds, and our portfolio companies are subject to applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations, including, without limitation, federal immigration laws and regulations. New legislation may be enacted or new interpretations, rulings or regulations could be adopted, including those governing the types of investments we are permitted to make, any of which could harm us and our stockholders, potentially with retroactive effect. In addition, any change to the SBA's current debenture SBIC program could have a significant impact on our ability to obtain lower-cost leverage, through the Funds, and therefore, our ability to compete with other finance companies.

Additionally, any changes to the laws and regulations governing our operations relating to permitted investments may cause us to alter our investment strategy in order to avail ourselves of new or different opportunities. Such changes could result in material differences to the strategies and plans set forth herein and may result in our investment focus shifting from the areas of expertise of our investment team to other types of investments in which our investment team may have less expertise or little or no experience. Thus, any such changes, if they occur, could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations and the value of your investment.

Table of Contents

Terrorist attacks, acts of war or natural disasters may affect any market for our common stock, impact the businesses in which we invest and harm our business, operating results and financial condition.

Terrorist acts, acts of war or natural disasters may disrupt our operations, as well as the operations of the businesses in which we invest. Such acts have created, and continue to create, economic and political uncertainties and have contributed to global economic instability. Future terrorist activities, military or security operations, or natural disasters could further weaken the domestic/global economies and create additional uncertainties, which may negatively impact the businesses in which we invest directly or indirectly and, in turn, could have a material adverse impact on our business, operating results and financial condition. Losses from terrorist attacks and natural disasters are generally uninsurable.

RISKS RELATED TO OUR INVESTMENTS

Our investments in portfolio companies involve higher levels of risk, and we could lose all or part of our investment.

Investing in our portfolio companies involves a number of significant risks. Among other things, these companies:

may have limited financial resources and may be unable to meet their obligations under their debt instruments that we hold, which may be accompanied by a deterioration in the value of any collateral and a reduction in the likelihood of us realizing any guarantees from subsidiaries or affiliates of our portfolio companies that we may have obtained in connection with our investment, as well as a corresponding decrease in the value of the equity components of our investments;

may have shorter operating histories, narrower product lines, smaller market shares and/or significant customer concentrations than larger businesses, which tend to render them more vulnerable to competitors' actions and market conditions, as well as general economic downturns;

are more likely to depend on the management talents and efforts of a small group of persons; therefore, the death, disability, resignation, termination, or significant under-performance of one or more of these persons could have a material adverse impact on our portfolio company and, in turn, on us;

generally have less predictable operating results, may from time to time be parties to litigation, may be engaged in rapidly changing businesses with products subject to a substantial risk of obsolescence, and may require substantial additional capital to support their operations, finance expansion or maintain their competitive position; and

generally have less publicly available information about their businesses, operations and financial condition. We are required to rely on the ability of our management team and investment professionals to obtain adequate information to evaluate the potential returns from investing in these companies. If we are unable to uncover all material information about these companies, we may not make a fully informed investment decision, and may lose all or part of our investment.

In addition, in the course of providing significant managerial assistance to certain of our portfolio companies, certain of our officers and directors may serve as directors on the boards of such companies. To the extent that litigation arises out of our investments in these companies, our officers and directors may be named as defendants in such litigation, which could result in an expenditure of funds (through our indemnification of such officers and directors) and the diversion of management time and resources.

The lack of liquidity in our investments may adversely affect our business.

We invest, and will continue to invest in companies whose securities are not publicly traded, and whose securities will be subject to legal and other restrictions on resale or will otherwise be less liquid than publicly traded securities. The illiquidity of these investments may make it difficult for us to sell these investments when desired. In addition, if we are required to liquidate all or a portion of our portfolio quickly, we may

Table of Contents

realize significantly less than the value at which we had previously recorded these investments. As a result, we do not expect to achieve liquidity in our investments in the near-term. Our investments are usually subject to contractual or legal restrictions on resale or are otherwise illiquid because there is usually no established trading market for such investments. The illiquidity of most of our investments may make it difficult for us to dispose of them at a favorable price, and, as a result, we may suffer losses.

We may not have the funds or ability to make additional investments in our portfolio companies.

We may not have the funds or ability to make additional investments in our portfolio companies. After our initial investment in a portfolio company, we may be called upon from time to time to provide additional funds to such company or have the opportunity to increase our investment through the exercise of a warrant to purchase common stock. There is no assurance that we will make, or will have sufficient funds to make, follow-on investments. Any decisions not to make a follow-on investment or any inability on our part to make such an investment may have a negative impact on a portfolio company in need of such an investment, may result in a missed opportunity for us to increase our participation in a successful operation or may reduce the expected yield on the investment.

Our portfolio companies may incur debt that ranks equally with, or senior to, our investments in such companies.

We invest primarily in secured term debt as well as equity issued by LMM and middle market companies. Our portfolio companies may have, or may be permitted to incur, other debt that ranks equally with, or senior to, the debt in which we invest. By their terms, such debt instruments may entitle the holders to receive payment of interest or principal on or before the dates on which we are entitled to receive payments with respect to the debt instruments in which we invest. Also, in the event of insolvency, liquidation, dissolution, reorganization or bankruptcy of a portfolio company, holders of debt instruments ranking senior to our investment in that portfolio company would typically be entitled to receive payment in full before we receive any distribution. After repaying such senior creditors, such portfolio company may not have any remaining assets to use for repaying its obligation to us. In the case of debt ranking equally with debt instruments in which we invest, we would have to share on an equal basis any distributions with other creditors holding such debt in the event of an insolvency, liquidation, dissolution, reorganization or bankruptcy of the relevant portfolio company.

There may be circumstances where our debt investments could be subordinated to claims of other creditors or we could be subject to lender liability claims.

Even though we may have structured certain of our investments as secured loans, if one of our portfolio companies were to go bankrupt, depending on the facts and circumstances, and based upon principles of equitable subordination as defined by existing case law, a bankruptcy court could subordinate all or a portion of our claim to that of other creditors and transfer any lien securing such subordinated claim to the bankruptcy estate. The principles of equitable subordination defined by case law have generally indicated that a claim may be subordinated only if its holder is guilty of misconduct or where the senior loan is re-characterized as an equity investment and the senior lender has actually provided significant managerial assistance to the bankrupt debtor. We may also be subject to lender liability claims for actions taken by us with respect to a borrower's business or instances where we exercise control over the borrower. It is possible that we could become subject to a lender's liability claim, including as a result of actions taken in rendering significant managerial assistance or actions to compel and collect payments from the borrower outside the ordinary course of business.

Table of Contents

Second priority liens on collateral securing loans that we make to our portfolio companies may be subject to control by senior creditors with first priority liens. If there is a default, the value of the collateral may not be sufficient to repay in full both the first priority creditors and us.

Certain loans that we make are secured by a second priority security interest in the same collateral pledged by a portfolio company to secure senior debt owed by the portfolio company to commercial banks or other traditional lenders. Often the senior lender has procured covenants from the portfolio company prohibiting the incurrence of additional secured debt without the senior lender's consent. Prior to and as a condition of permitting the portfolio company to borrow money from us secured by the same collateral pledged to the senior lender, the senior lender will require assurances that it will control the disposition of any collateral in the event of bankruptcy or other default. In many such cases, the senior lender will require us to enter into an "intercreditor agreement" prior to permitting the portfolio company to borrow from us. Typically the intercreditor agreements we are requested to execute expressly subordinate our debt instruments to those held by the senior lender and further provide that the senior lender shall control: (1) the commencement of foreclosure or other proceedings to liquidate and collect on the collateral; (2) the nature, timing and conduct of foreclosure or other collection proceedings; (3) the amendment of any collateral document; (4) the release of the security interests in respect of any collateral; and (5) the waiver of defaults under any security agreement. Because of the control we may cede to senior lenders under intercreditor agreements we may enter, we may be unable to realize the proceeds of any collateral securing some of our loans.

Finally, the value of the collateral securing our debt investment will ultimately depend on market and economic conditions, the availability of buyers and other factors. Therefore, there can be no assurance that the proceeds, if any, from the sale or sales of all of the collateral would be sufficient to satisfy the loan obligations secured by our first or second priority liens. There is also a risk that such collateral securing our investments will decrease in value over time, will be difficult to sell in a timely manner, will be difficult to appraise and will fluctuate in value based upon the success of the portfolio company and market conditions. If such proceeds are not sufficient to repay amounts outstanding under the loan obligations secured by our second priority liens, then we, to the extent not repaid from the proceeds of the sale of the collateral, will only have an unsecured claim against the company's remaining assets, if any.

We are a non-diversified investment company within the meaning of the 1940 Act, and therefore we are not limited with respect to the proportion of our assets that may be invested in securities of a single issuer.

We are classified as a non-diversified investment company within the meaning of the 1940 Act, which means that we are not limited by the 1940 Act with respect to the proportion of our assets that we may invest in securities of a single issuer. Although we seek to maintain a diversified portfolio in accordance with our business strategies, to the extent that we assume large positions in the securities of a small number of issuers, our net asset value may fluctuate to a greater extent than that of a diversified investment company as a result of changes in the financial condition or the market's assessment of the issuer. We may also be more susceptible to any single economic or regulatory occurrence than a diversified investment company. Beyond our RIC asset diversification requirements, we do not have fixed guidelines for diversification, and our investments could be concentrated in relatively few portfolio companies.

We generally will not control our portfolio companies.

We do not, and do not expect to, control the decision making in many of our portfolio companies, even though we may have board representation or board observation rights, and our debt agreements may contain certain restrictive covenants. As a result, we are subject to the risk that a portfolio company in which we invest will make business decisions with which we disagree and the management of such company, as representatives of the holders of their common equity, will take risks or otherwise act in ways that do not serve our interests as debt investors. Due to the lack of liquidity for our investments in non-traded companies, we may not be able to dispose of our interests in our portfolio companies as readily as we would like or at an

Table of Contents

appropriate valuation. As a result, a portfolio company may make decisions that would decrease the value of our portfolio holdings.

Defaults by our portfolio companies will harm our operating results.

A portfolio company's failure to satisfy financial or operating covenants imposed by us or other lenders could lead to non-payment of interest and other defaults and, potentially, termination of its loans and foreclosure on its secured assets, which could trigger cross-defaults under other agreements and jeopardize a portfolio company's ability to meet its obligations under the debt or equity securities that we hold. We may incur expenses to the extent necessary to seek recovery upon default or to negotiate new terms, which may include the waiver of certain financial covenants, with a defaulting portfolio company.

Any unrealized losses we experience on our loan portfolio may be an indication of future realized losses, which could reduce our income available for distribution.

As a BDC, we are required to carry our investments at market value or, if no market value is ascertainable, at the fair value as determined in good faith by our Board of Directors. Decreases in the market values or fair values of our investments will be recorded as unrealized depreciation. Any unrealized losses in our loan portfolio could be an indication of a portfolio company's inability to meet its repayment obligations to us with respect to the affected loans. This could result in realized losses in the future and ultimately in reductions of our income available for distribution in future periods.

Prepayments of our debt investments by our portfolio companies could adversely impact our results of operations and reduce our return on equity.

We are subject to the risk that the investments we make in our portfolio companies may be repaid prior to maturity. When this occurs, we will generally reinvest these proceeds in temporary investments, pending their future investment in new portfolio companies. These temporary investments will typically have substantially lower yields than the debt being prepaid and we could experience significant delays in reinvesting these amounts. Any future investment in a new portfolio company may also be at lower yields than the debt that was repaid. As a result, our results of operations could be materially adversely affected if one or more of our portfolio companies elect to prepay amounts owed to us. Additionally, prepayments could negatively impact our return on equity, which could result in a decline in the market price of our common stock.

Changes in interest rates may affect our cost of capital and net investment income.

Some of our debt investments will bear interest at variable rates and the interest income from these investments could be negatively affected by decreases in market interest rates. In addition, an increase in interest rates would make it more expensive to use debt to finance our investments. As a result, a significant increase in market interest rates could increase our cost of capital, which would reduce our net investment income. Also, an increase in interest rates available to investors could make an investment in our common stock less attractive if we are not able to increase our dividend rate, a situation which could reduce the value of our common stock. Conversely, a decrease in interest rates may have an adverse impact on our returns by requiring us to seek lower yields on our debt investments and by increasing the risk that our portfolio companies will prepay our debt investments, resulting in the need to redeploy capital at potentially lower rates. A decrease in market interest rates may also adversely impact our returns on idle funds, which would reduce our net investment income.

We may not realize gains from our equity investments.

Certain investments that we have made in the past and may make in the future include warrants or other equity securities. Investments in equity securities involve a number of significant risks, including the risk of further dilution as a result of additional issuances, inability to access additional capital and failure to pay

Table of Contents

current distributions. Investments in preferred securities involve special risks, such as the risk of deferred distributions, credit risk, illiquidity and limited voting rights. In addition, we may from time to time make non-control, equity investments in portfolio companies. Our goal is ultimately to realize gains upon our disposition of such equity interests. However, the equity interests we receive may not appreciate in value and, in fact, may decline in value. Accordingly, we may not be able to realize gains from our equity interests, and any gains that we do realize on the disposition of any equity interests may not be sufficient to offset any other losses we experience. We also may be unable to realize any value if a portfolio company does not have a liquidity event, such as a sale of the business, recapitalization or public offering, which would allow us to sell the underlying equity interests. We often seek puts or similar rights to give us the right to sell our equity securities back to the portfolio company issuer. We may be unable to exercise these puts rights for the consideration provided in our investment documents if the issuer is in financial distress.

Our marketable securities and idle funds investments are subject to risks including risks similar to our portfolio investments.

Marketable securities and idle funds investments can include, among other things, secured and unsecured debt investments, independently rated debt investments and diversified bond funds. Many of these investments in debt obligations are, or would be if rated, below investment grade quality. Indebtedness of below investment grade quality is regarded as having predominantly speculative characteristics with respect to the issuer's capacity to pay interest and repay principal, similar to our portfolio investments in the lower middle market. (See " Our investments in portfolio companies involve higher levels of risk, and we could lose all or part of our investment.") Many of these marketable securities and idle funds investments are purchased through over the counter or other markets and are therefore liquid at the time of purchase but may subsequently become illiquid due to events relating to the issuer of the securities, market events, economic conditions or investor perceptions. See " Risks Related to Our Investments The lack of liquidity in our investments may adversely affect our business" for a description of risks related to holding illiquid investments. In addition, domestic and foreign markets are complex and interrelated, so that events in one sector of the world markets or economy, or in one geographical region, can reverberate and have materially negative consequences for other market, economic or regional sectors in a manner that may not be foreseen and which may materially affect the market price of our marketable securities and idle funds investments. Other risks that our portfolio investments are subject to are also applicable to these marketable securities and idle funds investments. See " Risks Related to Our Investments" for risks affecting our portfolio investments.

RISKS RELATING TO OUR COMMON STOCK

Shares of closed-end investment companies, including BDCs, may trade at a discount to their net asset value.

Shares of closed-end investment companies, including BDCs, may trade at a discount to net asset value. This characteristic of closed-end investment companies and BDCs is separate and distinct from the risk that our net asset value per share may decline. We cannot predict whether our common stock will trade at, above or below net asset value. In addition, if our common stock trades below net asset value, we will generally not be able to issue additional common stock at the market price unless our stockholders approve such a sale and our Board of Directors makes certain determinations. See " Risks Relating to Our Business and Structure Stockholders may incur dilution if we sell shares of our common stock in one or more offerings at prices below the then current net asset value per share of our common stock or issue securities to subscribe to, convert to or purchase shares of our common stock" for a discussion of a proposal approved by our stockholders that permits us to issue shares of our common stock below net asset value.

Table of Contents

We may be unable to invest a significant portion of the net proceeds from an offering or from exiting an investment or other capital on acceptable terms, which could harm our financial condition and operating results.

Delays in investing the net proceeds raised in an offering or from exiting an investment or other capital may cause our performance to be worse than that of other fully invested BDCs or other lenders or investors pursuing comparable investment strategies. We cannot assure you that we will be able to identify any investments that meet our investment objective or that any investment that we make will produce a positive return. We may be unable to invest the net proceeds of any offering or from exiting an investment or other capital on acceptable terms within the time period that we anticipate or at all, which could harm our financial condition and operating results.

We anticipate that, depending on market conditions and the amount of the capital, it may take us a substantial period of time to invest substantially all the capital in securities meeting our investment objective. During this period, we will invest the capital primarily in marketable securities and idle funds investments, which may produce returns that are significantly lower than the returns which we expect to achieve when our portfolio is fully invested in securities meeting our investment objective. As a result, any distributions that we pay during such period may be substantially lower than the distributions that we may be able to pay when our portfolio is fully invested in securities meeting our investment objective. In addition, until such time as the net proceeds of any offering or from exiting an investment or other capital are invested in securities meeting our investment objective, the market price for our common stock may decline. Thus, the initial return on your investment may be lower than when, if ever, our portfolio is fully invested in securities meeting our investment objective.

Investing in our common stock may involve an above average degree of risk.

The investments we make in accordance with our investment objective may result in a higher amount of risk than alternative investment options and a higher risk of volatility or loss of principal. Our investments in portfolio companies involve higher levels of risk, and therefore, an investment in our shares may not be suitable for someone with lower risk tolerance.

The market price of our common stock may be volatile and fluctuate significantly.

Fluctuations in the trading prices of our shares may adversely affect the liquidity of the trading market for our shares and, if we seek to raise capital through future equity financings, our ability to raise such equity capital. The market price and liquidity of the market for our common stock may be significantly affected by numerous factors, some of which are beyond our control and may not be directly related to our operating performance. These factors include:

significant volatility in the market price and trading volume of securities of BDCs or other companies in our sector, which are not necessarily related to the operating performance of these companies;

changes in regulatory policies, accounting pronouncements or tax guidelines, particularly with respect to RICs, BDCs or SBICs;

inability to obtain any exemptive relief that may be required by us in the future from the SEC;

loss of our BDC or RIC status or either of the Funds' status as an SBIC;

changes in our earnings or variations in our operating results;

changes in the value of our portfolio of investments;