MULLEN SONDBERG WIMBISH & STONE, P.A.
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS AND BUSINESS CONSULTANTS

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2023 Business Tax Engagement Letter

We are pleased to provide you with the professional services described below. This letter confirms our understanding of the terms and objectives of our engagement and the nature and limitations of the services we will provide. The engagement between you and our firm will be governed by the terms of this Agreement.

Engagement Objective and Scope

We will prepare the following federal and state tax returns for the year ended December 31, 2023:

a) Prepare the federal tax return with supporting schedules.

b) Prepare any state income tax returns requested.

c) Prepare the annual Maryland Personal Property Tax Return, if requested.

We will not prepare any tax returns other than those identified above, without your written request, and our written consent to do so. We will rely upon the completeness and accuracy of the information and representations you provide to us to prepare your tax returns. We have not been engaged to and will not prepare financial statements. We will not audit or otherwise verify the data you submit to us, although we may ask you to clarify certain information.

We will prepare the above-referenced tax returns solely for filing with the Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") and applicable state and local tax authorities. Our work is not intended to benefit or influence any third party, either to obtain credit or for any other purpose. You agree to indemnify and hold us harmless with respect to any and all claims arising from the use of the tax returns for any purpose other than filing with the IRS, state and local tax authorities regardless of the nature of the claim, except claims arising from our gross negligence or intentional wrongful acts.

Our engagement does not include any procedures designed to detect errors, fraud, theft, or other wrongdoing. Therefore, our engagement cannot be relied upon to disclose such matters. In addition, we are not responsible for identifying or communicating deficiencies in your internal controls. You are responsible for developing and implementing internal controls applicable to your operations.

Assisting you with your compliance with the Corporate Transparency Act ("CTA"), including beneficial ownership information ("BOI") reporting, is not within the scope of this engagement. You have sole responsibility for your compliance with the CTA, including its BOI reporting requirements and the collection of relevant ownership information. We shall have no liability resulting from your failure to comply with CTA. Information regarding the BOI reporting requirements can be found at https://www.fincen.gov/boi. Consider consulting with legal counsel if you have questions regarding the applicability of the CTA's reporting requirements and issues surrounding the collection of relevant ownership information.

You may request that we perform additional services not contemplated in this engagement letter. If this occurs, we will communicate with you regarding the scope and estimated cost of these additional services.

Engagements for additional services may necessitate that we amend the Agreement or issue a separate agreement to reflect the obligations of all parties. In the absence of any other written communications from us documenting additional services, our services will be limited to and governed by the terms of this Agreement.

CPA Firm Responsibilities

It is our duty to prepare your returns based on the same standard of care that a reasonable tax return preparer would exercise in this type of engagement. Unless otherwise noted, the applicable standard of care for a "reasonable tax return preparer" shall be based upon the following pronouncements:

- the Statements on Standards for Tax Services ("SSTS") issued by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants ("AICPA"),
- U.S. Treasury Department Circular 230 ("Circular 230"),
- the Internal Revenue Code, Treasury Regulations, and any applicable state/local corollaries (collectively, "the Code").

As tax return preparers, these pronouncements also prohibit us from signing a tax return unless we have a reasonable belief that there is substantial authority for tax positions taken on the tax return, or we have a reasonable basis for tax return positions taken on the return which are disclosed as required by the Code. If you request that we report a tax position on your return which we feel is contrary to published guidance, frivolous, or a willful attempt to evade tax, we will be unable to proceed. If you are unwilling to disclose a position where required or we conclude that your failure to disclose does not permit us to sign your tax return, we will be unable to proceed.

It is your responsibility to safeguard your assets and maintain accurate records pertaining to transactions. We will not hold your property in trust for you, or otherwise accept fiduciary duties in the performance of the engagement.

We will not make management decisions or perform management functions on your behalf.

Arguable positions

If there are conflicting interpretations of tax law, or if tax law is unclear, we will explain the possible positions that may be taken in order for us to sign your return. We will follow the position you request, provided it is consistent with our understanding of tax reference materials and our professional standards. Tax reference materials include, but are not limited to, the Code, Revenue Rulings, Revenue Procedures, court cases, and similar state and local guidance. If the IRS, state, or local tax authorities later contest the position you select, additional tax, penalties, and interest may be assessed. You will be responsible for these amounts, as well as any related professional fees you may incur to respond to the tax authority.

Bookkeeping assistance

We may deem it necessary to provide you with accounting and bookkeeping assistance solely for the purpose of preparing the tax returns. These services will be performed solely in accordance with the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct. In the event we conclude that such services are necessary to prepare your tax returns, we will advise you in advance and bill you for the required services. These services will be billed at our standard hourly rates and will be subject to the terms of this Agreement.

Pass-through Entity Tax election

Several states now permit eligible entities to elect to pay income tax on passed through income for the benefit of their owners ("pass-through entity tax" or "PTET"). A PTET election may be beneficial for entity owners whose maximum amount of deductible state taxes for federal income tax purposes is limited. The timing and requirements for each state's pass-through entity tax regime varies and may be fact specific.

<u>Tax planning services</u>

Our engagement does not include tax advice which would impact future tax years. However, we may communicate potential tax strategies to you, and you may ask high-level questions of us. It is your responsibility to communicate to us, in writing, any interest in pursuing a tax strategy identified, or if you require more than a cursory response to your question. If we determine that assisting you with the implementation of any proposed tax strategy, or responding to your question requires additional research, analysis, discussion, or documentation, we will confirm our understanding with you.

We shall not be liable for any forgone tax or other benefits if you fail to advise us of your desire to investigate or pursue any tax strategy communicated to or by us. Any tax advice described in this paragraph and provided to you shall be governed by this Agreement and billed at our standard hourly rates.

<u>Government inquiries</u>

This engagement does not include responding to inquiries by any governmental agency or tax authority. If you are contacted by a tax authority, either for an examination or other inquiry, you may request our assistance in responding.

<u>Reliance on others</u>

There may be times when you engage another advisor to assist you. If you wish to take a tax position based upon the advice of another advisor, before we are able to sign your tax return, we must comply with the applicable provisions of the Code and the SSTS.

We will review the other advisor's work, including a written statement from the advisor describing the statutory basis for the position and the suggested disclosure standard to appropriately report the position. If additional research or disclosure is required, you agree to pay for the additional charges necessary to complete the disclosure or research.

Moreover, you understand that the IRS, state, or local tax authority may disagree with the position taken on the return. If this occurs, you will be responsible for any additional tax, penalties, and interest, as well as any related professional fees, you may incur.

If, after review of the work prepared by your other advisor, we determine that we are unable to sign the tax return, we will be unable to proceed.

<u>Aggressive tax strategies</u>

Certain tax positions or strategies, while not currently identified as a reportable transaction by the IRS, may ultimately be determined to be so in the future. Consequently, you agree to advise us of any transaction you enter into that entitles you to disproportionate tax benefits (deductions, credits, or refunds), that generates significant income deferral or non-recognition, or that generates significant tax losses without corresponding cash impacts ("aggressive tax strategy"). If you fail to timely notify us, in writing, of any aggressive tax strategy you have entered into, you will be responsible for any liability, including but not limited to, additional tax, penalties, interest and related professional fees.

Client Responsibilities

You acknowledge and agree that your failure to comply with the responsibilities enumerated in this section may result in economic or other loss to you, such as disallowance of tax deductions or credits claimed, additional tax, penalties or interest assessed against you, or loss of administrative rights. You agree to accept responsibility for any consequences of your failure to fulfill your responsibilities.

You will provide us with a trial balance and other supporting data necessary to prepare your tax returns. You are responsible for providing us with accurate and complete information, including income and activities outside of the U.S. or your home state.

Changes in ownership

A change in ownership may have unanticipated tax consequences if that change is not analyzed prior to completing the transaction. You are responsible for advising us of any changes in ownership, including the death of a partner/shareholder, so that it may be accurately reflected on the tax returns.

> Form 1065 Filings: A change in ownership also may be required to be reported on your return. You should understand the effects of any transaction involving new or existing ownership interests prior to completion, including the impact on the entity and/or other partners, and any additional elections, calculations, and reporting required. Assistance with analysis of any change in ownership transaction is not within the scope of this engagement.

> Form 1120S Filings: Certain transfers of ownership may result in the termination of your S election. A change in ownership also may be required to be reported on your return. You should understand the effects of any transaction involving new or existing ownership interests prior to completion, including the impact on the entity and/or other shareholders, and any additional elections, calculations, and reporting required. Assistance with analysis of any change in ownership transaction is not within the scope of this engagement.

Partnership or Limited Liability Company (LLC) agreement, if applicable

You should review your partnership (or LLC) agreement with your attorney to ensure that it addresses the significant changes to the partnership audit regime that generally apply to partnership returns filed after 2018. These changes include, but are not limited to the following:

- Replacement of a “tax matters partner” with a “partnership representative,”
- Current partners being held responsible for tax liabilities of prior partners,
- The partnership being held responsible for remittance of additional tax, rather than individual partners being taxed, and
- Numerous elections or opt-outs that the “partnership representative” may direct us to make.

You should review your partnership or LLC agreement to ensure that it meets your goals for the transfer of ownership and distribution of income. Often, partnership agreements fail to address the transfer of ownership or may require updating as circumstances change. A review of your partnership or LLC agreement or analysis of proposed transactions under any existing or draft language is not within the scope of this engagement.

Tax basis schedules (Form 1065 Filings)

The partnership return discloses partner capital accounts and partner’s share of partnership debt on Schedule K-1. However, Schedule K-1 does not disclose the partner’s share of allocable loss which may be deducted at the individual level or track partner tax/at-risk basis. Differences between a partner’s capital account and tax basis in their partnership interest may exist which also affect allocations to the partners as presented on Schedule K-1. The IRS may examine any or all of these tax attributes to determine whether a partner is allocated the proper amount of partnership items, entitled to reduce taxable income as a result of tax losses allocated from a partnership, or avoid tax on certain distributions of cash from the partnership.

Properly understanding and calculating these attributes is necessary for preparation of both partnership and partner tax returns. We will rely upon the historical balances disclosed on last year’s Schedule K-1, as well as the most recent executed partnership/operating agreement you provide to us.

You are responsible for providing any necessary documentation to support transactions between the partnership and its partners, including sale/redemption of partnership interests and loans between the partnership and its partners. You are also responsible for providing any necessary documentation to support transactions between partners involving partnership interests, as these may impact your partnership return. Additional analysis, such as recreating historical balances or analyzing proposed partner transactions is not within the scope of this engagement.

Allocation of partnership income and expenses (Form 1065 Filings)

You are responsible for reviewing partner Schedules K-1 and K-3 prior to filing, including verifying recipient identifying information, and agreeing to the accuracy of both the allocation of partnership income in accordance with the terms of the partnership agreement for capital account purposes and the allocation of partnership taxable income, deduction, credit, and other allocable items presented on partner Schedules K-1 and K-3 for tax purposes.

Tax basis schedules (Form 1120S Filings)

The S corporation return discloses historical and adjusted balances in the Accumulated Adjustment Account (AAA), Other Adjustments Account (OAA) and Accumulated Earnings and Profits (E&P). However, it does not disclose each shareholder's tax basis in S corporation stock or tax/at-risk basis in loans made to the S corporation. The IRS may examine any or all of these tax attributes to determine whether a shareholder is entitled to reduce taxable income as a result of tax losses allocated from an S corporation, or avoid tax on certain distributions of cash from the S corporation.

Properly understanding and calculating these attributes is necessary for preparation of both S corporation and shareholder tax returns. We will rely upon the historical balances disclosed on last year's tax return.

You are responsible for providing any necessary documentation to support transactions between the S corporation and its shareholders, including sale/redemption of S corporation stock and loans between the S corporation and its shareholders. You are also responsible for providing any necessary documentation to support transactions between shareholders involving S corporation stock, as these may impact your S corporation tax return. Additional analysis, such as recreating historical balances or analyzing proposed shareholder transactions is not within the scope of this engagement.

Schedule K-1 distribution

You are responsible for distributing a copy of the partnership or LLC's Schedule K-1s, including any attachments, to each partner or member.

Documentation

You are responsible for maintaining adequate documentation to substantiate the accuracy and completeness of your tax returns. Our records are not a substitute for yours. You should retain all documents that provide evidence and support for reported income, credits, deductions, and other information on your returns, as required under applicable tax laws and regulations. You represent that you have such documentation and can produce it, if necessary, to respond to any examination or inquiry by tax authorities. You will be responsible for any liability, including but not limited to, additional tax, penalties, interest and related professional fees, resulting from the disallowance of tax deductions due to inadequate documentation.

Personal expenses

You are responsible for ensuring that personal expenses, if any, are segregated from business expenses and that expenses such as meals, travel, vehicle use, gifts, and related expenses are supported by documentation and records required by the IRS and other tax authorities.

State and local filing obligations

You are responsible for fulfilling your filing obligations with any state or local tax authorities, including but not limited to, income, franchise, sales, use, and property taxes or abandoned and unclaimed property. The preparation of any state or local tax return not listed above is not within the scope of our engagement. If upon review of the information you have provided to us, including information that comes to our attention, we believe that you may have additional filing obligations, we will notify you. You will be responsible for tax due and penalties associated with the failure to file or untimely filing of any form for which we were not engaged to prepare.

U.S. filing obligations related to foreign investments and activities

U.S. persons generally must report income and activities related to both domestic and foreign assets (worldwide income). The business is responsible for fulfilling its filing obligations related to foreign activity where required. The business also is required to provide to its partners/shareholders their share of items with international tax relevance (Schedule K-3) so that those partners/shareholders may fulfill their filing obligations related to foreign activity where required. U.S. reporting requirements related to foreign activity are very complex. ***Contact us immediately*** if you have:

- Ownership of, investment in, or officer responsibilities for a corporation, partnership, or other business entity formed under the laws of another country;
- Fiduciary, grantor, or beneficiary relationships in connection with an entity formed under the laws of another country;
- Ownership of, signature authority over, or control over any financial account held in a financial institution located in another country;
- Citizenship or government-approved employment/visa status with a country other than the U.S. (including anyone in your immediate household, or your parents who live outside the U.S.);
- Transferred property, including cash, offshore either directly or through the purchase of or investment in an entity formed under the laws of another country;
- Received or have legally-recognizable rights to receive property, including cash, from a trust, business, or investment formed under the laws of another country or individual residing in another country;
- Conducted business with any entity or person physically located in another country, regardless of whether such business is for-profit, not for-profit, or informal/irregular;
- Received property, including cash, or income from a source outside of the U.S. which is not reported on a brokerage statement (such as a 1099-B or similar report); or
- Any other activity or economic arrangement which takes place outside of the U.S.

Based upon the information you provide, we will use this data to inform you of any additional filing requirements, which may include FinCEN Form 114, *Report of Foreign Bank and Financial Accounts* (“FBAR”). The FBAR is not a tax return and its preparation is not within the scope of this engagement.

Failure to timely file the required forms may result in substantial civil and/or criminal penalties. By your signature below, you agree to provide us with complete and accurate information regarding any foreign investments in which you have a direct or indirect interest, or over which you have signature authority, during the above referenced tax year.

If you have any questions regarding the application of the reporting requirements for your foreign interests or activities, please ask us and we will respond in writing. You will be responsible for tax due, penalties, and interest associated with the failure to file or untimely filing of any of these forms.

Foreign filing obligations

You are responsible for complying with the tax filing requirements of any other country. You acknowledge and agree that we have no responsibility to raise these issues with you and that foreign filing obligations are not within the scope of this engagement.

Digital assets

There are specific tax implications of investing in digital assets (e.g., virtual currencies such as Bitcoin, non-fungible tokens, virtual real estate and similar assets). The IRS considers these to be property for U.S. federal income tax purposes. As such, any transactions in, or transactions that use, digital assets are subject to the same general tax principles that apply to other property transactions.

If you transacted in digital assets during the tax year, you may have tax consequences and/or additional reporting obligations associated with such transactions. Depending on the nature or volume of those transactions, a change to the scope of our services may be required. You are responsible for providing us with complete and accurate information, including basis, regarding any transactions in, or transactions that have used, digital assets during the applicable tax year.

Ultimate responsibility

You have final responsibility for the accuracy of your tax returns, which includes Schedules K-1, Schedules K-3, all other attachments provided to support the filing, and any payments due. We will provide you with a copy of your electronic tax returns and accompanying schedules and statements for review prior to filing with the IRS, state and local tax authorities, as applicable. You agree to review and examine them carefully for accuracy and completeness.

You will be required to review and sign a completed Form 8879, *IRS e-file Signature Authorization* applicable to your tax return, and any similar state and local equivalent authorization form before your returns can be filed electronically. We shall not be liable for any penalties or interest resulting from your failure to timely sign and return Form 8879 or state equivalents.

In the event that you do not wish to have your tax returns filed electronically, please contact our firm. You will be responsible for reviewing the paper returns (including Schedules K-1/K-3, supporting attachments, and payments due) for accuracy, signing them, and filing them timely with the tax authorities.

You have final responsibility for the payment of your taxes in whatever amount ultimately determined. If you choose, you may opt to have funds automatically withdrawn from a designated account and transmitted when your tax return is electronically filed. We will not transmit partial payments. It is your responsibility to provide us with correct account and routing numbers, to review this information for accuracy prior to submission of your return, and to ensure that sufficient funds are available at the time of payment. We shall have no liability for any tax due, penalties, interest, or overdraft charges which may result from your failure to ensure sufficient funds are available at the time of payment.

Once your return is complete (e-file acceptance or provision of a paper copy to you), we shall have no obligation to update your returns for subsequent legislative or administrative changes or future judicial interpretations under this Agreement.

Timing of the Engagement

Our services will conclude upon the earlier of:

- On the later of:
  - the latest date of electronic acceptance of your 2023 tax returns by the relevant tax authority:
  - the date we deliver the returns to you for paper filing.
- Upon written notification by either party that the Agreement is terminated, or
- One (1) year from the execution date of this Agreement, whichever comes first.

Extensions of Time to File Tax Returns

It may become necessary to apply for an extension of the filing due dates if there are unresolved issues or delays in processing, or if we do not receive all of the necessary information from you on a timely basis. Applying for an extension of time to file may limit your ability to make certain elections, extend the time available for a government agency to undertake an examination of your return and/or extend the statute of limitations to file a legal action. If we apply for an extension of time to file because you have not provided us all of the information needed to prepare the tax returns by the original due date, you agree to hold our firm harmless from any consequences arising from any election waived. All taxes owed are due by the original filing due date. Additionally, extensions may affect your liability for penalties and interest or compliance with governmental or other deadlines.

Third-Party Service Providers or Subcontractors

We may use a third-party service provider to assist us where necessary to help provide professional services to you or support the needs of our firm. This may include provision of your confidential information to the third-party service provider. We require our third-party service providers to have established procedures and controls designed to protect client confidentiality and maintain data security. As the paid provider of professional services, our firm remains responsible for exercising reasonable care in providing such services, and our work product will be subjected to our firm's customary quality control procedures.

By accepting the terms and conditions of our engagement, you consent to the disclosure of your confidential information to third-party service providers, if such disclosure is necessary to deliver professional services to you or provide support services to our firm. In certain circumstances, we may require a separate written consent from you before your information is transmitted to a third party.

Penalties and Interest Charges

Federal, state, and local tax authorities impose various penalties and interest charges for non-compliance with tax laws and regulations, including failure to file or late filing of returns, and underpayment of taxes. You will be responsible for the payment of any additional tax, penalties, and interest charges imposed by tax authorities.

Professional Fee

Our fees for these services will be based upon the amount of time required at standard billing rates plus out-of-pocket expenses. All invoices are due and payable upon receipt. You agree that you will deliver all records requested and respond to all inquiries made by our staff to complete this engagement on a timely basis. You agree to pay all fees and expenses incurred whether or not we prepare the tax returns.

CPAR Designations (Form 1065 Filings)

You confirm that you have read the attached 2023 CPAR notice. If the partnership qualifies, we will automatically opt out of the CPAR procedures. If the partnership does not qualify for the opt-out election, we will name the representative signing this engagement letter as the Partnership Representative. If you have any questions or want to designate someone other than the signer of this letter, please reach out to your MSWS team member.

Agreement

If the above fairly sets forth your understanding, please sign, date, and return to us the Acceptance section below. Please note you are affirming to us your understanding of, and agreement to, the terms and conditions of this engagement letter by any one of the following actions: returning this signed form; sending your income tax information to us for use in the preparation of your returns; the submission of tax returns we have prepared for you to the taxing authorities; or the payment of our tax preparation fees.

We want to express our appreciation for this opportunity to work with you.

Very truly yours,

Mullen Sondberg Wimbish & Stone

Mullen, Sondberg, Wimbish & Stone, PA
www.mswspa.com

Acceptance:

Name of Business: _______________________________________

Name of Representative: ________________________________

Title of Representative: _________________________________

Signature of Representative: ____________________________

Date: ___________________________

2023 Partnership Audit Regime (CPAR) Notice

Opt-Out Election for Qualifying Partnerships

Partnerships with 100 or fewer **eligible** partners qualify to elect out of the IRS Centralized Partnership Audit Procedures (CPAR). Generally, eligible partners include individuals, C or S Corporations, and estates of deceased partners. The opt-out election must be made annually with a timely filed (including extensions) return. We will generally recommend that qualifying partnerships opt-out of CPAR. If your partnership qualifies to make the opt-out election, the appointment of a partnership representative (PR) is not mandatory, although recommended. A small partnership cannot opt-out of CPAR if it issues a K-1 to a partnership, a disregarded entity (i.e. sole member LLC), a trust or certain other partners.

Push-Out Election for Other Partnerships

In the event of an IRS audit under CPAR, the PR has the authority to make a "push out" election which would make the partners responsible for any resulting tax liability, thus avoiding the CPAR taxation at the partnership level. The push-out election is made by the PR upon the conclusion of an IRS audit.

Summary

This is a very brief overview of the complex partnership audit procedures. We recommend you have your partnership/operating agreements reviewed and amended, as necessary, in light of CPAR. Additional information can be found using the following link.

https://www.irs.gov/businesses/partnerships/designate-a-partnership-representative

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MSWS PRIVACY POLICY

CPAs, like all providers of personal financial services, are now required by law to inform their clients of their policies regarding privacy of client information. CPAs have been and continue to be bound by professional standards of confidentiality that are even more stringent than those required by law. Therefore, we have always protected your right to privacy.

TYPES OF NONPUBLIC PERSONAL INFORMATION WE COLLECT

We collect nonpublic personal information about you that is either provided to us by you or obtained by us with your authorization.

PARTIES TO WHOM WE DISCLOSE INFORMATION

For current and former clients, we do not disclose any nonpublic personal information obtained in the course of our practice except as required or permitted by law. Permitted disclosures include, for instance, providing information to our employees and, in limited situations, to unrelated third parties who need to know that information to assist us in providing services to you. In all such situations, we stress the confidential nature of information being shared.

PROTECTING THE CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY OF
CURRENT AND FORMER CLIENTS' INFORMATION

We retain records relating to professional services that we provide so that we are better able to assist you with your professional needs and, in some cases, to comply with professional guidelines. In order to guard your nonpublic personal information, we maintain physical, electronic, and procedural safeguards that comply with our professional standards.

Please call if you have any questions, because your privacy, our professional ethics, and the ability to provide you with quality financial services are very important to us.