



## Audit Committee Charter

### Purpose of Committee

The purpose of the Audit Committee (the "**Committee**") of the Board of Directors (the "**Board**") of Thomas Weisel Partners Group, Inc. (the "**Company**") is to:

- a. oversee the Company's accounting and financial reporting processes and the audits of the Company's financial statements, including assisting the Board in its oversight of (i) the integrity of the Company's financial statements, (ii) the Company's compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, (iii) the independent auditors' qualifications and independence, (iv) the performance of the Company's internal audit function and independent auditors and (v) the Company's management of market, credit, liquidity and other financial and operational risks;
- b. decide whether to appoint, retain or terminate the Company's independent auditors and to pre-approve all audit, audit-related and other services, if any, to be provided by the independent auditors; and
- c. prepare the report required to be prepared by the Committee pursuant to the rules of the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") for inclusion in the Company's annual proxy statement.

### Committee Membership

The Committee shall be comprised of at least three members of the Board. The members of the Committee shall each have been determined by the Board to be "independent" under the rules of the Nasdaq Stock Market, Inc. ("Nasdaq") and under Section 301 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (the "Act") and the rules promulgated thereunder, except as otherwise permitted by Nasdaq Rule 4350(d) and by the Act and the rules of the SEC promulgated thereunder. All members of the Committee must be able to read and understand fundamental financial statements, including a company's balance sheet, income statement and cash flow statement, and the Committee shall have at least one member who has past employment experience in finance or accounting, requisite professional certification in accounting, or other comparable experience or background which results in the member's financial sophistication. The Board shall determine whether any member of the Committee is an "audit committee financial expert" as defined by the SEC (and if no member is an "audit committee financial expert," the reason for not having an audit committee financial expert on the Committee).

Members of the Committee shall be appointed by the Board based on the recommendations of the Corporate Governance and Nominations Committee and shall serve at the pleasure of the Board and for such term or terms as the Board may determine.

### Committee Structure and Operations

The Board shall designate one member of the Committee as its chairperson. The Committee shall meet at least once during each fiscal quarter, with further meetings to occur, or actions to be taken by unanimous written consent, when deemed necessary or desirable by the Committee or its chairperson.

The Committee may invite such members of management and other persons to its meetings as it may deem desirable or appropriate. The Committee shall report regularly to the Board summarizing the Committee's actions and any significant issues considered by the Committee.

### Committee Duties and Responsibilities

The following are the duties and responsibilities of the Committee:

1. To meet with the independent auditors and the Company's management, the personnel responsible for the internal audit function and such other personnel as it deems appropriate and discuss such matters as it

considers appropriate, including the matters referred to below. The Committee must meet separately with the independent auditors, the Company's management and the personnel responsible for the internal audit function periodically, normally at least once each fiscal quarter.

2. To decide whether to appoint, retain or terminate the Company's independent auditors, who shall report directly to the Committee, and whether to pre-approve all audit, audit-related and other services, if any, to be provided by the independent auditors. The Committee shall monitor and evaluate the auditors' qualifications, performance and independence on an ongoing basis, and shall be directly responsible for the compensation and oversight of the work of the independent auditors (including resolving disagreements between management and the independent auditors regarding financial reporting). In conducting such evaluations, the Committee shall:
  - At least annually, obtain and review a report by the independent auditors describing: the auditors' internal quality-control procedures; any material issues raised by the most recent internal quality-control review or peer review of the auditors, or by any inquiry or investigation by governmental or professional authorities, within the preceding five years, respecting one or more independent audits carried out by the auditors, and any steps taken to deal with any such issues; and (to assess the auditors' independence) all relationships between the independent auditors and the Company (including information the Company determines is required to be disclosed in the Company's proxy statement as to services for audit, audit-related and other services, if any, provided to the Company and those disclosures required by Independence Standards Board Standard No. 1, as it may be modified or supplemented).
  - Discuss with the independent auditors any disclosed relationships or services that may impact the objectivity or independence of the independent auditors.
  - Review and evaluate the qualifications, performance and independence of the lead partner of the independent auditors.
  - Take into account the opinions of management and the personnel responsible for the internal audit function.
  - Discuss with management the timing and process for implementing the rotation of the lead audit partner, the concurring partner and any other active audit engagement team partner and consider whether there should be a regular rotation of the audit firm itself.

The Committee shall present its conclusions with respect to the independent auditors to the Board for its information at least annually.

3. To decide whether to appoint and retain and be directly responsible for the compensation and oversight of the work of any registered public accounting firm, other than the independent auditors, engaged by the Company to perform audit, review or attest services for the Company or its consolidated entities, which firm shall also report directly to the Committee.
4. To obtain from the independent auditors in connection with any audit report filed with the SEC, a report relating to the Company's annual audited financial statements describing all critical accounting policies and practices to be used, all alternative treatments within generally accepted accounting principles for policies and practices related to material items that have been discussed with management, ramifications of the use of such alternative disclosures and treatments, and the treatment preferred by the independent auditors, and any material written communications between the independent auditors and management, such as any "management" letter or schedule of unadjusted differences.
5. To review and discuss with management and the independent auditors the Company's annual audited financial statements and quarterly financial statements, including the Company's specific disclosures under "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" and "Controls and Procedures," and to discuss with the Company's Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer (a) their certifications to be provided pursuant to Sections 302 and 906 of the Act, including whether the financial statements fairly present, in all material respects, the financial condition, results of operations and cash flows of the Company as of and for the periods presented and whether any significant deficiencies and material weaknesses exist in the design or operation of internal control over financial reporting which are reasonably likely to adversely affect the Company's ability to record, process, summarize and report financial information, or any fraud has occurred, whether or not material, that involves management or other employees who have a significant role in the Company's internal control over financial reporting and (b) management's report on internal control over financial reporting pursuant to Section 404 of the Act, as and when such report is required by the rules of the SEC. The Committee shall discuss, as applicable: (a) major

issues regarding accounting principles and financial statement presentations, including any significant changes in the Company's selection or application of accounting principles, and major issues as to the adequacy of the Company's internal controls and any special audit steps adopted in light of material control deficiencies; (b) analyses prepared by management and/or the independent auditors setting forth significant financial reporting issues and judgments made in connection with the preparation of the financial statements; and © the effect of regulatory and accounting initiatives, as well as off-balance sheet structures, on the financial statements of the Company.

6. To discuss with the independent auditors on at least an annual basis the matters required to be discussed by Statement of Accounting Standards No. 61, as it may be modified or supplemented, as well as any problems or difficulties the independent auditors encountered in the course of the audit work, including any restrictions on the scope of the independent auditors' activities or access to requested information, and any significant disagreements with management. Among the items the Committee will consider discussing with the independent auditors are: any accounting adjustments that were noted or proposed by the independent auditors but were "passed" (as immaterial or otherwise); any communications between the audit team and the independent auditor's national office with respect to auditing or accounting issues presented by the engagement; and any "management" or "internal control" letter issued, or proposed to be issued, by the independent auditors to the Company. The discussion shall also include the responsibilities, budget and staffing of the Company's internal audit function.
7. To discuss with management earnings press releases and to review generally the type and presentation of information to be included in earnings press releases (paying particular attention to any use of "pro forma," or "adjusted" non-GAAP, information).
8. To review generally with management the type and presentation of any financial information and earnings guidance provided to analysts and rating agencies.
9. To review with management and, as appropriate, the independent auditors periodically, normally on at least an annual basis:
  - The independent auditors' annual audit scope, risk assessment and plan.
  - The form of independent auditors' report on the annual financial statements and matters related to the conduct of the audit under the standards of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (United States).
  - Comments by the independent auditors on internal controls and significant findings and recommendations resulting from the audit.
10. To discuss with management periodically, normally on at least an annual basis, the appointment of the personnel (including the engagement of any third-party service provider) responsible for the internal audit function.
11. To discuss with management and the personnel responsible for the internal audit function periodically, normally on at least an annual basis:
  - The adequacy of the Company's internal controls.
  - The annual internal audit plan, risk assessment, and significant findings and recommendations and management's responses thereto.
  - Internal audit staffing.
  - The internal audit function and responsibilities and any scope restrictions encountered during the execution of internal audit responsibilities.
12. To establish and review the procedures for the receipt, retention and treatment of complaints received by the Company regarding accounting, internal accounting controls or auditing matters, and for the confidential, anonymous submission by Company employees of concerns regarding questionable accounting or auditing matters, and to assess compliance with these procedures.
13. To establish and review the policies governing the hiring by the Company of any current or former employee of the Company's independent auditors, and to assess compliance with these policies.
14. To discuss with management periodically management's assessment of the Company's market, credit,

liquidity and other financial and operational risks, and the guidelines, policies and processes for managing such risks.

15. To review and monitor the adequacy of the structures, policies and procedures that the Company has developed to assure the integrity of its investment research. As part of this process, the Committee shall meet periodically with the Company's personnel who are charged with overseeing the Company's performance with respect to the investment research area as the Committee may determine.
16. To discuss with the Company's General Counsel any significant legal, compliance or regulatory matters that may have a material impact on the Company's business, financial statements or compliance policies, including material notices to or inquiries received from governmental agencies.
17. To obtain assurance from the independent auditors that the audit of the Company's financial statements was conducted in a manner consistent with Section 10A of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, which sets forth certain procedures to be followed in any audit of financial statements required under that Act.
18. To review and approve all related party transactions of the Company.
19. To produce the report and evaluation described under "Committee Reports" below.
20. To discharge any other duties or responsibilities delegated to the Committee by the Board from time to time.

## **Committee Reports**

The Committee shall produce the following report and evaluation and provide them to the Board:

1. Any report, including any recommendation, or other disclosures required to be prepared by the Committee pursuant to the rules of the SEC for inclusion in the Company's annual proxy statement.
2. An annual performance evaluation of the Committee, which evaluation shall compare the performance of the Committee with the requirements of this charter. The performance evaluation shall also include a review and reassessment of the adequacy of this charter and shall recommend to the Board any revisions the Committee deems necessary or desirable, although the Board shall have the sole authority to amend this charter. The performance evaluation shall be conducted in such manner as the Committee deems appropriate.

## **Delegation to Subcommittee**

The Committee may, in its discretion, delegate all or a portion of its duties and responsibilities to a subcommittee of the Committee. The Committee may, in its discretion, delegate to one or more of its members the authority to pre-approve any audit or non-audit services to be performed by the independent auditors, provided that any such approvals are presented to the Committee at its next scheduled meeting.

## **Resources and Authority of the Committee**

The Committee shall have the resources and authority appropriate to discharge its duties and responsibilities, including the authority to select, retain, terminate, and approve the fees and other retention terms of special or independent counsel, accountants or other experts, as it deems appropriate, without seeking approval of the Board or management. The Company shall provide for appropriate funding, as determined by the Committee, in its capacity as a committee of the Board, for payment of:

1. Compensation to the independent auditors and any other registered public accounting firm engaged for the purpose of preparing or issuing an audit report or performing other audit, review or attest services for the Company;
2. Compensation of any advisers employed by the Committee; and
3. Ordinary administrative expenses of the Committee that are necessary or appropriate in carrying out its duties.

