Eckhardt Ezra Form 4 July 10, 2012

FORM 4

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

OMB APPROVAL

OMB Number: 3235-0287

Expires: January 31, 2005

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Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

1(b).
(Print or Type Responses)

Common

Stock

1. Name and A Eckhardt Ez	Symbol STERL	2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol STERLING FINANCIAL CORP /WA/ [STSA]					5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable)				
(Last) 111 N. WAI	(First) (M	f Earliest Tr Day/Year) 2012	ansaction			Director 10% Owner Other (specify below) below) COO - Sterling Financial Corp.					
				ndment, Date Original nth/Day/Year)				6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line) _X_ Form filed by One Reporting Person Form filed by More than One Reporting			
(City) (State) (Zip) Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially O							II O d				
1.Title of Security (Instr. 3)	2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	Tan	3. Transacti Code	4. Securi onAcquired Disposed (Instr. 3,	ties I (A) of I of (D 4 and (A) or	or))	5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership 7. Nature of Form: Direct Indirect (D) or Beneficial Indirect (I) Ownership (Instr. 4)			
Common Stock	07/06/2012		A(1)	384 (2)	A	\$0	50,608	D			
Common Stock							10,072	I	401k		

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

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925

Spouse

IRA

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number.

Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

1. Title of	2.	3. Transaction Date	3A. Deemed	4.	5.	6. Date Exerc	cisable and	7. Title	e and	8. Price of	9. Nu
Derivative	Conversion	(Month/Day/Year)	Execution Date, if	Transacti	onNumber	Expiration Date		Amour	nt of	Derivative	Deriv
Security	or Exercise		any	Code	of	(Month/Day/	Year)	Underl	ying	Security	Secui
(Instr. 3)	Price of		(Month/Day/Year)	(Instr. 8)	Derivative	e		Securit	ties	(Instr. 5)	Bene
	Derivative				Securities Acquired			(Instr.	3 and 4)		Owne
	Security										Follo
					(A) or						Repo
					Disposed						Trans
					of (D)						(Instr
					(Instr. 3,						
					4, and 5)						
									Amount		
									Amount		
						Date	Expiration		or Name la sur		
						Exercisable	Date	Title Number			
				C 1 W	(A) (D)				of		
				Code V	(A) (D)				Shares		

Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address Relationships

Director 10% Owner Officer Other

Eckhardt Ezra

111 N. WALL STREET COO - Sterling Financial Corp.

SPOKANE, WA 99201

Signatures

/s/ Karla J. Gehlen, attorney-in-fact 07/10/2012

**Signature of Reporting Person Date

Explanation of Responses:

- * If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(b)(v).
- ** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).
- Grant of salary stock in the form of mandatorily deferred Restricted Stock Units as approved by Sterling's board of directors in March of (1) 2012. Future RSUs are to be granted each payroll period and will be calculated using the closing price of Sterling's common stock on the NASDAQ Capital Market as of the last trading day in each payroll period.
- (2) Units vest immediately upon grant, however, delivery of the awarded shares is deferred until future distribution dates provided in the Agreement between Sterling and Mr. Eckhardt.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, *see* Instruction 6 for procedure. Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.

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