

CRACKER BARREL OLD COUNTRY STORE, INC  
Form DEF 14A  
October 04, 2018  
[Table of Contents](#)

**UNITED STATES**  
**SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**

Washington, D.C. 20549

**SCHEDULE 14A**

(RULE 14a-101)

INFORMATION REQUIRED IN PROXY STATEMENT

SCHEDULE 14A INFORMATION

Proxy Statement Pursuant to Section 14(a) of the

Securities Exchange Act of 1934

(Amendment No. )

Filed by the Registrant

Filed by a party other than the Registrant

Check the appropriate box:

Preliminary Proxy Statement

**Confidential, for Use of the Commission Only (as permitted by Rule 14a-6(e)(2))**

Definitive Proxy Statement

Definitive Additional Materials

Soliciting Material Pursuant to §240.14a-12

**Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc.**

(Name of Registrant as Specified In Its Charter)

# Edgar Filing: CRACKER BARREL OLD COUNTRY STORE, INC - Form DEF 14A

(Name of Person(s) Filing Proxy Statement, if Other Than The Registrant)

Payment of Filing Fee (Check the appropriate box):

No fee required.

Fee computed on table below per Exchange Act Rules 14a-6(i)(1) and 0-11.

- (1) Title of each class of securities to which transaction applies:
- (2) Aggregate number of securities to which transaction applies:
- (3) Per unit price or other underlying value of transaction computed pursuant to Exchange Act Rule 0-11 (set forth the amount on which the filing fee is calculated and state how it was determined):
- (4) Proposed maximum aggregate value of transaction:
- (5) Total fee paid:

Fee paid previously with preliminary materials.

Check box if any part of the fee is offset as provided by Exchange Act Rule 0-11(a)(2) and identify the filing for which the offsetting fee was paid previously. Identify the previous filing by registration statement number, or the Form or Schedule and the date of its filing.

- (1) Amount Previously Paid:
- (2) Form, Schedule or Registration Statement No.:
- (3) Filing Party:
- (4) Date Filed:

**Table of Contents**

Dear Shareholder:

We have enclosed with this letter the proxy statement for our 2018 Annual Meeting (the "Annual Meeting") of shareholders of Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc. ("Cracker Barrel" or the "Company").

This year's Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday, November 15, 2018, at 10:00 a.m. Central Time, at our offices at 305 Hartmann Drive, Lebanon, Tennessee 37087, and we hope you will be able to attend. You will find directions to the Annual Meeting on the inside back cover of the accompanying proxy statement.

At the Annual Meeting, you will have an opportunity to vote on the following proposals: (1) to elect nine directors; (2) to approve, on an advisory basis, the compensation of the Company's named executive officers as disclosed in the accompanying proxy statement; (3) to approve the Company's shareholder rights plan which was adopted by our Board of Directors on April 9, 2018; and (4) to ratify the appointment of Deloitte & Touche LLP as the Company's independent registered public accounting firm for our 2019 fiscal year. Representatives from Deloitte & Touche LLP will be available at the Annual Meeting and we will address any questions that you may have.

This year, we have again elected to provide access to our proxy materials over the Internet under the Securities and Exchange Commission's notice and access rules.

Whether or not you expect to be present at the Annual Meeting, please vote and submit your proxy as soon as possible via the Internet, by phone, or if you have requested to receive printed proxy materials, by mailing a proxy card enclosed with those materials. This will not prevent you from voting in person at the Annual Meeting, but will help to secure a quorum and avoid added solicitation costs. If you decide later to attend the Annual Meeting, you may withdraw your proxy at any time and vote your shares in person.

We want your vote to be represented at the Annual Meeting. For those of you who plan to visit with us in person at the Annual Meeting, we look forward to seeing you, and please have a safe trip.

Sincerely,

Sandra B. Cochran

*President and Chief Executive Officer*

October 4, 2018

Table of Contents

305 Hartmann Drive

Lebanon, Tennessee 37087

**NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF SHAREHOLDERS**

**DATE OF MEETING:** November 15, 2018  
**TIME OF MEETING:** 10:00 a.m. Central Time  
**PLACE OF MEETING:** 305 Hartmann Drive

**ITEMS OF BUSINESS:** Lebanon, Tennessee 37087

- (1) to elect nine directors;
- (2) to approve, on an advisory basis, the compensation of the Company's named executive officers as disclosed in the proxy statement that accompanies this notice;
- (3) to approve the Company's shareholder rights plan which was adopted by our Board of Directors on April 9, 2018;
- (4) to ratify the appointment of Deloitte & Touche LLP as our independent registered public accounting firm for the 2019 fiscal year; and
- (5) to conduct other business properly brought before the meeting.

**WHO MAY VOTE/**

You may vote if you were a shareholder at the close of business on September 21, 2018.

**RECORD DATE:**

We are mailing a Notice of Internet Availability of Proxy Materials (the "Notice") to many of our shareholders instead of paper copies of our proxy statement and our 2018 Annual Report. The Notice contains instructions on how to access those documents over the Internet. The Notice also contains instructions on how shareholders can receive a paper copy of our proxy materials, including this proxy statement, our 2018 Annual Report and proxy card.

We hope that you will be able to attend the Annual Meeting. Instructions on how to obtain directions to the Annual Meeting are also included in the Notice. We ask, however, whether or not you plan to attend the Annual Meeting that you vote as soon as possible. Promptly voting will help ensure that the greatest number of shareholders are present whether in person or by proxy. You may vote over the Internet, as well as by telephone, or, if you requested to receive printed proxy materials, by mailing a proxy card enclosed with those materials. Please review the instructions on each of your voting options described in this proxy statement, as well as in the Notice you received in the mail.

If you attend the Annual Meeting in person, you may revoke your proxy at the meeting and vote your shares in person. You may revoke your proxy at any time before the proxy is exercised. Should you desire to revoke your proxy, you may do so as provided in the accompanying proxy statement.

By Order of our Board of Directors,

Richard M. Wolfson  
Secretary

Lebanon, Tennessee

October 4, 2018

**IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING THE AVAILABILITY OF PROXY MATERIALS**

**FOR THE SHAREHOLDER MEETING**

**TO BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 15, 2018:**

**The Notice of Internet Availability of Proxy Materials, Notice of Meeting and**

**Proxy Statement are available free of charge at: [www.proxyvote.com](http://www.proxyvote.com)**

**Table of Contents**

**CRACKER BARREL OLD COUNTRY STORE, INC.**

305 Hartmann Drive

Lebanon, Tennessee 37087

Telephone: (615) 444-5533

**PROXY STATEMENT FOR 2018 ANNUAL MEETING OF SHAREHOLDERS**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<u>GENERAL INFORMATION</u>	1
<u>VOTING MATTERS</u>	4
<u>BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEES</u>	8
<u>EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION</u>	14
<u>COMPENSATION DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS</u>	14
<u>COMPENSATION COMMITTEE REPORT</u>	33
<u>COMPENSATION TABLES AND INFORMATION</u>	34
<u>Summary Compensation Table</u>	34
<u>Grants of Plan-Based Awards Table</u>	35
<u>Outstanding Equity Awards at Fiscal Year-End Table</u>	37
<u>Option Exercises and Stock Vested Table</u>	38
<u>Equity Compensation Plan Information</u>	38
<u>Non-Qualified Deferred Compensation</u>	39
<u>Potential Payments Upon Termination or Change in Control</u>	39
<u>Director Compensation Table</u>	40
<u>Employment and Other Agreements</u>	41
<u>Compensation Committee Interlocks and Insider Participation</u>	43
<u>CEO Pay Ratio</u>	43
<u>CERTAIN RELATIONSHIPS AND RELATED TRANSACTIONS</u>	45
<u>SECTION 16(a) BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP REPORTING COMPLIANCE</u>	45
<u>STOCK OWNERSHIP OF CERTAIN BENEFICIAL OWNERS AND MANAGEMENT</u>	46
<u>PROPOSAL 1: ELECTION OF DIRECTORS</u>	48
<u>PROPOSAL 2: ADVISORY VOTE ON EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION</u>	56
<u>PROPOSAL 3: APPROVAL OF THE SHAREHOLDER RIGHTS PLAN</u>	57
<u>PROPOSAL 4: RATIFICATION OF APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT REGISTERED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRM</u>	61
<u>FEES PAID TO AUDITORS</u>	61

<u>AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT</u>	62
<u>SHAREHOLDER PROPOSALS FOR 2019 ANNUAL MEETING</u>	63
<u>ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION</u>	64
<u>OTHER BUSINESS</u>	64

**Table of Contents**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**What is this document?**

This document is the proxy statement of Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc. that is being furnished to shareholders in connection with our Annual Meeting of Shareholders to be held on Thursday, November 15, 2018 (the Annual Meeting ). If you requested a printed version of the proxy statement, a form of proxy card is also being furnished with this document.

We have tried to make this document simple and easy to understand. The Securities and Exchange Commission (the SEC ) encourages companies to use plain English, and we will always try to communicate with you clearly and effectively. We will refer to Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc. throughout this proxy statement as we, us, the Company or Cracker Barrel. Unless clearly indicated otherwise, all references to a particular year or quarter in this proxy statement refer to our fiscal year or quarter.

**Why am I receiving a proxy statement?**

Because you were one of our shareholders at the close of business on September 21, 2018, the record date for our Annual Meeting, you are receiving this document in order to solicit your proxy (i.e., your permission) to vote your shares of Cracker Barrel stock upon certain matters at the Annual Meeting. We are required by law to convene an Annual Meeting of our shareholders at which directors are elected. Because our shares are widely held, it would be impractical, if not impossible, for our shareholders to meet physically in sufficient numbers to hold a meeting. Accordingly, proxies are solicited from our shareholders. United States federal securities laws require us to send you this proxy statement and specify the information required to be contained in it.

**What does it mean if I receive more than one proxy statement or proxy card?**

If you receive multiple proxy statements or proxy cards, this may mean that you have more than one account with brokers or our transfer agent. Please vote all of your shares. We also recommend that you contact your broker and our transfer agent to consolidate as many accounts as possible under the same name and address. Our transfer agent is American Stock Transfer & Trust Company ( AST ). You can contact AST by calling (800) 485-1883.

**Why did I receive a one-page notice in the mail regarding the Internet availability of proxy materials instead of a full set of proxy materials?**

Pursuant to rules adopted by the SEC, this year the Company will again use the Internet as the primary means of furnishing proxy materials to shareholders. Accordingly, the Company is sending a Notice to the Company s shareholders. All shareholders will have the ability to access the proxy materials on the website referred to in the Notice or request a printed set of the complete proxy materials. Instructions on how to access the proxy materials over the Internet or to request a printed copy may be found in the Notice. In addition, shareholders may request to receive proxy materials in printed form by mail or electronically by email on an ongoing basis. The Company encourages shareholders to take advantage of the availability of the proxy materials on the Internet to help reduce the environmental impact of its annual meetings and the cost to the Company associated with the physical printing and mailing of materials.

**How can I get electronic access to the proxy materials?**

The Notice explains how to:



view the Company's proxy materials for the Annual Meeting on the Internet; and

instruct the Company to send future proxy materials to you by email.

## **Table of Contents**

The Company's proxy materials are also available on the Company's website at <http://investor.crackerbarrel.com>.

Choosing to receive future proxy materials by email will save the Company the cost of printing and mailing documents to you and will reduce the impact of the Company's annual meetings on the environment. If you choose to receive future proxy materials by email, you will receive an email message next year with instructions containing a link to those materials and a link to the proxy voting website. Your election to receive proxy materials by email will remain in effect until you terminate it.

### **Are you householding for shareholders sharing the same address?**

Yes. The SEC's rules regarding the delivery of proxy materials to shareholders permit us to deliver a single copy of these documents to an address shared by two or more of our shareholders. This method of delivery is called householding, and it can significantly reduce our printing and mailing costs. It also reduces the volume of mail you receive. Under this procedure, we are delivering a single copy of the Notice and, if applicable, the proxy materials to multiple shareholders who share the same address. Shareholders who participate in householding will continue to be able to access and receive separate proxy cards. Upon written request, we will deliver promptly a separate copy of the Notice and, if applicable, the proxy materials to any shareholder at a shared address to which we delivered a single copy of any of these documents. To receive a separate copy of the Notice and, if applicable, this proxy statement or the 2018 Annual Report, shareholders may write or call our transfer agent, AST, toll free at (800) 485-1883, or our Corporate Secretary at Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc., 305 Hartmann Drive, Lebanon, Tennessee 37087. The same phone number and address may be used to notify us that you wish to receive a separate set of proxy materials in the future, or to request delivery of a single copy of our proxy materials if you are receiving multiple copies.

### **Who pays for the Company's solicitation of proxies?**

We will pay for the entire cost of soliciting proxies on behalf of the Company. We will also reimburse brokerage firms, banks and other agents for the cost of forwarding the Company's proxy materials to beneficial owners. In addition, our directors and employees may solicit proxies in person, by mail, by telephone, via the Internet, press releases or advertisements. Directors and employees will not be paid any additional compensation for soliciting proxies, but MacKenzie Partners, Inc., our proxy solicitor, will be paid a fee, not expected to exceed \$15,000, for rendering solicitation services.

### **Who may attend the Annual Meeting?**

The Annual Meeting is open to all of our shareholders. To attend the meeting, you will need to register upon arrival. We also may check for your name on our shareholders' list and ask you to produce valid identification. If your shares are held in street name by your broker or bank, you should bring your most recent brokerage account statement or other evidence of your share ownership. If we cannot verify that you own Cracker Barrel shares, it is possible that you will not be admitted to the meeting.

### **May shareholders ask questions at the Annual Meeting?**

Yes. Certain of our officers will be available to respond to shareholder questions at the end of the Annual Meeting. In order to give a greater number of shareholders the opportunity to ask questions, we may impose certain procedural requirements, such as limiting repetitive or follow-up questions or requiring questions to be submitted in writing.

### **What if I have a disability?**

If you are disabled and would like to participate in the Annual Meeting, we can provide reasonable assistance. Please send any request for assistance to Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc., 305 Hartmann Drive, Lebanon, Tennessee 37087, Attention: Corporate Secretary, at least two weeks before the meeting.

**Table of Contents**

**What is Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc. and where is it located?**

We are the owner and operator of the Cracker Barrel Old Country Store® restaurant and retail concept throughout the United States. We also own and operate the Holler & Dash Biscuit House™ restaurant concept in a number of locations in the southeastern United States. Our corporate headquarters are located at 305 Hartmann Drive, Lebanon, Tennessee 37087. Our telephone number is (615) 444-5533.

**Where is Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc. common stock traded?**

Our common stock is traded and quoted on the Nasdaq Global Select Market ( Nasdaq ) under the symbol CBRL.

**Who will count the votes cast at the Annual Meeting?**

The Board of Directors will appoint an independent inspector of election to serve at the Annual Meeting. The inspector of election for the Annual Meeting will determine the number of votes cast by holders of common stock for all matters. Final voting results will be announced at the Annual Meeting.

**How can I find the voting results of the Annual Meeting?**

We will include the voting results in a Current Report on Form 8-K, which we will file with the SEC no later than four business days following the completion of the Annual Meeting.

**Table of Contents**

**VOTING MATTERS**

**What am I voting on?**

You will be voting on the following matters:

to elect nine directors;

to approve, on an advisory basis, the compensation of the Company's named executive officers as disclosed in this proxy statement;

to approve the Company's shareholder rights plan which was adopted by our Board of Directors on April 9, 2018; and

to ratify the appointment of Deloitte & Touche LLP as our independent registered public accounting firm for our 2019 fiscal year.

**Who is entitled to vote?**

You may vote if you owned shares of our common stock at the close of business on September 21, 2018. As of September 21, 2018, there were 24,031,772 shares of our common stock outstanding.

**How many votes must be present to hold the Annual Meeting?**

In order to lawfully conduct the Annual Meeting, a majority of our outstanding common shares as of September 21, 2018 must be present at the Annual Meeting either in person or by proxy. This is called a quorum. Your shares are counted as present at the Annual Meeting if you attend the Annual Meeting and vote in person or if you properly return a proxy by one of the methods described below under the question "How do I vote before the Annual Meeting?" Abstentions and broker non-votes (as explained below under the question "What is a broker non-vote?") also will be counted for purposes of establishing a quorum.

**How many votes do I have and can I cumulate my votes?**

You have one vote for every share of our common stock that you own. Cumulative voting is not allowed.

**May I vote my shares in person at the Annual Meeting?**

Yes. You may vote your shares at the Annual Meeting if you attend in person, even if you previously submitted a proxy card or voted by Internet or telephone. Whether or not you plan to attend the Annual Meeting in person, however, in order to assist us in tabulating votes at the Annual Meeting, we encourage you to vote by using the telephone, Internet or, if applicable, by returning a proxy card.

**How do I vote before the Annual Meeting?**

Edgar Filing: CRACKER BARREL OLD COUNTRY STORE, INC - Form DEF 14A

Before the Annual Meeting, you may vote your shares in one of the following three ways: (1) via the Internet by following the instructions provided in the Notice, (2) by mail, if you requested printed copies of the proxy materials, by filling out the form of proxy card and sending it back in the envelope provided, or (3) by telephone, if you requested printed copies of the proxy materials, by calling the toll free number found on the proxy card. If you requested printed copies of the proxy materials, and properly sign and return your proxy card and return it in the prepaid envelope, your shares will be voted as you direct.

Please use only one of the three ways to vote. If you hold shares in the name of a broker, your ability to vote those shares by Internet or telephone depends on the voting procedures used by your broker, as explained below under the question How do I vote if my broker holds my shares in street name ? The Tennessee Business

## **Table of Contents**

Corporation Act provides that a shareholder may appoint a proxy by electronic transmission, so we believe that the Internet or telephone voting procedures available to shareholders are valid and consistent with the requirements of applicable law.

### **How do I vote if my broker holds my shares in street name ?**

If your shares are held in a brokerage account in the name of your bank or broker (this is called street name ), your bank or broker will send you the Notice. Many (but not all) brokerage firms and banks participate in a program provided through Broadridge Financial Solutions, Inc. that offers Internet and telephone voting options.

### **What is a broker non-vote ?**

If you own shares through a broker in street name, you may instruct your broker how to vote your shares. A broker non-vote occurs when you fail to provide your broker with voting instructions at least 10 days before the Annual Meeting and the broker does not have the discretionary authority to vote your shares on a particular proposal because the proposal is not a routine matter under applicable rules. See How will abstentions and broker non-votes be treated? and Will my shares held in street name be voted if I do not provide my proxy? below.

### **How will abstentions and broker non-votes be treated?**

Abstentions and broker non-votes will be treated as shares that are present and entitled to vote for purposes of determining whether a quorum is present, but will not be counted as votes cast either in favor of or against a particular proposal, unless such proposal is a routine matter under applicable rules. See Will my shares held in street name be voted if I do not provide my proxy? below. The only routine matter to be presented at the Annual Meeting is Proposal 4: Ratification of the appointment of Deloitte & Touche LLP as our independent registered public accounting firm.

### **Will my shares held in street name be voted if I do not provide my proxy?**

On certain routine matters, brokerage firms have the discretionary authority to vote shares for which their customers do not provide voting instructions. The only routine matter to be presented at the Annual Meeting is Proposal 4: Ratification of the appointment of Deloitte & Touche LLP as our independent registered public accounting firm.

### **How will my proxy be voted?**

The individuals named on the proxy card will vote your proxy in the manner you indicate on the proxy card.

### **What if I return my signed proxy card or complete Internet or telephone procedures but do not specify my vote?**

If you sign and return your proxy card or complete the Internet or telephone voting procedures but do not specify how you want to vote your shares, we will vote them:

**FOR** the election of each of the nine director nominees named in this proxy statement;

**FOR** the approval, on an advisory basis, of the compensation of the Company's named executive officers as disclosed in this proxy statement;

**FOR** the approval of the Company's shareholder rights plan; and

**FOR** ratification of the appointment of Deloitte & Touche LLP as our independent registered public accounting firm for our 2019 fiscal year.



**Table of Contents**

**Can I change my mind and revoke my proxy?**

Yes. To revoke a proxy given pursuant to this solicitation, you must:

sign another proxy with a later date and return it to our Corporate Secretary at Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc., 305 Hartmann Drive, Lebanon, Tennessee 37087 at or before the Annual Meeting;

provide our Corporate Secretary with a written notice of revocation dated later than the date of the proxy at or before the Annual Meeting;

re-vote by using the telephone and calling (800) 690-6903;

re-vote by using the Internet by following the instructions in the Notice; or

attend the Annual Meeting and vote in person note that attendance at the Annual Meeting will not revoke a proxy if you do not actually vote at the Annual Meeting.

**What vote is required to approve each proposal?**

**Proposal 1: Election of nine directors.**

The affirmative vote of a plurality of the votes cast by the shareholders entitled to vote at the Annual Meeting is required for the election of directors. A properly executed proxy card marked **WITHHOLD** with respect to the election of a director nominee will be counted for purposes of determining if there is a quorum at the Annual Meeting, but will not be considered to have been voted for the director nominee. Broker non-votes will also not be considered to have been voted for any director nominee.

**Proposal 2: Approval, on an advisory basis, of the compensation of the Company's named executive officers as disclosed in the proxy statement that accompanies this notice.**

The approval of the compensation of the Company's named executive officers as described in this proxy statement will be approved if the number of shares of Company common stock voted **FOR** the proposal exceeds the number of shares of Company common stock voted **AGAINST**. If you vote **ABSTAIN** on this proposal via a properly executed proxy card, the Internet or telephone, your vote will not be counted as cast **FOR** or **AGAINST** this proposal. Broker non-votes likewise will not be treated as cast **FOR** or **AGAINST** this proposal. Accordingly, neither abstentions nor broker non-votes will have any legal effect on whether this proposal is approved.

**Proposal 3: Approval of the Company's shareholder rights plan.**

We are asking our shareholders to approve the shareholder rights plan that our Board of Directors adopted on April 9, 2018. The Company's shareholder rights plan will be approved if the number of shares of Company common stock voted FOR the proposal exceeds the number of shares of Company common stock voted AGAINST. If you vote ABSTAIN on this proposal via a properly executed proxy card, the Internet or telephone, your vote will not be counted as cast FOR or AGAINST this proposal. Broker non-votes likewise will not be treated as cast FOR or AGAINST this proposal. Accordingly, neither abstentions nor broker non-votes will have any legal effect on whether this proposal is approved.

**Proposal 4: Ratification of the appointment of Deloitte & Touche LLP as our independent registered public accounting firm for our 2019 fiscal year.**

Shareholder ratification of the appointment of our independent registered public accounting firm is not required, but the Board of Directors is submitting the appointment of Deloitte & Touche LLP for ratification in order to obtain the views of our shareholders. This proposal will be approved if the votes cast FOR the proposal exceed the votes cast AGAINST the proposal. If you submit a properly executed proxy card or use the

**Table of Contents**

Internet or telephone to indicate **ABSTAIN** on this proposal, your vote will not be counted as cast on this proposal. This proposal is considered routine, and thus if you hold your shares in street name, your broker may vote your shares for you absent any other instructions from you. Abstentions will not have any legal effect on whether this proposal is approved. If the appointment of Deloitte & Touche LLP is not ratified, the Audit Committee will reconsider its appointment.

**How do you recommend that I vote on these items?**

The Board of Directors recommends that you vote:

**FOR** the election of each of the nine director nominees named in this proxy statement;

**FOR** the approval, on an advisory basis, of the compensation of the Company's named executive officers as disclosed in this proxy statement;

**FOR** the approval of the Company's shareholder rights plan; and

**FOR** ratification of the appointment of Deloitte & Touche LLP as our independent registered public accounting firm for our 2019 fiscal year.

**May other matters be raised at the Annual Meeting; how will the Annual Meeting be conducted?**

We have not received proper notice of, and are not aware of, any business to be transacted at the Annual Meeting other than as indicated in this proxy statement. Under Tennessee law and our governing documents, no other business aside from procedural matters may be raised at the Annual Meeting unless proper notice has been given to us by the shareholders seeking to bring such business before the Annual Meeting. If any other item or proposal properly comes before the Annual Meeting, the proxies received will be voted on such matter in accordance with the discretion of the proxy holders.

The Chairman has broad authority to conduct the Annual Meeting so that the business of the Annual Meeting is carried out in an orderly and timely manner. In doing so, he has broad discretion to establish reasonable rules for discussion, comments and questions during the Annual Meeting. The Chairman is also entitled to rely upon applicable law regarding disruptions or disorderly conduct to ensure that the Annual Meeting proceeds in a manner that is fair to all participants.

**Table of Contents****BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEES****Directors**

The names and biographies of each member of our Board of Directors are set forth in this proxy statement under PROPOSAL 1: ELECTION OF DIRECTORS, beginning on page 48 of this proxy statement. All of the current members of our Board of Directors are nominees for re-election to the Board.

**Board Meetings**

Our Board of Directors met eight times during 2018. Each director attended at least 75% of the aggregate number of meetings of the full Board of Directors that were held during the period he or she was a director during 2018 and all meetings of the committee(s) on which he or she served that were held during the period he or she served on such committee in 2018.

**Board Committees**

Our Board of Directors has the following standing committees: Audit, Compensation, Nominating and Corporate Governance, Public Responsibility, and Executive. All members of the Audit, Compensation, and Nominating and Corporate Governance committees are independent under the Nasdaq Marketplace Rules and our Corporate Governance Guidelines. Our Board of Directors has adopted a written charter for each of the committees, with the exception of the Executive Committee. Copies of the charters of each of the Audit, Compensation, Nominating and Corporate Governance, and Public Responsibility committees, as well as our Corporate Governance Guidelines, are posted on our website: [www.crackerbarrel.com](http://www.crackerbarrel.com). Current information regarding all of our standing committees is set forth below:

Name of Committee and Members	Functions of the Committee	Number of Meetings in 2018
<b>AUDIT:</b>	Acts as liaison between our Board of Directors and independent auditors	8
Richard J. Dobkin, Chair	Reviews and approves the appointment, performance, independence and compensation of independent auditors	
Norman E. Johnson		
William W. McCarten		
Andrea M. Weiss	Has authority to hire, terminate and approve payments to the independent registered public accounting firm and other committee advisors	

Is responsible for developing procedures to receive information and address complaints regarding our accounting, internal accounting controls or auditing matters

Reviews internal accounting controls and systems, including internal audit plan

Reviews results of the internal audit plan, the annual audit and related financial reports

Reviews quarterly earnings press releases and related financial reports

Reviews our significant accounting policies and any changes to those policies

Reviews policies and practices with respect to risk assessment and risk management

**Table of Contents**

<b>Name of Committee and Members</b>	<b>Functions of the Committee</b>	<b>Number of Meetings in 2018</b>
	Reviews and pre-approves directors and officers related-party transactions and annually reviews ongoing arrangements with related parties and potential conflicts of interest	
	Reviews the appointment, performance and termination or replacement of the senior internal audit executive	
	Determines financial expertise and continuing education requirements of members of the committee	
<b>COMPENSATION:</b>	Reviews management performance, particularly with respect to annual financial goals	5
Coleman H. Peterson, Chair		
Thomas H. Barr	Administers compensation plans and reviews and approves salaries, bonuses and equity compensation grants of executive officers, excluding the Chief Executive Officer for whom the committee makes a recommendation to the Board of Directors for its approval	
James W. Bradford		
Meg Crofton		
	Monitors compliance of directors and officers with our stock ownership guidelines	
	Evaluates the risk(s) associated with our compensation programs	
	Selects and engages independent compensation consultants and other committee advisors	
	Reviews, in conjunction with the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee, a succession plan with the Chairman of the Board and the Chief Executive Officer and provides insights with respect to succession planning to the Nominating and Corporate	

Governance Committee

**NOMINATING AND  
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE:**

Identifies and recruits qualified candidates to fill positions on our Board of Directors

3

Norman E. Johnson, Chair

Considers nominees to our Board of Directors recommended by shareholders in accordance with the nomination procedures set forth in our bylaws

Richard J. Dobkin

William W. McCarten

Reviews corporate governance policies and makes recommendations to our Board of Directors

Coleman H. Peterson

Reviews and recommends the composition of the committees of our Board of Directors

Oversees annual performance review of our Board of Directors and the committees thereof

Reviews, on behalf of our Board of Directors, a succession plan with the Chairman of the Board and the Chief Executive Officer and reports to our Board of Directors on that issue

**Table of Contents**

Name of Committee and Members	Functions of the Committee	Number of Meetings in 2018
<b>PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY:</b>	Assists the Board of Directors in fulfilling its oversight responsibility for the Company's overall enterprise risk management program	2
Andrea M. Weiss, Chair	Analyzes public policy trends and makes recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding how the Company can anticipate and adjust to these trends	
Thomas H. Barr		
James W. Bradford		
	Annually reviews the policies, procedures and expenditures for the Company's political activities, including political contributions and direct and indirect lobbying	
	Reviews the Company's progress toward its diversity goals and compliance with the Company's responsibilities as an equal opportunity employer	
	Reviews the Company's human and workplace rights policies	
	Reviews and recommends procedures concerning the transmission of the Company's positions on public policy and social issues via digital media outlets	
	Reviews any shareholder proposals that deal with public policy issues and makes recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding the Company's response to such proposals	
<b>EXECUTIVE:</b>	Meets at the call of the Chief Executive Officer or Chairman of the Board	0
James W. Bradford, Chair	Meets when the timing of certain actions makes it appropriate to convene the committee rather than the entire Board of Directors	
Sandra B. Cochran		



Richard J. Dobkin

Norman E. Johnson

May carry out all functions and powers of our Board of Directors, subject to certain exceptions under applicable law

Coleman H. Peterson

Andrea M. Weiss

Advises senior management regarding actions contemplated by the Company whenever it is not convenient or appropriate to convene the entire Board of Directors

### **Board Leadership Structure**

Our Board of Directors regularly considers the appropriate leadership structure for the Company, and believes that its current leadership structure, with Mr. Bradford serving as Chairman and Ms. Cochran serving as the Chief Executive Officer, best serves (i) the objectives of the Board of Directors oversight of management, (ii) the ability of the Board of Directors to carry out its roles and responsibilities on behalf of the shareholders, and (iii) the Company's overall corporate governance.

Notwithstanding our current leadership structure, our Board of Directors has concluded that it is important for the Board of Directors to retain flexibility in exercising its judgment to determine whether the same

## **Table of Contents**

individual should serve as both Chief Executive Officer and Chairman at any given point in time, rather than adhering to a formal standing policy on the subject. This approach allows our Board of Directors to use its considerable experience and knowledge to elect the most qualified director as Chairman, while maintaining the ability to combine or separate the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer roles when appropriate. Accordingly, at different points in time, the Chief Executive Officer and Chairman roles may be held by the same person. At other times, as currently, they may be held by different individuals. In each instance, the decision on whether to combine or separate the roles is determined by what the Board of Directors believes is in the best interests of our shareholders, based on the circumstances at the time. By way of example, in the event of a departure of either our Chief Executive Officer or Chairman, the Board of Directors could reconsider the leadership structure and whether one individual was then suited to fulfill both roles, based on the individual's experience and knowledge of our business and whether the directors considered it in the best interest of the Company to combine the positions.

Our Board of Directors will continue to evaluate the Company's leadership structure on an ongoing basis to ensure that it is appropriate at all times.

## **Board Oversight of Risk Management**

It is the responsibility of our senior management to develop and implement our strategic plans, and to identify, evaluate, manage and mitigate the risks inherent in those plans. It is the responsibility of our Board of Directors to understand and oversee our strategic plans, the associated risks, and the steps that senior management is taking to manage and mitigate those risks. Our Board of Directors takes an active approach to its risk oversight role. This approach is bolstered by our Board of Directors' leadership and committee structure, which ensures: (i) proper consideration and evaluation of potential enterprise risks by the full Board of Directors under the auspices of the Chairman, and (ii) further consideration and evaluation of discrete risks at the committee level.

Our Board of Directors is comprised predominantly of independent directors (eight of our nine directors), and all directors who served on the key committees of our Board of Directors (Audit, Compensation, Nominating and Corporate Governance, and Public Responsibility) during 2018 were independent under applicable Nasdaq listing standards and our Corporate Governance Guidelines. This system of checks and balances ensures that key decisions made by the Company's most senior management, up to and including the Chief Executive Officer, are reviewed and overseen by the non-employee directors of our Board of Directors.

Risk management oversight by the full Board of Directors includes a comprehensive annual review of our overall strategic plans, including the risks associated with these strategic plans. Our Board of Directors also conducts an annual review, led by the Audit Committee, of the conclusions and recommendations generated by management's enterprise risk management process. This process involves a cross-functional group of our senior management that, on a regular basis, identifies current and future potential risks facing us and ensures that actions are taken to manage and mitigate those potential risks. Our Board of Directors also has overall responsibility for leadership succession for our most senior officers and reviews succession plans each year.

In addition, our Board of Directors has delegated certain risk management oversight responsibilities to certain of its committees, each of which reports regularly to the full Board of Directors. In performing these oversight responsibilities, each committee has full access to management, as well as the ability to engage independent advisors. The Audit Committee has primary overall responsibility for overseeing our risk management. It oversees risks related to our financial statements, the financial reporting process, accounting and legal matters. The Audit Committee oversees the internal audit function and our ethics and compliance program. It also regularly receives reports regarding our most significant internal control and compliance risks, along with management's processes for maintaining compliance within a strong internal control environment. In addition, the Audit Committee receives

reports regarding potential legal and regulatory risks and management's plans for managing and mitigating those risks. Representatives of our independent registered public accounting firm attend Audit Committee meetings, regularly make presentations to the Audit Committee and comment on management

## **Table of Contents**

presentations. In addition, our Chief Financial Officer, Vice President of Internal Audit, General Counsel and representatives of our independent registered public accounting firm individually meet in private sessions with the Audit Committee to raise any concerns they might have with the Company's risk management practices.

The Compensation Committee is responsible for overseeing our incentive compensation arrangements, for aligning such arrangements with sound risk management and long-term growth and for verifying compliance with applicable regulations. The Compensation Committee conducted an internal assessment of our executive and non-executive incentive compensation programs, policies and practices. The Compensation Committee reviewed and discussed: the various design features and characteristics of the Company-wide compensation policies and programs; performance metrics; and approval mechanisms of all incentive programs. Based on this assessment and after discussion with management and the Compensation Committee's independent compensation consultant, the Compensation Committee has concluded that our incentive compensation arrangements and practices do not create risks that are reasonably likely to have a material adverse effect on the Company.

The Public Responsibility Committee oversees the risks associated with the Company's response to public relations matters and public policy trends. The Public Responsibility Committee discussed and conducted specific analyses of the management of public relations issues as well as the Company's commitment to diversity and corporate responsibility through various channels, including social and digital media.

Finally, the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee oversees risks associated with its areas of responsibility, including, along with the Audit Committee, our ethics and compliance program. The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee also reviews annually our key corporate governance documents to ensure they are in compliance with the changing legal and regulatory environment and appropriately enable our Board of Directors to fulfill its oversight duties. In addition, our Board of Directors is routinely informed of developments at the Company that could affect our risk profile and business in general.

## **Compensation of Directors**

For 2018, we ceased paying Board and committee meeting fees to our outside directors, and increased the annual retainers that we pay them in respect of their service on the Board and on the various committees thereof. The Board made this change, on the recommendation of the Compensation Committee and after studying the issue in consultation with Frederic W. Cook & Co., the Compensation Committee's outside compensation consultant (FW Cook). In making its recommendation to the Board, the Compensation Committee considered various factors, including the fact that the majority of the Company's peer group have moved away from paying meeting fees. In light of the Compensation Committee's recommendation, the Board determined to eliminate meeting fees and instead (i) increase the annual retainer payable to each outside director and (ii) pay an additional retainer to the chair and members of each committee of the Board, as follows:

Annual Director Retainer (payable to all outside directors): \$75,000

Audit Committee Retainers: Chair \$25,000; Non-chair member \$14,000

Compensation Committee Retainers: Chair \$20,000; Non-chair member \$12,500

Nominating and Governance Committee Retainers: Chair \$15,000; Non-chair member \$5,500

Public Responsibility Committee Retainers: Chair \$13,000; Non-chair member \$2,500

Executive Committee Retainers: None

The Compensation Committee's recommendation to the Board also takes into consideration the competitiveness of total compensation relative to our restaurant and retail industry peer companies (see page 19 of this proxy statement for a discussion of our peer group) and similarly sized general industry companies. To assess the competitiveness of our director compensation program, FW Cook annually conducts a market assessment at the request of the Compensation Committee. FW Cook's assessment presented in July 2017 in

**Table of Contents**

connection with the Board's determination of outside director compensation for fiscal 2018 found total compensation provided to Cracker Barrel's outside directors to be aligned with median total compensation of the peer group and the median of similarly sized general industry companies.

Although we no longer pay meeting fees, we do reimburse our outside directors for their reasonable and customary expenses incurred in travelling to and attending meetings.

Each non-employee director who is elected at an annual meeting also receives a grant of restricted stock units ( RSUs ) having a value equal to approximately \$110,000, with the number of RSUs included in such grant to be determined based on the closing price of our common stock on the date of the applicable annual meeting, as reported by Nasdaq, and to be rounded down to the nearest whole share. These awards vest at the earlier of one year from the date of grant or at the next annual meeting of shareholders. The Company has no knowledge of any agreement or arrangement between any director or director nominee and any person or entity other than the Company relating to compensation or other payment in connection with such person's candidacy or service as a director.

In addition to the compensation set forth above with respect to each outside director, our independent Chairman, James W. Bradford, was paid an additional annual cash retainer of \$35,000 and received an additional grant of RSUs having a value equal to approximately \$65,000, based on the closing price of our common stock on the date of the grant, as reported by Nasdaq, and rounded to the nearest whole share. These RSUs vest at the earlier of one year from the date of grant or at the next annual meeting of shareholders.

Our non-employee directors are also offered the option to participate in a directors' deferred compensation plan. This plan allows a participant to defer a percentage or sum of his or her compensation and earn interest on that deferred compensation at a rate equal to the 10-year Treasury bill rate (as in effect at the beginning of each calendar month) plus 1.5%. The compensation of our directors during 2018 is detailed in the Director Compensation Table, which can be found on page 40 of this proxy statement.

**Table of Contents**

**EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION**

***COMPENSATION DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS***

This portion of the proxy statement, called the Compensation Discussion and Analysis or CD&A, provides a description of the objectives and principles of our executive compensation programs. It explains how compensation decisions are linked to Cracker Barrel's performance relative to our strategic goals and our efforts to drive shareholder value. It is also meant to give our shareholders insight into the deliberative process and the underlying compensation philosophies that are the foundation of the design of the pay packages of our executive officers. Generally, Cracker Barrel's executive compensation programs apply to all executive officers, but this CD&A focuses on the compensation decisions relating to our executive officers who qualified as named executive officers under applicable SEC rules (the Named Executive Officers or NEOs) during 2018.

**Executive Summary**

2018 was a more challenging year for the Company, as our financial results were below our expectations. We experienced traffic erosion and faced higher than anticipated commodity inflation, particularly in the second half of the year, and certain seasonal promotional menu items performed weaker than expected in the fourth quarter, causing us to achieve approximately 90% of our planned levels of operating income in 2018.

Consistent with our pay-for-performance philosophy designed to align our executive compensation with the interests of our shareholders, we paid annual bonuses to our executive officers at 61.8% of target in 2018, which decreased their cash compensation from 2017 levels. The annual bonus payable to our Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Cochran, in respect of 2018 was approximately \$584,000 less than she received for 2017, a decrease of approximately 42.8%. Similarly, because 50% of the value of the equity grants made to our executive officers in 2018 was in the form of performance shares, we currently expect that these share awards will pay out below target.

Notwithstanding the fact that we did not perform up to our expectations, the Company made substantial achievements in various areas and continued to make progress on a number of key initiatives in 2018.

We continued to deliver strong yields to our shareholders by increasing our quarterly dividend to \$1.25 per share and declaring our fourth special dividend in as many years. This special dividend was in the amount of \$3.75 per share, up from \$3.50 in 2017.

We continued making investments in and successfully growing our off-premises business lines of individual to-go, catering and special occasion dining, which we believe will be core drivers of growth, particularly among our younger guest base.

We achieved our best year for store manager retention in at least the last twenty years, with turnover limited to approximately 17% across our system despite a highly competitive market for talent and historically low levels of unemployment throughout the United States.

We opened eight new Cracker Barrel stores, including our first ever store in California, as we continue to expand our footprint in the western United States.

We opened three new Holler & Dash restaurants and further refined our business model for this exciting new concept.

We successfully launched a system-wide crafted coffee initiative, installing more than \$12 million of new specialized equipment to enable our restaurants to deliver specialty coffee beverages that are selling well and provide us with another platform for seasonal offerings that we believe will resonate with guests.

We continued to drive cost savings throughout the organization, and successfully implemented sustainable measures to reduce costs by approximately \$6 million in 2018.



**Table of Contents**

**Summary of 2018 Compensation Actions**

Pay actions for our Named Executive Officers in 2018 reflected the foregoing challenges and achievements, and as indicated above, demonstrated a strong alignment between our NEO compensation and the Company's performance. The chart below describes the elements of our executives' pay (each of which is discussed in greater detail in this CD&A) and summarizes how each element was handled in 2018:

<b>Pay Element</b>	<b>Pay Element in 2018</b>
Base Salary	Our CEO, Ms. Cochran, and Ms. Daily each received a merit increase of base salary of approximately 4.2% at the outset of 2018. Ms. Golder and Mr. Flanagan received increases of approximately 7.4% and 7.1%, respectively. Mr. Wolfson joined the Company at the beginning of 2018 and was not eligible for an increase.
Annual Bonus Plan	In 2018 our operating income for bonus purposes was approximately \$299 million, or approximately 90.3% of our 2018 target performance. Consequently, 2018 bonuses were paid out to our NEOs (and to approximately 180 other employees whose 2018 bonuses were determined by an operating income performance metric) at 61.8% of target.
Long-Term Performance Incentives	Our executives received two long-term incentive ( LTI ) awards in 2018 which are payable in future years based on the achievement of certain performance goals, as follows:

A 2018 Long Term Performance Plan ( LTPP ) award that will be payable based on our achievement of certain level of return on invested capital (ROIC) during years 2018 and 2019. Based on the Company's performance in 2018, we anticipate that these awards will pay out below target.

A 2018 restricted stock unit ( RSU ) award that will be payable (i) at target if our relative TSR over the next three years (i.e., 2018, 2019 and 2020) is between the 25<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles of the S&P MidCap 400 Index; (ii) at 75% of target if our relative TSR over such time period is equal to or below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile of such index; and (iii) at 125% of target if our relative TSR over such time period is equal to or above the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of such index.

In addition, performance-based equity awards that were granted in earlier years were paid out to our NEOs in 2018, as follows:

2017 LTPP Awards, which were granted in 2017 and had a two-year performance period (2017 and 2018) were paid out at 99.8% of target, reflecting our achievement of an 22.9% ROIC, on average, over the past two years.

2016 MSU Grants, which were granted in 2016 and had a three-year performance period (2016, 2017 and 2018), were paid out at 117.3% of target, reflecting our achievement of an 17.3% positive change in cumulative TSR over the past three years.

#### Long-Term Retention Incentives

At the outset of 2018, our NEOs received time-based RSUs. These awards cliff-vest after three years (i.e., at the end of 2020), and are intended to encourage executive retention.

**Table of Contents**

**Pay Element**

**Pay Element in 2018**

Health and welfare benefits

There were no material changes to the health and welfare benefits provided to NEOs in 2018.

CEO Employment Agreement

The Company entered into a new employment agreement with Ms. Cochran at the end of 2018 which replaced her 2015 agreement that was due to expire in September 2018. No other NEO has an employment agreement.

Under her new employment agreement, Ms. Cochran, who became retirement-eligible under Company policy in August 2018, agrees to provide the Company with at least 12 months notice prior to retiring. In exchange for this obligation, upon her retirement Ms. Cochran will be entitled to continued vesting of all of her then-outstanding equity awards in their normal course and subject to the achievement of any applicable performance goals.

The Company may terminate the employment agreement at any time, and Ms. Cochran's employment with the Company is at will. Nevertheless, the Company will have to make certain payments and provide certain benefits to Ms. Cochran in the event the Company terminates the employment relationship without cause or Ms. Cochran terminates the relationship for good reason (each as defined in the agreement). The amount of these payments and benefits depends on the timing of the termination and whether it occurs in connection with a change of control of the Company.

Ms. Cochran is bound by various restrictive covenants, including those relating to confidentiality, noncompetition and non-solicitation of employees. She is also obligated to sign a comprehensive release in favor of the Company in order to receive the above-described payments and benefits.

Ms. Cochran's employment agreement does not provide for any gross-ups of payments or benefits payable to her, including any excise tax gross-ups due to a change in control of the Company, and she remains solely responsible for paying taxes on these amounts to the extent incurred. Ms. Cochran's employment agreement is detailed below on page 41 of this proxy statement.

Severance and Change in Control Agreements

In 2018, the Company entered into a new Severance Agreement and a new Change in Control (CIC) Agreement with each NEO other than Ms. Cochran. These agreements replaced a former Severance and Change in Control Agreement in place between the Company and each of its officers that was entered into in 2015 and expired in May 2018.

Under the new Severance Agreement, depending on his/her years of service, each NEO will be entitled to 12-18 months of base salary and continuation of medical benefits under COBRA (with the executive paying the premiums) in the event that he/she is terminated without cause or he or she terminates for good reason, as such terms are defined in the agreement.

Under the new CIC Agreement, which requires a double trigger for full payment during the two year period following the CIC, the Company agrees to keep each NEO in his or her current position at the

## **Table of Contents**

### **Pay Element**

### **Pay Element in 2018**

same level of compensation and benefits for a period of two years following the CIC. During this two-year period, if the Company terminates the executive other than for cause or if the executive terminates for good reason (as defined in the CIC Agreement) then, in addition to any unpaid salary, bonus and vacation, the executive will be entitled to a payment equal to two times his or her salary and target bonus, a prorated bonus for the year of termination, a cash out of all outstanding equity awards to the extent not previously vested and paid, and continuation of perquisites and benefits for two years.

Under both the Severance Agreement and the CIC Agreement, each NEO is bound by various restrictive covenants, including those relating to confidentiality, noncompetition and non-solicitation of employees. Each NEO is also obligated to sign a comprehensive release in favor of the Company in order to receive the above-described payments and benefits.

Neither the Severance Agreement nor the CIC Agreement provide for any gross-ups of payments or benefits payable to an NEO, including any excise tax gross-ups due to a change in control of the Company. The NEO remains solely responsible for paying taxes on these amounts to the extent incurred.

### ***Advisory Vote on Executive Compensation***

Last year, we held our annual advisory vote to approve Named Executive Officer compensation, commonly known as Say on Pay. Approximately 96% of the votes cast (excluding broker non-votes and abstentions) were in favor of our executive compensation as disclosed in our 2017 Proxy Statement. The Compensation Committee considered these results, as well as other feedback the Company has received from shareholders as part of its ongoing review of our executive compensation programs, and determined not to make material changes to our executive compensation programs because the Compensation Committee believes this advisory vote indicates considerable shareholder support for continuing the Company's strong pay-for-performance philosophy.

### **Elements of Compensation Program**

#### ***Compensation Philosophy***

Our central compensation objective is to develop a program that will ultimately drive long-term total return to our shareholders and build a better company by implementing compensation programs that reward both company-wide and individual performance, align our executives' interests with those of our shareholders and allow us to attract and retain talented executives.

We have a strong pay for performance philosophy designed to reward executive officers for maximizing our success, as determined by our performance relative to our financial and operational goals. A significant amount of the compensation payable to our executives is tied to the Company's achievement of measurable performance goals (relative total shareholder return (TSR), operating income and ROIC) that we believe directly relate to our ability to return value to our shareholders and thereby translate into higher TSR over time. In furtherance of our overall

philosophy, we seek to reward our executives for both near-term and sustained longer-term financial and operating performance as well as leadership excellence. Compensation opportunities are intended to align the economic interests of executives with those of our shareholders and encourage them to remain with the Company for long and productive careers.

## **Table of Contents**

The Company's compensation philosophy is to target total direct compensation paid to our executive officers at the median of our peer group and other market comparisons. While the Compensation Committee strives to deliver a target total compensation package approximating the market median, judgment is applied to recognize individual performance, competitive pressures for management talent, experience, and value to the organization when establishing compensation opportunities. The Compensation Committee believes it utilizes elements of compensation that create appropriate flexibility and help focus and reward executives for both near-term and long-term performance while aligning the interests of executive officers with the interests of our shareholders.

## **Role of the Compensation Committee**

The Compensation Committee's primary responsibility is the establishment and approval of compensation and compensation programs for our executive officers that further the overall objectives of our executive compensation program. In fulfilling this responsibility, the Compensation Committee:

Reviews and approves corporate performance goals for our executive officers, sets cash- and equity-based compensation and administers our equity incentive arrangements;

Assesses (together with management) potential risks to the Company associated with our compensation programs and reviews and approves employment and change in control agreements of our executive officers; and

Periodically conducts or authorizes studies of matters within its scope of responsibilities and may retain, at the Company's expense, independent counsel or other consultants necessary to assist the Compensation Committee in connection with any such studies.

The Compensation Committee makes compensation decisions after reviewing the performance of the Company and carefully evaluating both quantitative and qualitative factors such as an executive's performance during the year against established goals, leadership qualities, operational performance, business responsibilities, long-term potential to enhance shareholder value, current compensation status as shown on tally sheets reflecting current and historical compensation for each executive, and tenure with the Company.

## **Role of Management**

Management plays the following roles in the compensation process:

Management recommends to our Board of Directors business performance targets and objectives for the annual plan and provides background information about the underlying strategic objectives;

Management evaluates employee performance;

Management recommends cash compensation levels and equity awards;

Management works with the Compensation Committee Chairman to establish the agenda for Compensation Committee meetings;

The Chief Executive Officer generally makes recommendations to the Compensation Committee regarding salary increases for other executive officers during the regular merit increase process;

The Chief Executive Officer provides her perspective on recommendations provided by the consulting firm hired by the Compensation Committee regarding compensation program design issues;

The Chief Executive Officer does not play a role in determining her own compensation; and

Other members of management, at the request of the Compensation Committee, work with the outside consultants hired by the Compensation Committee to provide data about past practices, awards, costs and participation in various plans, and information about our annual and longer-term goals. When



## **Table of Contents**

requested by the Compensation Committee, selected members of management may also review consultant recommendations on plan design and structure and provide a perspective to the Compensation Committee on how these recommendations may affect recruitment, retention and motivation of our employees as well as how they may affect us from an administrative, accounting, tax or similar perspective.

### **Role of Independent Compensation Consultant**

To assist the Compensation Committee with establishing executive compensation, the Compensation Committee retains FW Cook to provide competitive market data, assist in establishing a peer group of companies and provide guidance on compensation structure as well as levels of compensation for our senior executives and the Board. The Compensation Committee consulted with FW Cook in determining the compensation to be awarded to all of the Named Executive Officers, including Ms. Cochran, in 2018. FW Cook reports directly to the Compensation Committee. The Compensation Committee has assessed the independence of FW Cook pursuant to applicable SEC and Nasdaq rules and concluded that no conflict of interest exists that would prevent FW Cook from serving as an independent consultant to the Compensation Committee.

### **Analysis of Peer Group**

The Compensation Committee evaluates a variety of factors in establishing an overall compensation program that best fits our overarching goals of maximizing shareholder return and building a stronger company. As one element of this evaluative process, the Compensation Committee, with the assistance of FW Cook, considers competitive market compensation paid by other similarly situated companies and attempts to maintain compensation levels and programs that are comparable to and competitive with those of a peer group of similarly situated companies. Although we do not expressly benchmark our compensation relative to that provided by our peers, the Compensation Committee does use the peer group data as a component of its analysis to ensure relative consistency at the median level of our peers. The peer group is reviewed annually by the Compensation Committee, working with FW Cook, and is comprised of the following:

Organizations of similar business characteristics (i.e., publicly traded organizations in the restaurant and retail industries);

Organizations against which we compete for executive talent;

Organizations of comparable size to Cracker Barrel, as measured by primarily by sales but also by market capitalization, enterprise value, and other relevant factors; and

Organizations with similar geographic dispersion and workforce demographics.

The Company believes that the selection of a peer group to be used for assessing the competitiveness of its executive compensation levels is something that requires reconsideration every year. The Company reviews its peer group on an annual basis and changes certain members of the peer group as the Company refines its comparison criteria and when the Company and members of the peer group change in ways that make comparisons less or more appropriate.

With assistance from FW Cook, the Compensation Committee conducted its annual review of the Company's peer group in 2018 to confirm the alignment of the Company's peer group with the Company in terms of similarity of

business, median revenue and market capitalization, and to remove any company within the peer group that had been acquired and was no longer publicly traded. Specifically, in furtherance of these objectives, the Committee decided to eliminate Bob Evans Farms, Inc. from the peer group and to add Denny's Corporation.

**Table of Contents**

Following these changes, the peer group referenced as part of our determining 2018 compensation was comprised of the following 15 publicly-traded companies:

Big Lots, Inc.	Denny's Corporation
Bloomin' Brands, Inc.	DineEquity, Inc.
Brinker International, Inc.	Jack-in-the-Box, Inc.
Buffalo Wild Wings, Inc.	Panera Bread Co.
Cheesecake Factory, Inc.	Red Robin Gourmet Burgers, Inc.
Chipotle Mexican Grill, Inc.	Tractor Supply, Inc.
Darden Restaurants, Inc.	The Wendy's Company
	Williams-Sonoma, Inc.

Management and the Compensation Committee, with FW Cook's assistance, regularly evaluate the marketplace to ensure that our compensation programs remain competitive. In addition to its review of data from the peer group, the Compensation Committee also from time to time consults data from published compensation surveys to assess more generally the competitiveness and the reasonableness of our compensation programs. To the extent that the Compensation Committee benchmarks compensation, it relies only on comparisons to the enumerated peer group and survey data. The Compensation Committee, however, does not believe that compensation levels and design should be based exclusively on benchmarking and, therefore, considers various business factors and each executive's individual circumstances and role within our organization.

**Overview of Compensation Elements**

We strive to achieve an appropriate mix between cash payments and equity incentive awards in order to meet our objectives by rewarding recent results, motivating long-term performance and strengthening alignment with shareholders. The Compensation Committee evaluates the overall total direct compensation package relative to market conditions, but does not specifically target any percentile for each element of total direct compensation. In conducting this evaluation, the Compensation Committee's goal is to ensure that a significant majority of each executive officer's total direct compensation opportunity is contingent upon Company performance and shareholder value creation. The Compensation Committee reviews the compensation mix of each executive on a comprehensive basis to determine if we have provided the appropriate incentives to accomplish our compensation objectives.

In general, our compensation policies have provided for a more significant emphasis on long-term equity compensation than on annual cash compensation for our executive officers. Our long-term equity compensation consists of (i) a LTPP that provides for awards of performance shares tied to successful achievement of pre-determined ROIC goals over a two-year period, (ii) grants of performance RSUs with three-year vesting, with the actual number of shares delivered depending on the Company's relative TSR performance over the three-year vesting period compared to an industry index, and (iii) time-based RSUs that vest over a three-year period from the date of grant, subject to continued employment of the recipient. The Compensation Committee believes that the Company's 2018 pay mix supports the Company's strong pay for performance culture, as demonstrated by the fact that approximately 83% of our Chief Executive Officer's target total direct compensation and approximately 63% of our other Named Executive Officers' target total direct compensation in 2018 were variable or at risk, tied to the Company's measurable performance and/or change in stock price.



**Table of Contents**

The following table summarizes the basic elements of our compensation programs and describes the behavior and/or qualities exhibited by our executive officers that each element is designed to encourage as well as the underlying purpose for that element of our compensation program:

<b>Pay Element</b>	<b>What the Pay Element Rewards</b>	<b>Purpose of the Pay Element</b>
Base Salary	Skills, experience, competence, performance, responsibility, leadership and contribution to the Company	Provide fixed compensation for daily responsibilities
Annual Bonus Plan	Annual achievement of profitability (operating income) targets	Focus attention on meeting annual performance targets and our near-term success, provide additional cash compensation and incentives based on our annual performance
Long-Term Performance Incentives (LTPP and Performance RSUs)	Achieving multi-year: (i) ROIC targets and (ii) relative TSR performance	Focus attention on meeting longer-term performance targets and our long-term success, create alignment with shareholders by focusing efforts on longer-term financial and shareholder returns; Management retention
Long-Term Retention Incentive (time-based RSUs)	Continued service to the Company and its shareholders	Create alignment with shareholders by focusing efforts on longer-term financial and shareholder returns; Management retention
Health and welfare benefits	Provide appropriate amount of safety and security for executives and their families (as applicable) in the form of medical coverage as well as death/disability benefits	Allow executives to focus their efforts on running the business effectively

We believe our compensation programs are generally consistent with best practices for sound corporate governance.

**We DO:**

Maintain robust stock ownership and retention guidelines for executives and non-executive directors;

Conduct annual risk assessments of our compensation programs;

Deliver a majority of the target value of our long-term incentive program (as calculated at the time of grant) through performance-contingent awards;

Only accelerate equity upon change-in-control AND termination ( double trigger vesting); and

Maintain anti-hedging, anti-pledging and recoupment (or clawback ) policies.

We do **NOT**:

Execute employment agreements containing multi-year guaranties for salary increases, or automatic renewals (i.e., evergreen agreements) for those executive officers that have employment agreements currently only our Chief Executive Officer;

**Table of Contents**

Provide material perquisites for executives;

Offer gross-up payments to cover personal income taxes or excise taxes that pertain to executive or severance benefits;

Pay dividends on unvested LTI awards; or

Provide special executive retirement programs.

**Base Salary**

The Compensation Committee reviews our executive officers' base salaries annually at the end of the year and establishes the base salaries for the upcoming year. Base salary for our executive officers is determined after consideration of numerous factors, including, but not limited to: scope of work, skills, experience, responsibilities, performance and seniority of the executive, peer group salaries for similarly-situated positions and the recommendation of the Chief Executive Officer (except in the case of her own compensation). Ms. Cochran's salary is set in accordance with her employment agreement (discussed in greater detail below), subject to increases at the discretion of the Compensation Committee. The Company views base salary as a fixed component of executive compensation that compensates the executive officer for the daily responsibilities assumed in operating the Company throughout the year.

Base salaries for 2017 and 2018 for the Named Executive Officers were as follows:

<b>NAMED EXECUTIVE OFFICER</b>	<b>2017 BASE SALARY</b>	<b>2018 BASE SALARY</b>	<b>PERCENT CHANGE</b>
Sandra B. Cochran	\$ 1,056,000	\$ 1,100,000	4.2%
Jill M. Golder	\$ 475,000	\$ 510,000	7.4%
Nicholas V. Flanagan	\$ 467,000	\$ 500,000	7.1%
Richard M. Wolfson <sup>(1)</sup>	N/A	\$ 350,000	N/A
Laura A. Daily	\$ 336,000	\$ 350,000	4.2%

(1) Mr. Wolfson joined the Company at the start of 2018.

**Annual Bonus Plan**

The annual bonus plan generally provides our executive officers with the opportunity to receive additional cash compensation based on a targeted percentage of base salary, but only if the Company successfully meets established performance targets. For 2018, executive officers were eligible to receive a bonus, depending upon the Company's operating income performance relative to a target set at the beginning of the year. In 2018, following the passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, the Board authorized management to make certain unbudgeted investments of approximately \$12 million of the Company's approximately \$24 million of unanticipated tax savings in order to accelerate certain strategic initiatives. As part of this authorization, the Board agreed that the investments should be excluded from the calculation of 2018 operating income. The Company ultimately completed approximately \$5.4 million of these investments before the end of 2018, and this amount was excluded for purposes of calculating the Company's operating income for annual bonus purposes.





**Table of Contents**

The following graph reflects the various potential payout levels at different levels of performance (net of the approximately \$5.4 million of investments):

**Bonus Curve**

(Dollars are in Thousands)

For 2018, the Company's target operating income was \$331.1 million and the Company achieved an operating income of approximately \$299 million (net of the approximately \$5.4 million of investments), which was approximately 90.3% of the operating income target. As a result of the Company's performance, annual bonus payouts were approximately 61.8% of the target percentage of base salary (see table below).

	2018 Operating Income Goals		Actual 2018 Operating Income	2018 Annual Bonus Plan
	Performance Range (\$000)	Payout Range (% of target)	Performance (\$000)	Payout
<b>Threshold</b>	\$ 281,451	30%		
<b>Target</b>	\$ 331,119	100%	\$ 298,992	61.78%
<b>Maximum</b>	\$ 380,787	200%		

The following table sets forth (i) target 2018 bonuses for the Named Executive Officers, expressed both as a percentage of base salary and in absolute amounts, and (ii) the actual bonuses received by the Named Executive Officers under the 2018 annual bonus plan at 61.78% of target:

NAMED EXECUTIVE OFFICER	2018 BONUS		2018 BONUS		2018 ACTUAL BONUS
	2018 BASE SALARY	TARGET PERCENTAGE	ACTUAL TARGET	ACTUAL PERCENTAGE	
Sandra B. Cochran	\$ 1,100,000	115%	\$ 1,265,000	61.78%	\$ 781,512
Jill M. Golder	\$ 510,000	70%	\$ 357,000	61.78%	\$ 220,555
Nicholas V. Flanagan	\$ 500,000	70%	\$ 350,000	61.78%	\$ 216,230
Richard M. Wolfson	\$ 350,000	60%	\$ 210,000	61.78%	\$ 129,738
Laura A. Daily	\$ 350,000	60%	\$ 210,000	61.78%	\$ 129,738

The above 2018 annual bonuses are reflected in the 2018 Non-Equity Incentive Plan Compensation column of the Summary Compensation Table on page 34 of this proxy statement.

**Table of Contents**

**Long-Term Incentives**

The Compensation Committee believes that long-term incentives, particularly equity-based awards, provide a strong alignment of the interests of shareholders and executives and serve as a valuable talent retention tool. Therefore, a significant portion of our executive officers' total compensation is provided in the form of equity awards, which are granted under our 2010 Omnibus Stock and Incentive Plan (the "2010 Omnibus Plan"). Each year the Compensation Committee considers and discusses various alternatives as to the form and structure of equity-based awards in order to best achieve these goals of shareholder alignment and talent retention.

**Long-Term Incentive Arrangements for 2018**

**Overview.** In 2018, the Company's equity compensation to executive officers was governed by the 2018 Long-Term Incentive Program ("LTIP"). The 2018 LTIP, which was adopted at the start of 2018, consists of three components: (i) a LTIP (the "2018 LTIP"), which represents 50% of the LTIP target value at the time of grant and provides for awards of performance shares tied to the Company's successful achievement of a pre-determined return on invested capital ("ROIC") goal over fiscal years 2018 and 2019; (ii) an RSU Grant with relative TSR modifier (the "2018 Performance RSU Grant"), which represents 25% of the LTIP target value at the time of grant and provides for awards of time-based restricted stock units, with cliff vesting after three years from the date of grant, that may be increased or decreased by 25% of the target award amounts as a result of the Company's TSR relative to the S&P MidCap 400 Index over fiscal years 2018, 2019 and 2020; and (iii) a time-based RSU Grant (the "2018 Time-based RSU Grant"), which represents the remaining 25% of the LTIP target value at the time of grant and provides for awards of time-based restricted stock that cliff-vest after three years from the date of grant, subject to an executive's continued employment with the Company on the vesting date. The foregoing description is reflected in the following diagram:

The foregoing structure was the same as the one used in 2017, except that the form of the time-based component of the LTI program was changed from restricted stock awards ("RSAs") in 2017 to RSUs in 2018. The Committee made this change because RSUs provide the same retention benefits to the Company but are more flexible awards from a tax planning and expense perspective than RSAs. The Compensation Committee believes that the foregoing balance of performance and time-based awards properly incentivizes executive retention, is consistent with the practices of our closest competitors, and aligns our executives' interests with those of our shareholders.

Each year the Compensation Committee approves equity grants to executive officers in the LTIP and determines the target percentage of an executive officer's salary to be represented by each of the 2018 LTIP, the 2018 Performance RSU Grant, and the 2018 Time-based RSU Grant (such percentages are referred to as an "LTIP Percentage", "Performance RSU Percentage" and "Time-based RSU Percentage", respectively, and

**Table of Contents**

collectively as the executive officer's LTIP Percentage). The Compensation Committee established the 2018 LTIP Percentages for our executive officers and the relative amount of each component (i.e., each officer's LTIP Percentage, Performance RSU Percentage and Time-based RSU Percentage) at the same time the Compensation Committee established the 2018 LTIP. Each officer's LTIP Percentage, RSU Percentage and Time-based RSU Percentage were then used to derive a target award for the officer, expressed as a number of shares. In the case of the 2018 LTIP and 2018 Performance RSU Grant, the number of shares that are ultimately awardable depends on whether and to what extent the Company meets or exceeds targets for the relevant performance metrics for each of the applicable performance components. In the case of the 2018 Time-based RSU Grant, the number of shares was determined by reference to the average closing price of the Company's common stock during the last 30 calendar days of 2017 and the first 30 calendar days of 2018, which was \$156.624

All awards granted under the LTIP are credited with dividend equivalent rights for any cash dividends paid on the Company's stock between the award date and the vesting date, based on the number of shares ultimately awarded, and the deferred amounts are settled in cash upon the vesting of the awards at the end of the performance period. No dividends are paid on unvested/unearned shares.

**2018 LTIP.** For 2018, each executive officer was eligible to receive an 2018 LTIP award (a 2018 LTIP Award) of up to 200% of a target number of shares, which target was calculated by dividing (i) the product of (x) the executive officer's LTIP Percentage for the plan year multiplied by (y) his or her base salary at the time the target 2018 LTIP award was determined, by (ii) the average closing price of the Company's common stock during the last 30 calendar days of 2017 and the first 30 calendar days of 2018, which was \$156.624. The actual number of shares that will be awarded based on these LTIP targets will be determined at the end of the applicable performance period and will be forfeited (with the exception of awards granted to Ms. Cochran) if, prior to that time, a participant is terminated or voluntarily resigns other than as a result of (i) retirement by an individual who meets the retirement-eligible conditions of 60 years of age and at least five years of service, for which such awards will be prorated for time served and based on actual performance determined at the end of the performance period; or (ii) following a change in control of the Company.

The performance metric for LTIP performance is ROIC, measured over a two-year performance period. For the 2018 LTIP, the Compensation Committee set a target of cumulative ROIC over 2018 and 2019.

At the end of the performance period, the Compensation Committee will determine final award amounts based on Company performance relative to these targets. The final 2018 LTIP Awards will be determined after the conclusion of the 2018 LTIP's performance period, covering 2018 and 2019. The following table summarizes the target and maximum 2018 LTIP Awards for each of our Named Executive Officers:

NAMED EXECUTIVE OFFICER	LTIP PERCENTAGE	BASE SALARY	LTIP TARGET VALUE	LTIP TARGET	
				LTIP TARGET AWARD (# Shares)	MAX. AWARD (# Shares)
Sandra B. Cochran	185.0%	\$ 1,100,000	\$ 2,035,000	12,992	25,984
Jill M. Golder	60.0%	\$ 510,000	\$ 306,000	1,953	3,906
Nicholas V. Flanagan	60.0%	\$ 500,000	\$ 300,000	1,915	3,830
Richard M. Wolfson	50.0%	\$ 350,000	\$ 175,000	1,117	2,234
Laura A. Daily	37.5%	\$ 350,000	\$ 131,250	837	1,674

2018 Performance RSU Grant. Under the 2018 Performance RSU Grant, each executive officer was eligible to receive a target RSU award, which target was calculated by dividing (i) the product of (x) the executive's Performance RSU Percentage for 2018 multiplied by (y) his or her base salary at the time the target 2018 Performance RSU Grant was determined, by (ii) the average closing price of the Company's common stock during the last 30 calendar days of 2017 and the first 30 calendar days of 2018, which was \$156.624. The possible number of shares that may ultimately be awarded upon vesting can range from 75% to 125% of the target 2018 RSU Grant, pursuant to a potential adjustment based on the Company's TSR performance relative to the S&P MidCap 400 Index (the Index) over the three-year performance period. Accordingly, the final 2018

**Table of Contents**

RSU Grant to be received by an executive officer, subject to the operating income performance and continued employment conditions described below, will be equal to (i) his or her target 2018 Performance RSU Grant if the Company's TSR performance over the three-year performance period is between the 25th and 75th percentiles of the Index; (ii) 75% of his or her target 2018 RSU Grant if the Company's TSR performance over the three-year performance period is at or below the 25th percentile of the Index; and (iii) 125% of his or her target 2018 Performance RSU Grant if the Company's TSR performance over the three-year performance period is at or above the 75th percentile of the Index.

The actual number of shares that will be awarded based on these performance metrics will be determined at the end of the applicable performance period and the 2018 Performance RSU Grants will be forfeited (with the exception of awards granted to Ms. Cochran) if, prior to the end of the three-year performance period, a participant is terminated or voluntarily resigns, other than (i) as a result of retirement by an individual who meets the retirement-eligible conditions of 60 years of age and at least five years of service, in which case such awards will be prorated for time served during the performance period prior to retirement and based on actual performance determined at the end of the performance period, or (ii) in the event of a change in control of the Company.

The following table summarizes the target 2018 Performance RSU Grants and applicable 75% and 125% thresholds for each of our Named Executive Officers:

NAMED EXECUTIVE OFFICER	PERFORMANCE		75%	RSU	
	RSU PERCENTAGE	BASE SALARY	RSU THRESHOLD	TARGET	125% MAXIMUM
Sandra B. Cochran	92.5%	\$ 1,100,000	4,872	6,496	8,120
Jill M. Golder	30.0%	\$ 510,000	732	976	1,220
Nicholas V. Flanagan	30.0%	\$ 500,000	717	957	1,196
Richard M. Wolfson	25.0%	\$ 350,000	418	558	697
Laura A. Daily	18.75%	\$ 350,000	313	418	522

**2018 Time-based RSU.** Under the 2018 Time-based RSU, each executive officer was eligible to receive a target award of Time-based RSUs, which target was calculated by dividing (i) the product of (x) the executive's Time-based RSU Percentage for the plan year multiplied by (y) his or her base salary at the time the target 2018 Time-based RSU was determined by (ii) \$ 156.624, which was the average closing price of the Company's common stock during the last 30 calendar days of 2017 and the first 30 calendar days of 2018. Each executive officer's 2018 Time-based RSU award will cliff-vest three years from the date of grant, so long as he or she is employed by the Company on the vesting date. The 2018 Time-based RSUs will be forfeited (with the exception of awards granted to Ms. Cochran) if, prior to the end of the three-year vesting period, a participant is terminated or voluntarily resigns other than (i) as a result of retirement by an individual who meets the retirement-eligible conditions of 60 years of age and at least five years of service, for which such awards will be prorated for time served; or (ii) in the event of a change of control of the Company. The 2018 Time-based RSUs are intended as a long-term retention incentive and, consequently, are not conditioned upon the Company's achievement of any pre-established level of operating income or other performance goals.

The following table summarizes the 2018 Time-based RSUs for each of our Named Executive Officers:

**NAMED EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

	<b>TIME-BASED RSU PERCENTAGE</b>	<b>BASE SALARY</b>	<b>TIME-BASED RSU TARGET VALUE</b>	<b>TIME-BASED RSU GRANT</b>
Sandra B. Cochran	92.5%	\$ 1,100,000	\$ 1,017,500	6,496
Jill M. Golder	30.0%	\$ 510,000	\$ 153,000	976
Nicholas V. Flanagan	30.0%	\$ 500,000	\$ 150,000	957
Richard M. Wolfson	25.0%	\$ 350,000	\$ 87,500	558
Laura A. Daily	18.75%	\$ 350,000	\$ 65,625	418

**Table of Contents**

In addition to the above-described LTIP Awards granted in respect of 2018, our executive officers also received payments of performance-based equity awards that were granted in prior years and tied to a performance period which ended in 2018. These are described below.

**Payment of 2016 MSU Grants**

On September 20, 2018, the Compensation Committee reviewed and certified the awards of Market Stock Units ( MSUs ) granted to executive officers at the outset of 2016 (the 2016 MSU Grants ). The 2016 MSU Grants were an award of performance share units, payable at the end of a three-year performance period based on the Company s achievement of a performance metric. The performance metric for MSU awards was the Company s cumulative TSR for the period, which is calculated as follows:

(Change in price of our common stock during 3-year performance period + dividends paid during 3-year performance period)

Price of our common stock at the start of the performance period

The Company achieved positive change in cumulative TSR of approximately 17.3% for the three-year performance period of 2016, 2017 and 2018, resulting in 2016 MSU Grants in an amount equal to approximately 117.3% of the target number of 2016 MSU Grants originally allocated in 2016. Under the terms of the plan, an increase in cumulative TSR of 50% or more from the beginning of the three-year performance period results in a maximum award payment of 150% of target shares.

**2016 Market Stock Units (MSU)**

**Table of Contents**

**Payment of 2017 LTPP Awards**

On September 20, 2018, the Compensation Committee reviewed and certified the awards granted to executive officers under the 2017 LTPP (the 2017 LTPP Awards ). The Compensation Committee set a cumulative ROIC target under the 2017 LTPP of 22.9% for the two-year performance period of 2017 and 2018. The Company achieved a cumulative ROIC just two basis points below this target for the two-year performance period, resulting in 2017 LTPP Awards that were approximately 99.8% of the target number of 2017 LTPP Awards originally allocated in 2017.

**2017 Long-term Performance Plan (LTPP)**

The performance metric for LTPP awards is an internal ROIC-based metric to measure effective returns from working capital and capital investments. For the purposes of the 2017 LTPP Awards, the Company achieved just below a 22.9% ROIC during the applicable two-year performance period. The Company calculates ROIC as follows:

The average of 2017 and 2018 adjusted operating incomes + rents

The average for 2016, 2017 and 2018 of

(Inventory + Net Property Held for Sale Accounts Payable + Net PP&E + Capitalized leases)

**Health and Welfare Benefits**

We offer a group insurance program consisting of life, disability and health insurance benefit plans that cover all full-time management and administrative employees, and a supplemental group term life insurance program that covers our Named Executive Officers and certain other management personnel. Aside from the annual recalibration of benefit costs and the associated premium changes that affect all participants, no significant changes were made to our health and welfare benefits for our Named Executive Officers during 2018.

**Severance and Change in Control Provisions**

None of our current Named Executive Officers has an employment agreement other than Ms. Cochran, whose agreement is described beginning on page 41 of this proxy statement and governs her arrangement relating to severance and/or a change in control of the Company (a CIC Transaction ). All of our other Named



## **Table of Contents**

Executive Officers, along with all of the Company's other executive officers, have entered into (i) severance agreements ( "Severance Agreements" ) that govern the terms of their involuntary separation from the Company other than in connection with a CIC Transaction; and (ii) change in control agreements ( "CIC Agreements" ) that govern their employment by the Company and the terms of their involuntary separation from the Company following a CIC Transaction. These agreements, which are summarized as they apply to our Named Executive Officers below, were entered into on May 25, 2018 and replaced management retention agreements (described in last year's proxy statement) which expired on May 22, 2018. Our Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Cochran, is not a party to either a Severance Agreement or a CIC Agreement.

The Severance Agreements are intended to attract and retain executive talent by providing executives with reasonable assurance that if their employment relationship with the Company is involuntarily terminated in certain circumstances other than for cause they will have sufficient resources to be able to transition to other professional opportunities. While the CIC Agreements are also intended as a recruitment and retention tool, they are additionally intended to ensure that the Company will have the continued dedication, focus and objectivity from key executives in the event of a proposed CIC Transaction, and thus maintain the alignment of our executives' interests with those of our shareholders.

Recognizing these differences, the Committee determined that it would be best to split the 2015 management retention agreement that was in place with all of our executive officers (and expired in May 2018) into separate documents to better align their respective provisions with the above stated goals. The Committee undertook this exercise with the assistance of FW Cook, and considered market practice and norms.

Each of these agreements is described in greater detail below. Potential payments pursuant to these agreements to our Named Executive Officers under various termination scenarios are more fully described under "COMPENSATION TABLES AND INFORMATION - Potential Payments Upon Termination or Change in Control" below, including the table on page 40 of this proxy statement.

### *Severance Agreement*

Each Named Executive Officer who is a party to the Severance Agreement will be entitled to receive severance benefits of 12-18 months' base salary continuation and continuation of benefits under COBRA (with the executive responsible for paying the premiums), depending on his/her length of service, as a result of the termination of his/her employment by the Company other than for "cause" or by the executive for "good reason" (each as defined in the agreement).

To receive the foregoing benefits, the executive must execute a comprehensive release in favor of the Company, waiving any claims the executive may have against the Company. In addition to obligating the executive to maintain confidentiality of Company information and return all Company property, the Severance Agreement further obligates the executive (i) not to work as an employee or consultant for any "multi-unit restaurant business that offers full service family or casual dining" for a period of six months following the severance event or the remainder of the severance payment period, whichever is shorter; and (ii) not to solicit the employees or customers of the Company for a period of 12 months following the severance event or the remainder of the severance payment period, whichever is shorter.

The Severance Agreement has an initial term of three years and will automatically renew each year thereafter unless the Company provides the executive with 90 days' written notice of its intention not to renew prior to the expiration of the then-current term.

### *CIC Agreements*

The CIC Agreement becomes effective only in the event of a CIC Transaction, as defined in the agreement. Once it takes effect, the Company agrees to employ the executive, and the executive agrees to remain in the employ of the Company, from the date of a change in control to the earlier to occur of the second anniversary of

## **Table of Contents**

such change in control or the executive's normal retirement date. During this period of employment, the Company agrees to provide the executive with (i) base salary at least equal to the highest base salary which the executive was paid during the 24 calendar months immediately prior to the change in control, (ii) the right to participate, at the highest target percentage rate or target participation level at which he/she participated during the 12-month period prior to the change in control, in the Company's bonus and equity incentive compensation plans; and (iii) the same employee benefits and perquisites which the executive received (or had the right to receive) during the 12 months immediately prior to the date of the change in control.

The CIC Agreement has an indefinite term but may be terminated by the Company upon not less than one year's prior written notice to the executive if (i) the Company has not received any proposal or indication of interest from a party regarding, nor is the Company's Board of Directors then considering, a potential change in control transaction; and (ii) the Company terminates the CIC Agreements for all similarly situated executives and not just the individual.

The CIC Agreement is a "double trigger", and no payments or equity awards are paid out immediately upon the change in control. The executive does not have any right to receive any gross-up payment in reimbursement of any excise tax under Sections 280G and 4999 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code"). If amounts payable under the CIC Agreement would be subject to such excise tax, then the executive will pay the tax or such amounts will be reduced to a level where the excise tax no longer applies, whichever is more beneficial to the executive.

In the event that employment is terminated by the Company other than for "cause" or by the executive for "good reason" (each as defined in the agreement) at any point during the 24 months following a change in control, then, in addition to any accrued and unpaid salary, bonus, benefits and vacation time, the terminated executive is entitled to (i) a lump-sum cash payment equal to two times the sum of his/her annual salary and target annual bonus for the year in which termination occurs, (ii) his/her annual bonus for the year in which termination occurs, pro-rated to his/her actual period of service during that year; (iii) continued health and welfare benefits and perquisites for the two-year period following termination at no greater cost to the executive; and (iv) the payment of the cash-out of his/her equity awards, as described below.

Unless an individual equity award agreement provides the executive with immediate vesting of the award upon a change in control (in which case the terms of such award agreement will apply), under the CIC Agreement, all of the executive's outstanding and unvested equity awards and accrued dividends at the time of the change in control occurs will be converted to cash at their target level of award, which, depending on the Company's projected performance at the time of conversion, could be beneficial or detrimental to the executive. The converted cash will earn interest at the rate of 1.5% over the 10-year Treasury Bill rate in effect at the beginning of each month and will be paid to the executive upon the earliest to occur of (i) the second anniversary of the change in control; (ii) the date(s) on which the underlying awards would have otherwise vested or been paid; or (iii) the date of a qualifying termination of the executive's employment under the CIC Agreement.

## **Perquisites/Retirement Benefits**

We provide very limited perquisites and other benefits to our Named Executive Officers aside from participation in benefit plans that are broadly applicable to our full-time employees. Any perquisites that are received by Named Executive Officers are reflected in the Summary Compensation Table on pages 34 of this proxy statement under the "All Other Compensation" column and related footnote. In particular:

Named Executive Officers do not have use of a Company vehicle;

Named Executive Officers may not schedule the Company aircraft for personal travel;

We do not have a defined benefit pension plan or SERP; and

We do not provide a number of perquisites that are provided by other companies, such as club memberships or drivers. We only offer certain financial planning services to our Named Executive Officers, though our CEO, Ms. Cochran, does not avail herself of this perquisite.

**Table of Contents****Other Executive Compensation Policies and Guidelines****Stock Ownership Guidelines**

We have stock ownership guidelines (the Ownership Guidelines) covering all executive officers, which are posted on our website at [www.crackerbarrel.com](http://www.crackerbarrel.com). The Ownership Guidelines emanate from the Compensation Committee's belief that executives and directors should accumulate a meaningful level of ownership in Company stock to align their interests with shareholders. The Ownership Guidelines are based on a multiple of base salary for executive officers and the total annual cash retainer for non-employee directors. The Chief Executive Officer's guideline is five times base salary, the Chief Financial Officer's guideline is three times base salary and any other executive officer's guideline is two times base salary. No officer may sell or otherwise dispose of any shares until his or her aggregate ownership satisfies these requirements. Our non-employee directors are subject to a guideline of six times the annual cash retainer paid to such non-employee director. Calculations to determine compliance with the Ownership Guidelines are made during the first quarter of each year, and are based upon (i) with respect to executive officers, each officer's base salary applicable at the time of such calculation and (ii) the average closing price of the Company's common stock, as reported by Nasdaq, for each trading day during the last 30 calendar days of the preceding year and the first 30 calendar days of the year in which the calculation is performed. For 2018, the Ownership Guidelines for our Named Executive Officers were as follows:

<b>Executive Officer</b>	<b>Multiple of Base Salary</b>
Sandra B. Cochran	5X
Jill M. Golder	3X
Nicholas V. Flanagan	2X
Richard M. Wolfson	2X
Laura A. Daily	2X

Executive officers and non-employee directors must retain 100% of the net number of shares of common stock acquired (after payment of exercise price, if any, and taxes) upon the exercise of stock options and the vesting of restricted stock or RSUs granted until they achieve compliance with the applicable guideline. Once achieved, ownership of the guideline amount must be maintained for as long as the executive officers and non-employee directors are subject to the Ownership Guidelines. Executive officers and non-employee directors who do not comply with the Ownership Guidelines may not be eligible for future equity awards. If an executive officer or non-employee director falls below the required ownership threshold, he or she will be prohibited from selling shares of Company common stock until he or she meets the ownership thresholds.

**Anti-Hedging and Anti-Pledging Policy**

The Company's anti-hedging and anti-pledging policy (the Anti-Hedging and Anti-Pledging Policy) prohibits directors and officers from directly or indirectly engaging in hedging against future declines in the market value of the Company's securities through the purchase of financial instruments designed to offset such risk and from pledging the Company's securities as collateral for margin and other loans. The Compensation Committee considers it improper and inappropriate for directors and officers of the Company to hedge transactions to mitigate the impact of changes in the value of the Company's securities. Similarly, placing the Company's securities in a margin account or pledging them as collateral may result in their being sold without the director's or officer's consent or at a time when the director or officer is in possession of material nonpublic information of the Company. When any of these types of transactions occurs, the director's or officer's incentives and objectives may be less closely aligned with those of the Company's other shareholders, and the director's or officer's incentive to improve the Company's performance may be (or may

appear to be) compromised.

Under the Anti-Hedging and Anti-Pledging Policy, no director or officer may, directly or indirectly, engage in any hedging transaction that reduces or limits the director's or officer's economic risk with respect to the

## **Table of Contents**

director's or officer's holdings, ownership or interest in the Company's securities, including outstanding stock options, stock appreciation rights or other compensation awards the value of which are derived from, referenced to or based on the value or market price of the Company's securities.

Prohibited transactions include the purchase by a director or officer of financial instruments, including, without limitation, prepaid variable forward contracts, equity swaps, collars, puts, calls or other derivative securities that are designed to hedge or offset a change in market value of the Company's securities, as well as any transaction that places the Company's securities in a margin account or pledges them as collateral for loans or other obligations.

## **Compensation Risk Analysis**

The Compensation Committee is responsible for overseeing our incentive compensation arrangements, for aligning such arrangements with sound risk management and long-term growth and for verifying compliance with applicable regulations. The Compensation Committee conducted an internal assessment of our executive and non-executive incentive compensation programs, policies and practices. The Compensation Committee reviewed and discussed: the various design features and characteristics of the Company-wide compensation policies and programs; performance metrics; and approval mechanisms of all incentive programs. Based on this assessment and after discussion with management and FW Cook, the Compensation Committee has concluded that our incentive compensation arrangements and practices do not create risks that are reasonably likely to have a material adverse effect on the Company.

## **Recoupment Provisions**

The Company may recover any incentive compensation awarded or paid pursuant to an incentive plan based on (i) achievement of financial results that were subsequently the subject of a restatement due to material noncompliance with any financial reporting requirement under either GAAP or the federal securities laws, other than as a result of changes to accounting rules and regulations, or (ii) a subsequent finding that the financial information or performance metrics used by the Compensation Committee to determine the amount of the incentive compensation were materially inaccurate, in each case regardless of individual fault. In addition, the Company may recover any incentive compensation awarded or paid pursuant to any incentive plan based on a participant's conduct which is not in good faith and which materially disrupts, damages, impairs or interferes with the business of the Company and its affiliates.

## **Impact of Tax and Accounting Treatments on Compensation**

Although the accounting and tax treatment of executive compensation generally has not been a factor in the Compensation Committee's decisions regarding the amounts of compensation paid to our executive officers, it has been a factor in the compensation mix as well as the design of compensation programs. We have attempted to structure our compensation to maximize the tax benefits to the Company (e.g., deductibility for tax purposes) and to appropriately reward performance. The accounting treatment of differing forms of equity awards presently used to compensate our executives varies. However, the accounting treatment is not expected to have a material effect on the Compensation Committee's selection of differing types of equity awards.

## **Sections 280G and 4999**

As described above, Ms. Cochran has an Employment Agreement and we provide our Named Executive Officers other than Ms. Cochran with Severance and CIC Agreements. Neither Ms. Cochran nor any of our other Named Executive Officers has a right under these agreements or otherwise to receive any gross-up payment to reimburse such executive officer for any excise tax under Sections 280G and 4999 of the Code.





## **Table of Contents**

### **Section 162(m)**

Section 162(m) of the Code imposes a \$1.0 million limit on the amount a public company may deduct for compensation paid to certain of its Named Executive Officers. The Compensation Committee attempts to maximize deductibility of compensation under Section 162(m) to the extent practicable while maintaining a competitive, performance-based compensation program. However, the Compensation Committee also believes that it must (and does) reserve the right to award compensation which it deems to be in the best interests of the Company and our shareholders, but which may not be fully tax deductible under Section 162(m).

Previously, the \$1.0 million limit under Section 162(m) did not apply to qualified performance-based compensation, and this exception applied to the Company for 2018 due to the timing of our fiscal year. Consistent with prior years, the Company intended for payments under the 2018 annual bonus plan to qualify for this performance based exception by basing the bonus on the Company's achievement of a threshold level of operating income of at least \$225 million. Below this threshold, no bonuses would have been paid. While this represented the threshold amount for purposes of Section 162(m), actual bonus payments to individual executives under the 2018 annual bonus plan were based on the achievement of performance criteria set forth under Elements of Compensation Program Annual Bonus Plan, on pages 22 and 23 of this proxy statement.

Likewise, the Company also intended for a majority of awards made under its various long-term incentive plans for 2018 to qualify as performance-based compensation under Section 162(m) of the Code to the maximum extent permitted under the 2010 Omnibus Plan. As with the annual bonus plan, eligibility to receive awards under the long-term incentive plans other than the 2018 Time-Based RSUs is dependent upon the Company's operating income performance during the applicable performance period. For the 2018 Performance RSU Grant, the operating income threshold is \$570 million over the three-year performance period, and for the 2018 LTPP, the operating income threshold is \$380 million over the two-year performance period. If these operating income performance goals are not met, then no award will be made under the applicable plan to any executive officer participating in the plan. If, however, the applicable operating income performance goal is met, then each participant in the applicable plan will become eligible to receive an equity award determined according to the performance criteria described under Elements of Compensation Program Long-Term Incentives, above.

In light of changes to the Code which eliminated the performance-based exceptions described above and which will take effect for the Company in 2019, we anticipate that the \$1.0 million limitation on compensation-related deductions under Section 162(m) will apply to some payments to our NEOs in respect of 2019 and subsequent years.

### ***COMPENSATION COMMITTEE REPORT***

The Compensation Committee has reviewed and discussed with management the Compensation Discussion and Analysis ( CD&A ) included in this proxy statement. Based on its review and discussions of the CD&A with management, the Compensation Committee recommended to the Board of Directors that the CD&A be included in this proxy statement and incorporated by reference into our Annual Report on Form 10-K for 2018.

This report has been submitted by the members of the Compensation Committee:

Coleman H. Peterson, Chair

Thomas H. Barr

Meg Crofton

James W. Bradford

**Table of Contents****COMPENSATION TABLES AND INFORMATION****Summary Compensation Table**

The following table sets forth information regarding the compensation for the Named Executive Officers during 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Name and Principal Position	Year	Salary (\$)	Stock Awards(1) (\$)	Non-Equity	All	Total (\$)
				Incentive Plan Compensation(\$)	Other Compensation(\$)	
Sandra B. Cochran, President and Chief Executive Officer	2018	\$ 1,100,000	\$ 3,924,884	\$ 781,517	\$ 428,201	\$ 6,234,602
	2017	\$ 1,056,000	\$ 3,449,775	\$ 1,366,079	\$ 337,488	\$ 6,209,342
	2016	\$ 1,025,000	\$ 3,804,236	\$ 1,163,693	\$ 606,351	\$ 6,599,280
Jill M. Golder, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer	2018	\$ 510,000	\$ 589,849	\$ 220,555	\$ 85,758	\$ 1,406,162
	2017	\$ 475,000	\$ 419,221	\$ 374,029	\$ 48,310	\$ 1,316,560
	2016	\$ 128,646(3)	\$ 570,187	\$ 92,943	\$ 30,669	\$ 822,445
Nicholas V. Flanagan, Senior Vice President, Operations	2018	\$ 500,000	\$ 578,368	\$ 216,230	\$ 81,760	\$ 1,376,358
	2017	\$ 467,000	\$ 494,597	\$ 367,730	\$ 64,982	\$ 1,394,309
	2016	\$ 445,000	\$ 446,365	\$ 321,499	\$ 85,332	\$ 1,298,196
Richard M. Wolfson, <sup>(4)</sup> Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary	2018	\$ 350,000	\$ 492,763	\$ 129,738	\$ 30,049	\$ 1,002,550
Laura A. Daily, Senior Vice President, Retail	2018	\$ 350,000	\$ 252,705	\$ 129,738	\$ 27,935	\$ 760,378
	2017	\$ 336,000	\$ 222,354	\$ 226,780	\$ 24,117	\$ 809,251
	2016	\$ 320,000	\$ 192,466	\$ 181,650	\$ 41,200	\$ 735,316

(1) The amounts disclosed in this column reflect the aggregate grant date fair value of awards for 2018, 2017 and 2016, calculated in accordance with the Financial Accounting Standards Board Accounting Standards Codification Topic 718 ( ASC Topic 718 ). Specifically, the amounts provided for 2018 reflect the aggregate grant date fair value of the Named Executive Officers (i) time-based award under the 2018 Time-based RSU and (ii) performance-based awards under the 2018 LTTP and 2018 Performance RSU Grant.

For the performance-based awards, the aggregate grant date fair value has been determined assuming the probable outcome of the performance condition on the date of the grant (i.e., the achievement of the target performance level). Assuming an outcome of performance conditions at the maximum level for the performance-based awards, the aggregate grant date fair value of all the stock awards made to each Named Executive Officer in 2018 (including the time-based award) are as follows:

Name	Year	Aggregate Grant Date Fair Value at Maximum Performance Level
------	------	--

Sandra B. Cochran	2018	\$	6,120,450
Jill M. Golder	2018	\$	919,874
Nicholas V. Flanagan	2018	\$	901,973
Richard M. Wolfson	2018	\$	681,510
Laura A. Daily	2018	\$	394,133

For information regarding the compensation cost of the awards and the assumptions used to calculate the grant date fair value of the awards, see Note 10 to the Consolidated Financial Statements included or incorporated by reference in the Company's Annual Reports on Form 10-K for 2018, 2017 and 2016.

- (2) The table below sets forth information regarding each component of compensation included in the All Other Compensation column of the Summary Compensation Table above.
- (3) Ms. Golder began her employment with the Company on April 25, 2016. Ms. Golder's 2016 salary reflects a prorated amount based on her service with the Company during 2016, with an annualized base salary for 2016 of \$475,000.
- (4) Mr. Wolfson began his employment with the Company on July 29, 2017, the first day of our 2018 fiscal year.



Edgar Filing: CRACKER BARREL OLD COUNTRY STORE, INC - Form DEF 14A

Jill M. Golder	\$ 107,100	\$ 357,000	\$ 714,000					
9/27/17				976	1,953	3,906		\$ 292,071
9/27/17				732	976	1,220		\$ 151,817
9/27/17							976	\$ 145,961
Nicholas V. Flanagan	\$ 105,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 700,000					
9/27/17				957	1,915	3,830		\$ 286,388
9/27/17				717	957	1,196		\$ 148,861
9/27/17							957	\$ 143,119
Richard M. Wolfson	\$ 63,000	\$ 210,000	\$ 420,000					
7/29/17							1,000	\$ 155,470
9/27/17				558	1,117	2,234		\$ 167,047
9/27/17				418	558	697		\$ 86,797
9/27/17							558	\$ 83,449
Laura A. Daily	\$ 63,000	\$ 210,000	\$ 420,000					
9/27/17				418	837	1,674		\$ 125,173
9/27/17				313	418	522		\$ 65,020
9/27/17							418	\$ 62,512

- (1) The amounts shown reflect the possible aggregate payouts under the 2018 annual bonus plan at the threshold, target and maximum levels. Actual payouts for 2018 are disclosed in the Non-Equity Incentive Plan Compensation column of the Summary Compensation Table. For a discussion of the 2018 annual bonus plan and the 2018 payouts, see Compensation Discussion and Analysis Overview of Compensation Elements Annual Bonus Plan.
- (2) The amounts shown reflect the possible payouts (at grant date fair value) for the LTTP Awards granted under the 2018 LTTP and 2018 Performance RSU Grants. The grant date fair value of these awards, based on the probable outcome of the relevant performance

**Table of Contents**

conditions as of the grant date (computed in accordance with ASC Topic 718) is the amount reported in the Stock Awards column of the Summary Compensation Table. No awards will be earned unless the Company's operating income Section 162(m) threshold for the performance period is met. For a description of the Section 162(m) thresholds, see Compensation Discussion and Analysis Other Executive Compensation Policies and Guidelines Section 162(m). Once the threshold is met, the Named Executive Officers will be eligible to receive up to 200% of his or her 2018 LTTP target and up to 125% of his or her 2018 Performance RSU Grant target. For a discussion of the 2018 Long-Term Incentive Program, see Compensation Discussion and Analysis Overview of Compensation Elements Long-Term Incentives.

- (3) The amounts disclosed in this column reflect the Time-based RSU Grant awarded to each executive in 2018, other than the 7/29/17 award to Mr. Wolfson, which was in the form of a time-based RSA and was awarded in connection with the commencement of his employment with the Company.
- (4) The amounts disclosed in this column reflect the aggregate grant date fair value of the awards calculated in accordance with ASC Topic 718. For the performance-based awards (i.e., the 2018 LTTP and 2018 Performance RSU Grants), the aggregate grant date fair value has been determined assuming the probable outcome of the performance condition on the date of the grant (i.e., the achievement of the target performance level), excluding the effect of estimated forfeitures. For information regarding the compensation cost of the awards and the assumptions used to calculate grant date fair value of the awards, see Note 10 to the Consolidated Financial Statements included or incorporated by reference in the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for 2018.

Table of Contents**Outstanding Equity Awards at Fiscal Year-End Table**

The following table sets forth information regarding equity awards held by the Named Executive Officers as of August 3, 2018.

Name	Option Awards					Number of Shares or Units of Stock That Have Not Vested (#)	Market Value of Shares of Stock That Have Not Vested (\$)(10)	Stock Awards	
	Equity Incentive Plan Awards: Number of Securities Underlying Unexercised Options (#)	Equity Incentive Plan Awards: Number of Securities Underlying Exercised Options (#)	Equity Incentive Plan Awards: Number of Securities Underlying Unexercised Options (#)	Equity Incentive Plan Awards: Exercise Price (\$)	Equity Incentive Plan Awards: Expiration Date			Equity Incentive Plan Awards: Number of Unearned Shares, Other Rights That Have Not Vested (#)	Equity Incentive Plan Awards: Market or Payout Value of Unearned Shares, Other Rights That Have Not Vested (\$)(10)
Sandra B. Cochran								6,496(1)	\$ 945,688
								4,587(2)	\$ 667,775
								4,872(3)	\$ 709,266
						14,750(4)	\$ 2,147,305		
						12,213(5)	\$ 1,777,969		
						7,233(6)	\$ 1,052,980		
						6,496(7)	\$ 945,688		
Jill M. Golder								976(1)	\$ 142,086
								557(2)	\$ 81,088
								732(3)	\$ 106,565
						486(4)	\$ 70,752		
						1,484(5)	\$ 216,041		
						879(6)	\$ 127,965		
						976(7)	\$ 142,086		
						3,000(8)	\$ 436,740		
Nicholas V. Flanagan								957(1)	\$ 139,320
								657(2)	\$ 95,646
								717(3)	\$ 104,381
						1,730(4)	\$ 251,853		
						1,751(5)	\$ 254,911		
Richard M. Wolfson								1,037(6)	\$ 150,966
								957(7)	\$ 139,320
								558(1)	\$ 81,234
								418(3)	\$ 60,852
					558(7)	\$ 81,234			



	1,000(9)	\$	145,580		
Laura A. Daily				418(1)	\$ 60,852
				295(2)	\$ 42,946
				313(3)	\$ 45,567
	746(4)	\$	108,603		
	787(5)	\$	114,571		
	466(6)	\$	67,840		
	418(7)	\$	60,852		

- (1) This award represents the 2018 LTTP Award. The 2018 LTTP Award has a two-year performance period, which ends on August 2, 2019. Actual awards are distributable, if at all, following the end of the performance period. The number of shares reflected assumes a minimum level of payout.
- (2) This award represents the 2017 Performance RSU Grant. The 2017 Performance RSU Grant has a three-year performance period, which ends on August 2, 2019. Actual awards are distributable, if at all, following the end of the performance period. The number of shares reflected assumes a minimum level of payout.
- (3) This award represents the 2018 Performance RSU Grant. The 2018 Performance RSU Grant has a three-year performance period, which ends on July 31, 2020. Actual awards are distributable, if at all, following the end of the performance period. The number of shares reflected assumes a minimum level of payout.

**Table of Contents**

- (4) This award reflects the 2016 MSU Grant. The 2016 MSU Grant performance period concluded on August 3, 2018, and the performance conditions were met for this award. The award subsequently vested when certified by the Compensation Committee on September 20, 2018.
- (5) This award reflects the 2017 LTPP Award. The 2017 LTPP Award performance period concluded on August 3, 2018, and the performance conditions were just below target for this award. The award subsequently vested when certified by the Compensation Committee on September 20, 2018.
- (6) This award represents the 2017 RSA. This award will cliff-vest on October 24, 2019, so long as the NEO remains employed by the Company on such date.
- (7) This award represents the 2018 Time-based RSU Grant. This award will cliff-vest on September 17, 2020, so long as the NEO remains employed by the Company on such date.
- (8) This is an RSA granted to Ms. Golder when she joined the Company. The award will vest on April 25, 2019, so long as Ms. Golder remains employed by the Company on such date.
- (9) This is an RSA granted to Mr. Wolfson when he joined the Company. The award will vest July 29, 2020, so long as Mr. Wolfson remains employed by the Company on such date.
- (10) The amounts disclosed in this column reflect the aggregate market value determined based on a per share price of \$145.58, the closing price for our common stock as quoted on the Nasdaq Global Select Market on August 3, 2018.

**Option Exercises and Stock Vested Table**

The following table sets forth information, for the Named Executive Officers, regarding the number of shares acquired upon the vesting of restricted stock and the value realized, each before payment of any applicable withholding tax and broker commissions. No stock options were exercised by Named Executive Officers in 2018.

Name	Stock Awards	
	Number of Shares Acquired On Vesting (#)	Value Realized on Vesting (\$)(1)
Sandra B. Cochran	42,150	\$ 6,280,772
Jill M. Golder	477	\$ 71,078
Nicholas V. Flanagan	4,932	\$ 734,917
Richard M. Wolfson		\$
Laura A. Daily	2,001	\$ 298,169

- (1) Value is based on the closing price of a share of the Company's common stock as quoted by the Nasdaq Global Select Market on the vesting date.

**Equity Compensation Plan Information**

The following table sets forth information with respect to our equity plans as of August 3, 2018.

Plan category	Number of securities to be issued upon exercise of outstanding options,	Weighted- average exercise price of outstanding	Number of securities remaining available for future issuance under
---------------	---	---	--

	<b>warrants and rights</b>	<b>options, warrants and rights</b>	<b>equity compensation plans (excluding securities reflected in column (a))</b>
	<b>(a)</b>	<b>(b)</b>	<b>(c)</b>
Equity compensation plans approved by security holders	Options 0		
	Full Value 101,972(1)		1,096,627
Equity compensation plans not approved by security holders	Options 0		0
	Full Value 0		
<b>Total</b>	Options 0		
	Full Value 101,972		1,096,627

**Table of Contents**

- (1) Includes target awards under the 2017 and 2018 LTPP, the 2016 MSU Grant and the 2017 and 2018 Performance RSU Grants, representing a total of 85,619 shares of common stock. Actual share awards, if any, will be made at the end of the applicable performance period for each of these plans. Also includes Time-based RSU Grants to Company executives and members of the Board of Directors, representing a total of 16,353 shares of common stock.

**Non-Qualified Deferred Compensation**

We maintain a non-qualified deferred compensation plan for our executive officers and certain employees. The deferred compensation plan permits participants to voluntarily defer receipt of up to 50% of their compensation and up to 100% of their performance-based compensation. These deferrals are fully funded from deductions from the participants' applicable payroll or bonus checks. Amounts deferred under the deferred compensation plan are payable in cash on the date or dates selected by the participant in accordance with the terms of the plan or on such other dates specified in the plan. Deferred amounts earn rates of return based on the performance of several investment alternatives selected by the participant. These investment alternatives mirror those available to all eligible employees under our 401(k) plan. We also provide a 25% match of the participants' contributions up to 6% of their compensation (or, a maximum of 1.5% of their compensation). The following table provides additional information regarding the deferred compensation accounts for each Named Executive Officer, including the voluntary contributions made by the Named Executive Officers and by the Company to the non-qualified deferred compensation plan during 2018 and the aggregate deferred compensation balance as of the end of our year ended August 3, 2018.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Aggregate Balance at Beginning FYE (\$)</b>	<b>Executive Contributions Last FY (\$)(1)</b>	<b>Registrant Contributions Last FY (\$)(2)</b>	<b>Aggregate Earnings in Last FY (\$)(3)</b>	<b>Aggregate Withdrawals/ Distributions (\$)</b>	<b>Aggregate Balance at Last FYE (\$)(4)</b>
Sandra B. Cochran	\$ 1,668,721	\$ 150,605	\$ 36,505	\$ 85,386	\$ 0	\$ 1,941,217
Jill M. Golder	\$ 29,420	\$ 98,035	\$ 8,252	\$ 13,476	\$ 0	\$ 149,183
Nicholas V. Flanagan	\$ 831,465	\$ 77,052	\$ 10,886	\$ 92,304	\$ 0	\$ 1,011,707
Richard M. Wolfson	\$ 0	\$ 19,250	\$ 2,917	\$ 412	\$ 0	\$ 22,579
Laura A. Daily	\$ 38,825	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 2,929	\$ 0	\$ 41,754

- (1) Executive contributions are included in the Salary and Non-Equity Incentive Plan Compensation columns for 2018 in the Summary Compensation Table.
- (2) Company contributions are included in the All Other Compensation column for 2018 in the Summary Compensation Table.
- (3) The earnings reflected in this column represent investment earnings or losses from voluntary deferrals and Company contributions, as applicable, based on the results of the investment choices made by the Named Executive Officers. As noted above, the investment options available under the deferred compensation plan mirror the investment options that are available to all eligible employees in the 401(k) plan. Because the Named Executive Officers do not receive preferential or above-market rates of return under the deferred compensation

plan, earnings under the deferred compensation plan are not included in the Summary Compensation table.

- (4) The following amounts from this column were reported in Summary Compensation Tables for prior fiscal years: Ms. Cochran, \$1,124,716; Ms. Golder, \$28,302; Mr. Flanagan, \$400,525; Mr. Wolfson, \$0; Ms. Daily, \$34,536. These amounts reflect actual amounts reported and do not include accumulated earnings.

**Potential Payments Upon Termination or Change in Control**

Our Named Executive Officers are entitled to certain benefits in the event their employment is terminated under specified circumstances. Circumstances which would trigger payments and/or other benefits to certain of our Named Executive Officers include death, disability, termination of employment by us without cause, termination by the Named Executive Officer for good reason or a change in control of the Company.

In order for a Named Executive Officer to receive the payment and benefits to which he or she is entitled pursuant to any applicable employment agreement or our severance policy, he or she must execute and deliver to us a release of claims against the Company in a form prescribed by the agreement itself. Named Executive Officers are subject to certain restrictive covenants (including, without limitation, non-competition, non-solicitation, non-disparagement and confidentiality covenants). In the event a Named Executive Officer

**Table of Contents**

breaches any applicable restrictive covenant, we have the contractual right to cease making any future payments or providing any other benefits to the Named Executive Officer and will consider pursuing legal and equitable remedies available to us under any applicable employment agreement and applicable law.

The following table sets forth payments and benefits that may be received by our Named Executive Officers under any existing employment agreement, equity grant agreements, plans or arrangements, whether written or unwritten, in the event of termination for specified reasons and/or a change in control of the Company. The following information has been prepared based on the assumption that the Named Executive Officer was terminated, or a change in control of the Company occurred, on August 3, 2018. The closing price for our common stock on August 3, 2018 was \$145.58.

Name	Termination for Cause(1)	Death or Disability(1)(2)	Retirement(3)	Involuntary Termination	Involuntary Termination
				(without cause or for good reason) before CIC(1)(2)	(without cause or for good reason) after CIC(1)(2)
Sandra B. Cochran	\$ 0	\$ 8,014,214	\$ 11,546,360	\$ 16,299,242	\$ 18,664,242
Jill M. Golder	\$ 0	\$ 1,415,571	\$ 0	\$ 510,000	\$ 3,821,783
Nicholas V. Flanagan	\$ 0	\$ 1,269,970	\$ 0	\$ 500,000	\$ 3,582,975
Richard M. Wolfson	\$ 0	\$ 392,394	\$ 0	\$ 350,000	\$ 1,874,400
Laura A. Daily	\$ 0	\$ 615,906	\$ 0	\$ 350,000	\$ 2,012,544

- (1) With respect to Ms. Cochran, the applicable amounts are determined based on her employment agreement with us. With respect to the other Named Executive Officers, the applicable amounts are determined based on their respective Severance and CIC Agreements.
- (2) To the extent that the amounts reflected in this column include the value of any performance-based long term incentive awards that would receive accelerated or continued vesting at or following termination, such value has been calculated assuming a target level of achievement. To the extent that the amounts reflected in this column include the value of any health and welfare benefits or perquisites, such value has been calculated based on the amounts that were actually paid by, to or on behalf of the NEO for such benefits and perquisites in 2018 and are reflected in the Summary Compensation Table.
- (3) None of our NEOs were retirement-eligible for retirement under Company policy as of at the end of 2018. However, because Ms. Cochran became retirement-eligible by reaching age 60 only three weeks after the conclusion of our fiscal year and because this eligibility factored so significantly into the Board's decision to enter into Ms. Cochran's new Employment Agreement prior to the end of the fiscal year, we have elected to display the total amount of payments and benefits that would have been received by Ms. Cochran upon her retirement at the end of 2018 if she had been retirement eligible at that time and had provided the 12 months of notice required under her Employment Agreement. The amount shown for Ms. Cochran assumes that her 2018 annual bonus was paid out at the target level of achievement and that all of her outstanding equity awards (and the associated dividend equivalent rights) were also achieved at target levels.

**Director Compensation Table**

The table below sets forth the 2018 compensation of non-employee directors, which is described in greater detail beginning on page 12 of this proxy statement. We have no non-equity incentive plan for non-employee directors and,

during 2018, no director received an option award.

Name	Fees Earned or		Change in Pension Value and Non-Qualified Deferred Compensation		Total
	Paid in Cash	Stock Awards(1)(2)	Earnings	All Other Compensation(3)	
Thomas H. Barr	\$ 83,500	\$ 109,896	\$ 0	\$ 7,038	\$ 200,434
James W. Bradford	\$ 120,500	\$ 174,955	\$ 0	\$ 9,613	\$ 305,068
Meg G. Crofton	\$ 82,954	\$ 144,385	\$ 0	\$ 7,815	\$ 235,154
Glenn A. Davenport (4)	\$ 26,500	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 851	\$ 27,351
Richard J. Dobkin	\$ 106,875	\$ 109,896	\$ 1,462	\$ 7,038	\$ 225,271
Norman E. Johnson	\$ 103,750	\$ 109,896	\$ 0	\$ 7,038	\$ 220,684
William W. McCarten	\$ 97,375	\$ 109,896	\$ 0	\$ 7,038	\$ 214,309
Coleman H. Peterson	\$ 100,375	\$ 109,896	\$ 138	\$ 6,038	\$ 216,447
Andrea M. Weiss	\$ 101,750	\$ 109,896	\$ 10,009	\$ 6,038	\$ 227,693

---

**Table of Contents**

- (1) The amounts disclosed in this column reflect the aggregate grant date fair value of the RSUs granted on November 16, 2017, calculated in accordance with ASC Topic 718. On November 16, 2017, in accordance with our director compensation policy described under Board of Directors and Committees Compensation of Directors, each non-employee director, other than our independent Chairman, James W. Bradford, received a grant of shares of RSUs having a value approximately equal to \$110,000, with the number of RSUs (rounded down to the nearest whole share) included in such grant to be determined based on the closing price of our common stock on November 16, 2017. Mr. Bradford received a grant of shares of RSUs having a value approximately equal to \$175,000, with the number of RSUs (rounded down to the nearest whole share) included in such grant to be determined based on the closing price of our common stock on November 16, 2017. All awards vest in their entirety one year from the date of the grant. For information regarding the compensation cost of the awards and the assumptions used to calculate grant date fair value of the awards, see Note 10 to the Consolidated Financial Statements included in the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for 2018.
- (2) At year-end, the aggregate number of outstanding RSU awards held by each non-employee director was as follows: Mr. Barr, 701 RSUs; Mr. Bradford, 1,116 RSUs; Ms. Crofton, 921 RSUs; Mr. Dobkin, 701 RSUs; Mr. Johnson, 701 RSUs; Mr. McCarten, 701 RSUs; Mr. Peterson, 701 RSUs; and Ms. Weiss, 701 RSUs.
- (3) Reflects (i) matching of charitable donations of up to \$1,000 paid to a charitable organization of the director's choice pursuant to our Board of Directors matching grant program, and (ii) dividend equivalents accrued in respect of unvested RSAs or RSUs held by a director during 2018. A portion of these dividend equivalents were settled in cash upon the vesting of RSAs that were granted in 2017. The remaining portion corresponds to dividend equivalents which were accrued on RSUs granted in 2018 and which will be settled in cash upon the vesting of such RSUs in 2019.
- (4) Mr. Davenport did not stand for re-election at the 2017 Annual Meeting. Ms. Cochran, our President and Chief Executive Officer, was compensated pursuant to her employment agreement and certain benefit plans described under EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION above. She did not receive additional benefits as a result of her service on our Board of Directors.

## **Employment and Other Agreements**

### **Employment Agreement with Named Executive Officers**

We currently have one employment agreement with a Named Executive Officer as further described below.

#### **Employment Agreement with Sandra B. Cochran**

Ms. Cochran entered into a new employment agreement ( Employment Agreement ) with the Company on July 27, 2018. For the majority of 2018, she served as our President and Chief Executive Officer pursuant to an employment agreement (the Former Employment Agreement ) which was due to expire on September 26, 2018.

Under the Company's retirement policy and the terms of her former employment agreement, Ms. Cochran, who turned 60 on August 25, 2018, would have been entitled to retire and retain certain compensation benefits upon providing the Company with 60 days' prior notice of retirement. In recognition of Ms. Cochran's contributions to the Company and the Board's desire to retain her as the Company's leader, and in order to ensure that the Board and the Company will have sufficient time to plan for an orderly succession in the event she decides to retire, the Board and the Compensation Committee determined that it was in the best interest of the Company to (i) negotiate a new Employment Agreement in advance of the expiration of the Former Employment Agreement, and (ii) ensure that the new Employment Agreement provided for a significantly longer retirement notice period.



With this in mind, the Board (acting through its independent Chairman, Mr. Bradford, and the Chairman of the Compensation Committee, Mr. Peterson) negotiated the new Employment Agreement with Ms. Cochran over a period of several months, with each party separately represented by outside counsel. The full Committee, the entire Board and FW Cook had multiple opportunities to review and comment upon the new Employment Agreement before the Board approved it in its final form and authorized its execution.

Under the new Employment Agreement, Ms. Cochran will continue to serve as the Company's President and Chief Executive Officer, reporting to the Board, and will be nominated annually by the Board to serve as a

**Table of Contents**

director throughout her employment. During the term of the agreement, she will receive an annual base salary of not less than \$1,100,000 (her 2018 salary) and an annual bonus opportunity with a target of not less than 115% of annual base salary (her 2018 target bonus opportunity). Additionally, with respect to any of the Company's long-term incentive plans, Ms. Cochran's target aggregate award value under such plans will be not less than 370% of her annual base salary (her 2018 target award value). Ms. Cochran will be eligible to participate in the benefit programs and will be entitled to an annual paid vacation commensurate with the Company's established policy applicable to senior executive officers of the Company. Future adjustments to salary, annual bonus and long-term incentive awards to Ms. Cochran will be as recommended by the Compensation Committee and approved by the Board.

Under the new Employment Agreement Ms. Cochran agrees to provide the Company with at least 12 months' prior notice (or such shorter period as the Board may agree at its discretion) before exercising her right to retire after achieving the age of 60 (which, as noted above, occurred in August 2018). If she fails to provide such notice, any retirement will be treated as if she voluntarily quit the Company.

Ms. Cochran's employment with the Company remains at will under the new Employment Agreement and either party may terminate the agreement at any time, but Ms. Cochran will be entitled to certain severance and change in control benefits in the event that her employment with the Company is terminated under certain circumstances. If Ms. Cochran's employment is terminated by the Company without cause (as defined in the agreement) or terminated by Ms. Cochran with good reason (as defined in the agreement) prior to July 27, 2023 and outside of a CIC Transaction, Ms. Cochran will be entitled to receive (i) a lump sum payment of accrued obligations, including, among other things, her base salary through the date of termination and reimbursement for any business expenses to the extent not previously paid (accrued obligations), (ii) two times the sum of (x) her then-current annual base salary and (y) then-current target bonus payable in installments ratably over 24 months following termination, (iii) a lump sum payment equal to her annual bonus for the fiscal year in which the termination occurs, prorated based on the number of days elapsed between the beginning of the fiscal year and the termination date, to the extent the applicable performance goal is subsequently achieved, and (iv) a lump sum amount equal to 24 times the monthly COBRA premium amount applicable as of the termination date. Additionally, the Employment Agreement provides for acceleration of vesting of long-term incentive awards held by Ms. Cochran at the time of termination without cause or with good reason within the first five years following the execution of the agreement (*i.e.*, until July 27, 2023). Specifically, Ms. Cochran's outstanding long-term incentive awards that vest with the passage of time (time-based awards) will accelerate and vest in full upon termination, and her long-term incentive awards that vest depending upon the Company's performance (performance-based awards) will vest in full, but only when and to the extent the applicable performance goals are subsequently achieved.

If Ms. Cochran's employment is terminated without cause or for good reason after July 27, 2023, then in lieu of the benefits summarized above she will be entitled to receive only (i) the accrued obligations and (ii) 1.50 times the sum of (x) current annual base salary and (y) target current year bonus payable in installments, with no payment of a prorated target bonus for the termination year, no vesting of unvested long-term incentive awards, and no payment for health and welfare benefits continuation.

The payment of the foregoing severance benefits, exclusive of the accrued obligations, is subject to execution by Ms. Cochran of a comprehensive release of claims against the Company. If Ms. Cochran's employment is terminated by the Company for cause or if Ms. Cochran terminates her employment by voluntarily quitting without good reason, then she would be entitled to receive only the accrued obligations.

If Ms. Cochran retires after providing to the Company at least 12 months' advance of her intent to retire, Ms. Cochran's outstanding time-based awards will vest in full in accordance with the original vesting schedule set forth in the applicable award agreements and her performance-based awards will vest in full to the extent the applicable

performance goals are subsequently achieved, all as if she had remained employed by the Company following her retirement throughout the applicable vesting periods. In other words, no award accelerates upon

## **Table of Contents**

retirement and all performance-based awards remain subject to the Company's achievement of all applicable performance criteria.

The Employment Agreement is "double trigger" with respect to a change in control of the Company. In the event that a change in control of the Company (as defined in the agreement) occurs during the term of the Employment Agreement, and her employment is terminated without cause or terminated by Ms. Cochran with good reason within 90 days prior to or two years following the change in control, Ms. Cochran will be entitled to receive (i) a lump sum payment of accrued obligations, (ii) a lump sum payment of three times the sum of (x) current annual base salary and (y) target current year bonus, (iii) a lump sum payment equal to her target bonus for the fiscal year in which the termination occurs, prorated based on the number of days elapsed between the beginning of the period and the termination date, (iv) acceleration and immediate vesting of all long-term incentive awards, with time-based awards vesting in full and performance-based awards vesting at target level, and (v) a lump sum amount equal to 24 times the monthly COBRA premium amount applicable as of the termination date.

The Employment Agreement does not entitle Ms. Cochran to receive any gross-up payment to reimburse her for any excise tax under Sections 280G and 4999 of the Code, as amended. Ms. Cochran will be subject to noncompetition, non-solicitation and confidentiality restrictions following the termination of her employment. The agreement obligates Ms. Cochran not to own or work as an employee or consultant for any multi-unit restaurant business that offers full service family or casual dining or to solicit the Company's employees for a period of two years following the termination of her employment.

## **Severance Plan and Management Retention Agreements**

As described beginning on page 29 of this proxy statement, our executive officers, including all of our Named Executive Officers, are parties to a Severance Agreement and a CIC Agreement which provide them with certain benefits and impose on them certain obligations in the event their employment is terminated without cause or good reason (as defined in these agreements), either in the normal course or following a change in control of the company, respectively. For the reasons described previously, we believe that these agreements are important tools in recruiting and retaining key executives and that the CIC Agreement appropriately aligns the interests of our executives and our shareholders in connection with an actual or potential change of control transaction.

## **Compensation Committee Interlocks and Insider Participation**

During 2018, Messrs. Peterson, Barr, Bradford, and Ms. Crofton served as members of our Compensation Committee. None of the members of the Compensation Committee (1) was an officer or employee of the Company during 2018, (2) was formerly an officer of the Company, or (3) had any relationships requiring disclosure by us under applicable SEC regulations. None of our executive officers has served on the board of directors or on the compensation committee of any other entity any of whose executive officers served either on our Board of Directors or on our Compensation Committee.

## **CEO Pay Ratio**

As required by Section 953(b) of the Dodd Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, and Regulation 402(u) of Regulation S-K, we are providing the following information about the relationship of the annual total compensation of our employees and the annual total compensation of Ms. Cochran, our President and Chief Executive Officer.

For fiscal 2018:

the median of the annual total compensation of all employees of our Company (other than our Chief Executive Officer) represents a restaurant prep cook who worked approximately 1,100 hours (or approximately 20 hours per week, as our fiscal 2018 was a 53 week year) and was \$14,232; and

**Table of Contents**

the annual total compensation of our Chief Executive Officer, as reported in the Summary Compensation Table, was \$6,234,602.

Based on this information, for fiscal 2018, our Chief Executive Officer's annual total compensation was approximately 438 times that of the median of the annual total compensation of all other employees.

To identify the median of the annual total compensation of all employees, as well as to determine the annual total compensation of our median employee and our Chief Executive Officer, we took the following steps:

1. The bulk of our employee population is comprised of restaurant employees who are paid hourly. Our restaurant employees' roles provide flexible employment opportunities, many of whom seek accommodating work schedules, supplemental income or social connection, although such flexible and part-time employment has the effect of lowering the annual total compensation for our median employee. We identified the median employee by examining the tax and payroll records of our entire employee population, excluding our Chief Executive Officer, as of June 15, 2018. Based on seasonal traffic patterns in our restaurants, we believe June is the month that is most representative of hours worked for the full year, occurring at a time when the summer travel season tends to drive increased traffic in our stores but not at a time that typically sees extraordinarily high traffic that would distort the calculation, such as the Thanksgiving holidays. Other than Ms. Cochran, all employees of the Company and its subsidiaries were considered in our identification of the median employee.
2. To identify the median employee from our employee population, we compared the amount of gross wages (including reported tips) of our employees as reflected in our payroll records as reported to the Internal Revenue Service on Form W-2. No cost of living adjustments were made to determine the median employee. We did not make any assumptions, adjustments or estimates with respect to total cash compensation, nor did we annualize the compensation for any employees who were not employed by us for all of 2018. We believe the use of gross wages for all employees is a consistently applied compensation measure.
3. We identified our median employee by using this compensation measure, which we consistently applied to all our employees included in the calculation. Based on this methodology, our median employee was identified as a restaurant prep cook in one of our restaurants who in 2018 was paid on an hourly basis and worked approximately 1,100 hours (or 20 hours per week over a 53 week fiscal year).
4. After we had identified our median employee, we combined all of the elements of such employee's compensation for 2018 in accordance with the requirements of Item 402(c)(2)(x) of Regulation S-K, resulting in annual total compensation of \$14,232.
5. With respect to the annual total compensation of our Chief Executive Officer, we used the amount reported in the Total column for 2018 in the Summary Compensation Table, above.

We believe our pay ratio is a reasonable estimate calculated in a manner consistent with applicable SEC rules, based on our employment and payroll records and the methodology described above. The SEC rules governing pay ratio disclosure allow companies to apply numerous different methodologies, exclusions and reasonable assumptions, adjustments and estimates that reflect their compensation practices. For that reason, shareholders should use caution in

attempting to use the pay ratio reported above as a basis for comparison with other companies, as they may have different employment and compensation practices and might use various methodologies, exclusions, assumptions, adjustments and estimates in calculating their own pay ratios. For similar reasons, our executive compensation process has not included an examination of our pay ratio. We have provided this pay ratio information for compliance purposes, and neither the Compensation Committee nor Company management have used the pay ratio measure to influence compensation actions or decisions.

**Table of Contents**

**CERTAIN RELATIONSHIPS AND RELATED TRANSACTIONS**

**Related Party Transactions**

Our Board of Directors has assigned responsibility for reviewing related party transactions to the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee has adopted a written policy pursuant to which all transactions between us or our subsidiaries and any director or officer must be submitted to the Audit Committee for consideration prior to the consummation of the transaction. In addition, the directors are required annually to complete a detailed questionnaire that is designed to elicit disclosure of any potential related party relationships or transactions and to ensure that directors meet the applicable requirements established by Nasdaq and the SEC. The Audit Committee reports to our Board of Directors, for its review, on all related party transactions considered.

During 2018, there were no transactions or business relationships in which we were a participant and in which any of our executive officers, directors or director nominees had a material interest that would require disclosure under applicable SEC regulations, and no transactions requiring such disclosure are currently proposed.

**Code of Ethics**

The Company's Code of Business Conduct and Ethics may be viewed on our website at [www.crackerbarrel.com](http://www.crackerbarrel.com). With respect to conflicts of interest that may arise from time to time between us and any of our executive officers or directors, our Code of Business Conduct and Ethics states that if the alleged violation involves an executive officer or a director, the Audit Committee or the full Board of Directors, as appropriate, will determine whether a violation of the Code of Business Conduct and Ethics has occurred and, if so, will determine the disciplinary measures to be taken against that executive officer or director. The directors expect that each of them will disclose actual or potential conflicts of interest. Not less than annually, each director affirms the existence or absence of actual or potential conflicts, and that affirmation is reported to the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee and to the Audit Committee.

The Company's Financial Code of Ethics, which was formerly a separate policy, was consolidated into the new Code of Business Conduct and Ethics and applies to our Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer and Principal Accounting Officer. Any amendments to, or a waiver from, a provision of the financial code of ethics section of our Code of Business Conduct and Ethics will be posted on our website.

**SECTION 16(a) BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP REPORTING COMPLIANCE**

The United States securities laws require our executive officers, directors, and greater than 10% shareholders to file reports of ownership and changes in ownership on Forms 3, 4 and 5 with the SEC and with us. Based upon a review of Forms 3, 4 and 5 and amendments thereto furnished to us during and with respect to 2018 and written representations by our directors, executive officers and 10% shareholders, we believe that each such person filed, on a timely basis, the reports required by Section 16(a) of the Exchange Act with respect to 2018.



**Table of Contents****STOCK OWNERSHIP OF CERTAIN BENEFICIAL OWNERS AND MANAGEMENT*****Security Ownership of Certain Beneficial Owners***

The following table sets forth information for those who, as of September 21, 2018, were known by us to beneficially own more than 5% of our common stock. Percentage computations are based on 24,031,771 shares of our common stock outstanding as of September 21, 2018.

Name and Address of Beneficial Owner	Amount and Nature of Beneficial Ownership	Percent of Class
Biglari Capital Corp.  17802 IH 10 West, Suite 400  San Antonio, Texas 78257	4,737,794(1)	19.7%
BlackRock, Inc.  55 East 52nd Street  New York, New York 10055	2,431,276(2)	10.1%
The Vanguard Group, Inc.  100 Vanguard Boulevard  Malvern, Pennsylvania 19355	2,286,767(3)	9.5%

(1) Based solely on Schedule 13D/A filed by Biglari Capital Corp. on June 12, 2017.

(2) Based solely on Schedule 13G/A filed by BlackRock, Inc. on June 8, 2018.

(3) Based solely on Schedule 13G/A filed by The Vanguard Group, Inc. on February 9, 2018.

***Security Ownership of Management***

The following table presents information regarding the number of shares of our common stock beneficially owned, as of September 21, 2018, by each of our directors, each of our Named Executive Officers, and by our current directors and executive officers as a group. Unless otherwise noted, these persons have sole voting and investment power with respect to the shares indicated.

Name of Beneficial Owner	Shares Beneficially Owned(1)	Percent of Class
Sandra B. Cochran	126,687	*
Jill M. Golder	1,835	*

Edgar Filing: CRACKER BARREL OLD COUNTRY STORE, INC - Form DEF 14A

Nicholas V. Flanagan	17,066	*
Laura A. Daily	10,058	*
Thomas H. Barr	5,232	*
James W. Bradford	10,386	*
Meg G. Crofton		*
Richard J. Dobkin	18,135	*
Norman E. Johnson	4,888	*
William W. McCarten	6,273	*
Coleman H. Peterson	6,325	*
Andrea M. Weiss	9,758	*
Richard M. Wolfson		*
All executive officers and directors as a group (16 persons)	210,681	*

\* Less than one percent.

**Table of Contents**

- (1) Includes the following number of shares of restricted stock, RSUs or options exercisable by the named holders within 60 days of September 21, 2018:

Sandra B. Cochran	0
Jill M. Golder	0
Nicholas V. Flanagan	0
Laura A. Daily	0
Thomas H. Barr	701
James W. Bradford	1,116
Meg G. Crofton	921
Richard J. Dobkin	701
Norman E. Johnson	701
William W. McCarten	701
Coleman H. Peterson	701
Andrea M. Weiss	701
Richard M. Wolfson	0

All executive officers and directors as a group (16 persons) 7,243

The shares described in this note are considered outstanding for the purpose of computing the percentage of outstanding Cracker Barrel common stock owned by each named individual and by the group. They are not considered outstanding for the purpose of computing the percentage ownership of any other person.

**Table of Contents**

**PROPOSAL 1: ELECTION OF DIRECTORS**

**Board Structure**

Pursuant to our Charter, our Board of Directors must consist of at least five directors, but the exact number is set by a majority of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors currently has set the size of the Board of Directors at nine. All of the current members of our Board of Directors are nominees for election to the Board.

**Director Nominations and Qualifications**

The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee identifies, recruits and recommends to the Board only those candidates that the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee believes are qualified to become Board members consistent with the criteria for selection of new directors adopted from time to time by the Board. We endeavor to have a Board of Directors representing diverse experience at policy-making levels in business, marketing, finance and other areas that are relevant to our business. In addition, the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee desires to recommend candidates with the interpersonal skills and attributes that will foster a collaborative decision-making environment. The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee recommends candidates, including those submitted by shareholders, only if the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee believes that the candidate's knowledge, experience and expertise would strengthen the Board of Directors and that the candidate is committed to representing the long-term interests of all of our shareholders. A majority of the Board of Directors must consist of independent directors (as defined by Nasdaq's listing standards and our Corporate Governance Guidelines).

The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee assesses a candidate's independence, background and experience, as well as the Board's current needs in terms of director experience, skills and diversity. The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee recommends appropriate candidates with the goal that the Board of Directors be comprised of qualified individuals with education and experience appropriate to guide the Company in meeting its legal, financial, operational and societal objectives. Individual directors and any person nominated to serve as a director should possess the highest moral integrity and should generally have had significant managerial experience in the form of being a current or former senior executive of a publicly traded or privately held company or similar business experience or training. With respect to incumbent directors selected for re-election, the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee assesses each director's contributions, attendance record at Board of Directors and applicable committee meetings and the suitability of continued service. Under our Corporate Governance Guidelines, no person may be considered for board membership if such person is: (i) an employee or director of a company in significant competition with the Company; (ii) an employee or director of a major or potentially-major customer, supplier, contractor, counselor or consultant of the Company; (iii) a recent employee of the Company (other than a former Chief Executive Officer of the Company); or (iv) an executive officer of a company on whose board an employee of the Company serves.

Below we identify and describe the key experience, qualifications and skills our directors bring to the Board of Directors that are important in light of the Company's business and structure. The directors' experiences, qualifications and skills that the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee considered in their nomination are (in part) included in their individual biographies.

*Leadership Experience.* We believe that directors with experience in significant leadership positions over a long period of time, especially chief executive officer and president positions, provide the Company with strategic thinking and multiple perspectives. These people generally possess excellent leadership qualities

and the ability to identify and develop those qualities in others. They demonstrate a practical understanding of organizations, processes, strategy, risk management, the methods to promote change and growth and the ways to respond to changes in market conditions.

*Financial Experience.* We believe that an understanding of finance and financial reporting processes is important for our directors. We measure our operating and strategic performance by reference to

## **Table of Contents**

financial targets. In addition, accurate financial reporting and auditing are critical to our success and developing shareholder confidence in our reporting processes that are required by the U.S. federal securities laws. Directors with financial experience are critical to ensuring effective oversight of our financial measures and processes; accordingly, we expect all of our directors to be financially literate.

*Industry Experience.* As a company that relies upon the strength of our brand, we seek directors who are familiar with the restaurant and retail industries, have marketing and retail experience or who have brand-building expertise.

## **Diversity**

In evaluating potential candidates for Board membership, the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee considers, among other things, independence, character, ability to exercise sound judgment, diversity of age, gender and ethnic background and professional experience. The Board of Directors believes in a governing style that emphasizes respect for diversity in perspective and includes individuals from diverse backgrounds. The Board of Directors believes that diversity is important because varied points of view contribute to a more effective, engaged Board of Directors and better decision-making processes.

## **Director Nominees**

The nominees for our Board of Directors are: Thomas H. Barr, James W. Bradford, Sandra B. Cochran, Meg G. Crofton, Richard J. Dobkin, Norman E. Johnson, William W. McCarten, Coleman H. Peterson and Andrea M. Weiss. Ms. Cochran, our President and Chief Executive Officer, is the only nominee who holds a management position with the Company. All other nominees have been determined to be independent under Nasdaq's listing standards and our Corporate Governance Guidelines. If elected, each nominee would hold office until the 2019 Annual Meeting of Shareholders and until his or her successor is duly elected and qualified. If a director nominee becomes unwilling or unable to serve, proxies may be voted for a substitute nominee designated by our Board of Directors. Each of the nominees has consented to being named in this proxy statement and has agreed to serve, if elected. There are no family relationships between any of the nominees or executive officers.

*Thomas H. Barr*, age 50, first became one of our directors in May 2012. Since February 2016, Mr. Barr has served as President of Sono Bello, a leader in elective cosmetic surgery, with over 50 locations nationwide. From January 2013 to July 2015, Mr. Barr served as an executive of Hailo Network, a privately owned London-based company that develops mobile applications for acquiring taxicab services. Mr. Barr's roles with Hailo Network included serving as CEO and Global President, Co-CEO and Global President, Global Chief Operating Officer, Chief Operating Officer of Hailo Network USA and board member of Hailo Network. From 2005 to 2013, Mr. Barr served as Vice President at Starbucks Corporation (Nasdaq: SBUX) ( Starbucks ) and was a member of the Starbucks marketing and products team since 2000 with responsibility for Starbucks' U.S. retail coffee business. During his approximately 12-year career with Starbucks, Mr. Barr led North American Marketing, U.S. Product Management and U.S. Food categories in senior executive roles, most recently as Vice President, Global Coffee. Since May 2015, Mr. Barr has served as a board member of Sheetz, Inc., a privately owned company that operates over 500 convenience store locations throughout the mid-Atlantic region of the United States, and serves as an advisor on several early-stage start-up companies, including Mill Hill Capital.

Director Qualifications:

*Leadership Experience* currently President, Sono Bello LLC; former CEO and Global President, Hailo Network, and former President and Chief Operating Officer of Hailo Network USA; former Vice President, Global Coffee, at Starbucks; served in senior roles for Starbucks North American Marketing, U.S. Product Management, and U.S. Food categories.

*Industry Experience* significant knowledge in our industry as a former senior officer of Starbucks and current board member of Sheetz, Inc., particularly in the areas of product and menu management,

---

**Table of Contents**

pricing decision-making and innovation of a company that successfully combined both coffee and retail shops under the same roof; multi-unit management experience in his role as President of Sono-Bello LLC.

**James W. Bradford**, age 71, first became one of our directors in July 2011 and became the independent Chairman of the Board in November 2012. Mr. Bradford served as Dean of Vanderbilt University's Owen Graduate School of Management (Vanderbilt) from June 2005 until his retirement in June 2013. Prior to that time from 2002 until June 2005, Mr. Bradford served in the following capacities at Vanderbilt: Acting Dean, Associate Dean of Corporate Relations, Professor for the Practice of Management and adjunct faculty member. An experienced corporate executive, Mr. Bradford previously served, from 1992 to 1999, as President and Chief Executive Officer of AFG Industries, Inc., a large vertically integrated glass manufacturing and fabrication company. From 1999 to 2001, Mr. Bradford was the President and Chief Executive Officer of United Glass Corporation, a diversified glass fabrication company. Mr. Bradford presently serves on the boards of directors of Genesco, Inc. (NYSE: GCO), for which he serves as lead director, and Granite Construction, Inc. (NYSE: GVA). Mr. Bradford also served on the board of directors of CLARCOR Inc. (NYSE: CLC) from 2006 until the company was acquired by Parker-Hannifin Corporation in March of 2017.

**Director Qualifications:**

*Leadership Experience* former Dean of Vanderbilt; former President and Chief Executive Officer of United Glass Corporation; former President and Chief Executive Officer of AFG Industries, Inc.; served as Lead Director of Graduate Management Admissions Council (GMAC); serves on the boards of Genesco, Inc. (lead independent director) and Granite Construction, Inc.; named the 2015 Non-Executive Chairman of the Year by the New York Stock Exchange Governance Services.

*Financial Experience* previously served as Chairman of the Finance Committee of the board of directors of Genesco, Inc.; former member of the Audit Committees of CLARCOR Inc. and GMAC; serves on the Audit/Compliance Committee of the board of directors of Granite Construction, Inc.

**Sandra B. Cochran**, age 60, has served as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Company since September 2011. From April 2009 until November 2010, Ms. Cochran served as Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of the Company and was named President and Chief Operating Officer of the Company in November 2010. Ms. Cochran previously served from February 2004 until April 2009 as Chief Executive Officer of Books-A-Million, Inc. (Nasdaq: BAMB) (Books-A-Million), a leading book retailer in the southeastern United States. Ms. Cochran presently serves on the board of directors of Dollar General Corporation (NYSE: DG) and Lowe's Companies, Inc. (NYSE:LOW).

**Director Qualifications:**

*Leadership Experience* President and Chief Executive Officer of the Company; served as Chief Executive Officer of Books-A-Million; member of the board of directors of Dollar General Corporation and Lowe's Companies, Inc.

*Financial Experience* served as Chief Financial Officer of the Company; served as Chief Financial Officer of Books-A-Million; member of the Audit Committee of the board of directors of Dollar General Corporation.



*Industry Experience* various leadership positions at the Company since 2009.

**Meg G. Crofton**, age 64, first became one of our directors in July 2017. Ms. Crofton retired from The Walt Disney Company (NYSE: DIS) ( Disney ) in 2015, after a 35 year career with that company. From 2006 until 2013, she was President of Walt Disney World, the largest site in Disney s Parks and Resorts division, and from 2011 until her retirement in 2015, she served as President of Disney s Parks and Resorts Operations, U.S. and France. Since 2016, Ms. Crofton has served on the Board of Directors of Tupperware Brands Corporation (NYSE: TUP) ( Tupperware ) and currently serves on Tupperware s compensation committee.

**Table of Contents**

Director Qualifications:

*Leadership Experience* As President of Walt Disney Parks and Resorts Operations, U.S. and France, Ms. Crofton was responsible for the operations of Disney's theme parks and resorts in Florida, California and Paris, and the division's global functional lines of business reported to her including food and beverage, merchandise, hotel and park operations, facilities/maintenance, safety and security. Throughout her Disney career, Ms. Crofton held a wide range of executive positions in both operating and functional areas, as well as key leadership roles in the openings of many domestic and international properties.

*Industry Experience* Ms. Crofton is a seasoned, well-respected executive who had direct responsibility for ensuring employee performance and satisfaction and the delight and well-being of tens of millions of guests of Disney parks and resorts in the United States and France, including in respect of foodservice and retail operations; she also serves director of Tupperware, an iconic consumer products company.

**Richard J. Dobkin**, age 73, first became one of our directors in 2005. Mr. Dobkin was the Managing Partner of the Tampa, Florida office of Ernst & Young, LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, from 1987 until his retirement in June 2005. From October 2009 until September 2010, Mr. Dobkin served as a member of the board of directors of the PBSJ Corporation, which provides planning, design, and construction management services in the U.S. and abroad. Mr. Dobkin served on the board of directors of Blue Pearl Veterinary Partners, LLC, a private company which owns and operates several specialty and emergency veterinary hospitals in numerous states, from 2008 until its sale in November 2015. Since 2011, Mr. Dobkin has served as an Executive in Residence at the University of South Florida School of Accountancy and acted as a consultant to private companies, and from March 2014 until its sale in September 2015, Mr. Dobkin served on the board of directors of Bay Cities Bank, a community bank with offices in the Tampa, Florida area.

Director Qualifications:

*Leadership Experience* served as Managing Partner of the Tampa, Florida office of Ernst & Young, LLP, member of the board of directors of Blue Pearl Veterinary Partners and Bay Cities Bank and PBSJ Corporation.

*Financial Experience* served as Managing Partner of the Tampa, Florida office of Ernst & Young, LLP; Chairman of the Audit Committee of our Board of Directors; served as a member of the Audit Committee of Blue Pearl Veterinary Partners and Bay Cities Bank; member of Technology Steering Committee of Bay Cities Bank; practicing certified public accountant for over 40 years; Chairman of the Audit Committee of Tampa General Hospital Foundation and Chairman of the Audit Committee of The Community Foundation of Tampa Bay; Executive in Residence at the University of South Florida School of Accountancy.

**Norman E. Johnson**, age 70, first became one of our directors in August 2012. From March 2000 to July 2010, Mr. Johnson served as President, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of CLARCOR Inc. (CLARCOR), a NYSE-traded diverse filtration company which was acquired by Parker-Hannifin Corporation in 2017. From July 2010 to December 2011, Mr. Johnson was the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of CLARCOR, and he later served as the Executive Chairman of CLARCOR from December 2011 until his retirement in November 2012. In addition, Mr. Johnson has served, since 2006, on the board of directors of Schneider National, Inc. (NYSE: SNDR)

( Schneider ) a provider of truckload, intermodal, and logistics solutions and operator of one of the largest trucking fleets in North America. Mr. Johnson also served, from 2012 until 2017, as a director of CIRCOR International, Inc. (NYSE: CIR) ( CIRCOR ), a manufacturer of valves and other highly engineered products and sub-systems used in the energy, aerospace and industrial markets.

Director Qualifications:

*Leadership Experience* former President, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of CLARCOR; member of the board of directors of Schneider and former director of CIRCOR; chairs the Corporate

**Table of Contents**

Governance and serves on the Compensation Committee of the board of directors of Schneider; intimate knowledge of integration and distribution networks as well as acquisition and growth strategies.

**William W. McCarten**, age 69, first became one of our directors in August 2011. Since 2004, Mr. McCarten has served as Chairman of the board of directors of DiamondRock Hospitality Company (NYSE: DRH) (DiamondRock), a lodging-focused Real Estate Investment Trust he founded in 2004 and that went public in 2005. DiamondRock owns several high-quality hotels throughout the United States and has assets of approximately \$3 billion. Mr. McCarten served as Chief Executive Officer of DiamondRock from its inception until September 2008. Mr. McCarten serves as a member of the board of directors of Marriott Vacations Worldwide Corporation (NYSE: VAC), a leader in the timeshare industry with a global portfolio of resorts in popular destinations. From 2001 through 2003, Mr. McCarten was President of the Marriott Services Group of Marriott International, Inc. (NYSE: MAR). Prior to that position, Mr. McCarten served as President and Chief Executive Officer of HMSHost Corporation. Mr. McCarten served in a number of senior financial positions at Marriott International, Inc. from 1979 through 1992 and was an accountant with Arthur Andersen & Co. from 1970 to 1979.

Director Qualifications:

*Leadership Experience* Founder and Chairman of DiamondRock; member of the boards of directors of DiamondRock and Marriott Vacations Worldwide Corporation; former Chief Executive Officer of DiamondRock; former President of Marriott Services Group; former President and Chief Executive Officer of HMSHost Corporation.

*Financial Experience* served as accountant with Arthur Andersen & Co.; served as Vice President and Corporate Controller of Marriott International, Inc.

*Industry Experience* significant knowledge of our industry as Chief Executive Officer of a company that successfully combined both restaurants and retail shops under the same roof.

**Coleman H. Peterson**, age 70, first became one of our directors in June 2011. Mr. Peterson is President and Chief Executive Officer of Hollis Enterprises, LLC, the human resources consulting firm he founded in 2004 following his retirement from Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (NYSE: WMT), where he served as Chief People Officer from 1994 to 2004. Mr. Peterson serves on the board of directors of J.B. Hunt Transport Services, Inc. (Nasdaq: JBHT). Mr. Peterson also served as a director of Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc. (NYSE: BBW) until 2018.

Director Qualifications:

*Leadership Experience* Founder, President, and Chief Executive Officer of Hollis Enterprises, LLC; member of the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee of the board of directors of J.B. Hunt Transport Services, Inc. and, previously, the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee of Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc.; extensive executive compensation and succession planning expertise as the Chairman of the Executive Committee of J.B. Hunt Transport Services, Inc. and, previously, the Compensation Committee of Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc.

*Industry Experience* developed significant retail industry experience and knowledge as Chief People Officer for Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., where he had the distinction of being the chief human resources officer of the world's largest private workforce.

**Andrea M. Weiss**, age 63, first became one of our directors in 2003. Ms. Weiss has been the President and Chief Executive Officer of Retail Consulting, Inc., a retail consulting firm, since October 2002. Prior to that, Ms. Weiss served as President of dELiA\*s Corp., a former multichannel retailer to teenage girls and young women, from May 2001 to October 2002. From May 1998 until February 2001, Ms. Weiss served as the Executive Vice President and Chief Store Officer of The Limited, Inc. and Intimate Brands, Inc., units of L Brands, Inc. (formerly Limited Brands, Inc.) (NYSE: LB), a women's retailer. Ms. Weiss has served on the

**Table of Contents**

boards of directors of Chicos FAS (NYSE: CHS) since February 2009, and Nutrisystem, Inc. (Nasdaq: NTRI) since March 2013. From April 2006 to June 2007, Ms. Weiss was the Chairman of Cortefiel Group, SA, a European retailer with stores in more than 60 countries. Ms. Weiss' prior retail experience includes positions at The Walt Disney Company (NYSE: DIS), ANN INC., formerly AnnTaylor Stores Corporation (NYSE: ANN), and Guess?, Inc. (NYSE: GES). In addition, Ms. Weiss previously served on the boards of directors of The Pep Boys Manny, Moe & Jack (formerly NYSE: PBV), Brookstone, Inc. (formerly Nasdaq: BKST), GSI Commerce Inc. (formerly Nasdaq: GSIC), Ediets.com, Inc. (formerly Nasdaq: DIET), and Worth Ltd., a private direct marketer of luxury apparel and accessories. In January 2014, Ms. Weiss co-founded The O Alliance, LLC, a digital and retail consulting network. Ms. Weiss advises a number of digital, technology and startup fashion technology firms as part of The O Alliance, LLC. From 2014 until 2017, Ms. Weiss was on the board of directors of Newgistics, a private logistics firm which was acquired by Pitney Bowes Inc. in November 2017

**Director Qualifications:**

*Leadership Experience* Founder of The O Alliance, LLC, President and Chief Executive Officer of Retail Consulting, Inc.; former President of dELIA\*s Corp.; former Executive Vice President and Chief Store Officer of The Limited, Inc. and Intimate Brands, Inc., units of L Brands, Inc.; former Chairman of Cortefiel Group, SA; member of the boards of directors of Chicos FAS, and Nutrisystem, Inc.; former member of the boards of directors of The Pep Boys Manny, Moe & Jack, Brookstone, Inc., GSI Commerce, Inc., Ediets.com, Inc. and several other private company boards of directors in the retail, e-commerce and consumer sector.

*Industry Experience* over 30 years of experience in the retail and consumer sector with major retail brands, such as The Walt Disney Company, AnnTaylor Stores Corporation and Guess?, Inc.; member of the boards of directors of Chicos FAS, and Nutrisystem, Inc.; former member of the boards of directors of The Pep Boys Manny, Moe & Jack, Brookstone, Inc., GSI Commerce, Inc. and several other private company boards of directors in the retail and consumer sector; former Chairman of Cortefiel Group, SA.

**Director Independence**

In accordance with Nasdaq's listing requirements, the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee has evaluated each of our directors' independence from the Company and its management based on Nasdaq's definition of independence. In its review of each director's independence, the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee reviewed whether any transactions or relationships exist currently or, during the past three years existed, between each director and the Company and its subsidiaries, affiliates, equity investors or independent auditors. The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee also examined whether there were any transactions or relationships between each director and members of the senior management of the Company or their affiliates. Based on the review by the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee and Nasdaq's definition of independence, the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee has determined that all of our current Board members, with the exception of Ms. Cochran, and all of our director nominees other than Ms. Cochran, are independent in accordance with Nasdaq's listing standards and our Corporate Governance Guidelines, the latter of which are posted on our website at [www.crackerbarrel.com](http://www.crackerbarrel.com).

**Communications with the Board**

Our Board of Directors provides a process for shareholders to send communications to the Board of Directors. All correspondence addressed to the Board of Directors or to one or more members of the Board of Directors should be sent: via mail, to Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc., c/o Corporate Secretary, 305 Hartmann Drive, Lebanon, Tennessee 37087, or via e-mail, to [corporate.secretary@crackerbarrel.com](mailto:corporate.secretary@crackerbarrel.com), or via fax, to (615) 443-9279, or website communication on the Investor Relations section of our website at [www.crackerbarrel.com](http://www.crackerbarrel.com).

## **Table of Contents**

All correspondence received by the Corporate Secretary will be promptly acknowledged and reviewed by the Corporate Secretary, who will determine whether the correspondence should be forwarded immediately to the Board of Directors as a whole or to any specific member or members of the Board of Directors or whether the correspondence should be presented to the Board of Directors at its next regular meeting. The Corporate Secretary will consult with the Chairman of the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee if there is a question concerning the need for immediate review by the Board of Directors or by any specific member or members of the Board of Directors.

### **Attendance of Directors at 2017 Annual Meeting of Shareholders**

Our Board of Directors has adopted a policy that requires all directors to attend our annual shareholder meeting unless attendance is not feasible owing to unavoidable circumstances. All of our current Board members attended our 2017 Annual Meeting. Mr. Davenport did not stand for re-election at the 2017 Annual Meeting and did not attend.

### **Director Nomination Process**

The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee of our Board of Directors is responsible for identifying and recommending to the Board all persons to be nominated to serve as a director of the Company. The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee will consider director candidates timely submitted by our shareholders in accordance with the notice provisions as discussed below under Shareholder Director Nominees. The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee applies the same criteria to the evaluation of shareholder-nominated director candidates as it applies to other director candidates. Our Board is responsible for nominating the slate of directors for the Annual Meeting, upon the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee's recommendation.

All director nominees are current directors. The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee uses a variety of methods for identifying and evaluating nominees for director. The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee regularly assesses the appropriate size of the Board of Directors and whether any vacancies on the Board of Directors are expected due to retirement or otherwise. In the event that vacancies are anticipated or otherwise arise, the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee considers various potential candidates that may come to its attention through current members of the Board of Directors, outside advisors, shareholders or other persons. From time to time, the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee may retain one or more third-party search firms to assist with identifying potential candidates who meet the qualification and experience requirements described above and to compile information regarding each candidate's qualifications, experience and independence. Any such third-party search firms report directly to the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee.

### **Shareholder Director Nominees**

The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee will consider nominees to the Board recommended by shareholders if shareholders comply with the Company's advance notice requirements. See **SHAREHOLDER PROPOSALS FOR 2019 ANNUAL MEETING** on page 63 of this proxy statement. The Company's bylaws provide that a shareholder who wishes to nominate a person for election as a director at a meeting of shareholders must deliver written notice to the Secretary of the Company. Such notice must contain, as to each nominee, all of the information relating to such person as would be required to be disclosed in a proxy statement meeting the requirements of Regulation 14A under the Exchange Act, and certain other information, including the name and address of the shareholder delivering the notice as it appears on the stock records of the Company, the number and class of shares held of record by such shareholder, information about derivative securities holdings of such shareholder, any arrangement or understanding pursuant to which such shareholder has a right to vote or has granted a right to vote any shares of the Company's stock, whether such shareholder has a short interest in any of the Company's securities,



whether such shareholder is entitled to a fee based on the

**Table of Contents**

value of the Company's securities, a representation that such shareholder intends to appear in person or by proxy at the meeting to nominate such nominee, and a certification that such shareholder has complied with all applicable federal, state and other legal requirements in connection with such shareholder's acquisition of the Company's securities and such shareholder's acts or omissions as a shareholder of the Company. The foregoing summary does not include all requirements a shareholder must satisfy in order to nominate a candidate for election to the Board of Directors. Shareholders of the Company who wish to recommend a nominee to the Board of Directors should read carefully the Company's bylaws, which are available on the Investor Relations section of our website at [www.crackerbarrel.com](http://www.crackerbarrel.com).

In order to be eligible to be a nominee for election as a director of the Company by a shareholder, such potential nominee must deliver to the Secretary of the Company a written questionnaire providing the requested information about the background and qualifications of such person and a written representation and agreement that such person is not and will not become a party to any voting agreements, any agreement or understanding with any person with respect to any compensation or indemnification in connection with service on the Board of Directors, and would be in compliance with all applicable publicly disclosed corporate governance, conflict of interest, confidentiality and stock ownership and trading policies and guidelines of the Company.

Shareholder nominations must be submitted in accordance with the deadlines set forth under the caption

SHAREHOLDER PROPOSALS FOR 2019 ANNUAL MEETING on page 63 of this proxy statement. Shareholder nominations should be sent to Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc., 305 Hartmann Drive, Lebanon, Tennessee 37087, Attention: Corporate Secretary.

**Board Recommendation**

**OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS UNANIMOUSLY RECOMMENDS THAT YOU VOTE FOR EACH OF THE BOARD'S NOMINEES FOR DIRECTOR.**

---

**Table of Contents**

**PROPOSAL 2: ADVISORY VOTE ON EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION**

We are providing our shareholders with the opportunity to cast an advisory, non-binding vote on the executive compensation of our Named Executive Officers ( executive compensation ) as required by Section 14A of the Exchange Act and the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (the Dodd-Frank Act ). In light of shareholder approval at the Company s 2018 Annual Meeting to hold an advisory vote on the compensation of the Company s named executive officers every year, the Board of Directors determined to hold an advisory vote on the compensation of the Company s named executive officers every year. While the vote on this proposal is advisory and non-binding, the Compensation Committee, which is responsible for designing and administering our executive compensation program, highly values the opinions of our shareholders. We will consider the vote of our shareholders when making compensation decisions for the Named Executive Officers in the future.

We have described the compensation of the Named Executive Officers under the sections EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION COMPENSATION DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS and EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION COMPENSATION TABLES AND INFORMATION of this proxy statement. We have a strong pay for performance philosophy for our executive compensation program, which is designed to reward executive officers for maximizing our success, as determined by our performance relative to our financial and operational goals. We seek to reward our executives for both near-term and sustained longer-term financial and operating performance as well as leadership excellence. Compensation opportunities are intended to align the economic interests of executives with those of our shareholders and encourage executives to remain with the Company for long and productive careers.

The Compensation Committee reviews on an ongoing basis the compensation programs for the Named Executive Officers to ensure that such programs achieve the desired goals of enhancing the long-term total return to our shareholders and building a better company by implementing compensation programs that reward both company-wide and individual performance, aligning our executives interests with those of our shareholders and allowing us to attract and retain talented executives. For additional information regarding our executive compensation, including our 2018 executive compensation decisions, please see COMPENSATION DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS beginning on page 14 of this proxy statement.

In light of the foregoing considerations, we are asking our shareholders to indicate their approval, on an advisory basis, of the compensation of the Named Executive Officers as disclosed in this proxy statement. Accordingly, we will ask our shareholders to vote FOR the following resolution at the Annual Meeting:

RESOLVED, that the Company s shareholders approve, on an advisory basis, the compensation of the Named Executive Officers, as disclosed in the Company s proxy statement for the Annual Meeting of Shareholders pursuant to the compensation disclosure rules of the SEC, including the Compensation Discussion and Analysis, the 2018 Summary Compensation Table and the other related tables and disclosure.

**Board Recommendation**

**OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS UNANIMOUSLY RECOMMENDS A VOTE FOR THE RESOLUTION TO APPROVE, ON AN ADVISORY BASIS, THE COMPENSATION OF THE NAMED EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AS DISCLOSED IN THIS PROXY STATEMENT.**

**Table of Contents**

**PROPOSAL 3: APPROVAL OF THE SHAREHOLDER RIGHTS PLAN**

**Introduction**

On April 9, 2018, the Board of Directors adopted a shareholder rights plan (the Rights Plan ) and declared a dividend distribution of preferred share purchase rights (the Rights ) to shareholders of record on April 19, 2018. The Board of Directors is submitting the Rights Plan to the shareholders for approval at the Annual Meeting. If shareholders approve the Rights Plan at the Annual Meeting, the Rights Plan will expire on April 9, 2021. If shareholders do not approve the Rights Agreement, it will expire immediately following certification of the vote at the Annual Meeting.

The Rights Plan is intended to replace the Company s previous rights plan adopted and approved by the Company s shareholders in 2015 (which replaced the previous rights plan adopted and approved by the Company s shareholders in 2012). The Board of Directors has adopted the Rights Plan in response to the persistent threat that a third party could accumulate a substantial, and potentially controlling, position in the Company through market purchases that do not reflect a control premium offered to all shareholders.

In general terms, the Rights Plan works by imposing a significant penalty upon any person or group which acquires 20% or more of the outstanding common stock of the Company without the approval of the Board of Directors. The Rights may be redeemed by the Board of Directors for one cent per Right prior to a person or group accumulating 20% or more of the Company s outstanding common stock. The Rights will not interfere with any merger or business combination approved by the Board of Directors, or any qualifying offer whether or not approved by the Board. The Rights Plan defines a qualifying offer as any all-cash, fully financed tender offer for all shares open for at least 60 business days, subject to a minimum condition of a majority of the outstanding shares and that provides for a 20-business day subsequent offering period after consummation.

Adoption of the Rights Plan does not weaken the financial strength of the Company or affect its business plans. Issuance of the Rights:

has no dilutive effect on the value of the Company s common stock,

will not affect reported earnings per share,

is not taxable to the Company or to you, and

will not change how you can trade the Company s shares.

The Rights will be exercisable only if and when a situation arises that the Rights were intended to address.

The Rights Plan is designed to protect our shareholders from unfair, abusive or coercive takeover strategies, including the acquisition of control of the Company by a bidder in a transaction or series of transactions that does not treat all shareholders equally or fairly or provide all shareholders an equal opportunity to share in the premium paid on an acquisition of control. The Rights Plan is not intended to prevent a takeover or deter fair offers for securities of the Company. To the contrary, it is designed to encourage anyone seeking to acquire the Company to negotiate with the Board of Directors prior to attempting a takeover. This should enable all shareholders to fully realize the value of their

investment in our Company. We believe the characteristics of the Rights Plan are shareholder friendly :

The Rights Plan is focused on preventing creeping acquisitions above 20% that do not result in a premium being paid to all shareholders and would not deter a non-coercive cash offer for all shares;

If shareholders do not approve the Rights Plan at the Annual Meeting, the Rights Plan expires immediately following the certification of the vote at the Annual Meeting; and

If shareholders approve the Rights Plan, the Rights will expire on April 9, 2021.

---

**Table of Contents**

Certain provisions of Tennessee law to which the Company is subject may also provide protections from abusive takeover tactics, but we believe the Rights Plan provides additional protection from an acquirer that desires to own a significant position and exercise a controlling influence over the Company through voting and election of directors, without engaging in a transaction that could result in a premium paid to all of the Company's shareholders. For example, the Tennessee Business Combination Act restricts shareholders owning 10% or more of the Company's shares (termed an "interested shareholder") from engaging in business combination transactions with the Company for five years, unless the business combination is approved by the Company's Board of Directors before the interested shareholder exceeds the 10% threshold. After five years, the Company could effect a business combination with the interested shareholder only if the combination is approved by the other shareholders or certain fair price standards are met. Having held in excess of 10% of the Company's shares for more than five years, Biglari Capital Corp. and its affiliates, collectively the holders of approximately 19.7% of our outstanding common stock, are not subject to the restrictions of the Tennessee Business Combination Act. The Tennessee Control Share Acquisition Act limits the voting rights of shareholders that acquire shares above specified thresholds starting at 20%, unless the Company's shareholders approve the excess voting rights, but the Tennessee Control Share Acquisition Act has no effect on acquisitions below 20%, and may not adequately discourage acquisitions of economic interests greater than 20% without paying a control premium. The Board of Directors believes that the adoption of the Rights Plan, which may impose a significant economic penalty on acquisitions of over 20%, is a more effective protection against creeping acquisitions of control and other abusive takeover tactics than these statutory provisions and that the Rights Plan will also encourage potential acquirers to engage in negotiations with the Board of Directors prior to acquiring any significant stake in the Company.

The Board of Directors authorized and declared a dividend of one Right for each share of the Company's common stock outstanding at the close of business on April 19, 2018, and thereafter issued (and will continue to issue, as long as the Rights Plan is in effect) a Right with each new share of common stock. In general terms, the Rights impose a significant penalty upon any person or group that acquires beneficial ownership of 20% or more of our outstanding common stock without the prior approval of the Board of Directors. Shareholders who beneficially own 20% or more of our outstanding common stock as of April 9, 2018, the date of the adoption of the Rights Plan, are exempted from the ownership threshold requirement so long as such shareholders' beneficial ownership of the Company's common stock does not increase.

The Rights are issued pursuant to the Rights Plan. The following is a summary of the principal terms of the Rights Plan. The following summary is a general description only and is qualified in its entirety by the full text of the Rights Plan, which appears as [Annex A](#) to this proxy statement.

**Summary of the Rights Plan***The Rights*

Currently, the Rights trade with, and are inseparable from, the Company's common stock. The Rights are evidenced by the same stock certificates as the common stock (or, in the case of uncertificated shares of common stock, the same book-entry account that evidences record ownership of such shares) and not by separate Rights certificates. Rights will accompany all new shares of common stock the Company may issue in the future, as long as the Rights Plan remains in effect.

Each Right will entitle the holder to buy one one-hundredth of a share of Series A Junior Participating Preferred Share, par value \$0.01 per share (the "Preferred Share"), at a purchase price of \$600, subject to adjustment, once the Rights become exercisable. Until a Right is exercised, however, it does not give its holder any additional rights as a shareholder of the Company.

*Exercisability*

The Rights become exercisable and separate from the Company's common stock on the Distribution Date. The Distribution Date means the tenth (10th) business day after a public announcement that any person or

## **Table of Contents**

group of affiliated or associated persons (an Acquiring Person ) has become the beneficial owner of 20% or more of our common stock. Certain synthetic interests in securities created by derivative positions whether or not such interests are considered to be ownership of the underlying common stock or are reportable for purposes of Regulation 13D of the Exchange Act are treated as beneficial ownership of the number of shares of the Company s common stock equivalent to the economic exposure created by the derivative position, to the extent actual shares of the Company s common stock are directly or indirectly held by counterparties to the derivatives contracts.

### *Issuance of Right Certificates*

After the Distribution Date, American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, LLC, the rights agent for the Rights Plan, will mail separate certificates evidencing the Rights to each record holder of our common stock (or, if the common stock is uncertificated, by appropriate changes to the book-entry account that evidences record ownership of such shares) at the close of business on the Distribution Date. Thereafter, the Rights will be transferable separately from the common stock. Any Rights held by an Acquiring Person are null and void and may not be exercised.

### *Consequences of a Person or Group Becoming an Acquiring Person*

**Flip In.** If a person or group becomes an Acquiring Person, all holders of Rights except the Acquiring Person may, for \$600, purchase shares of our common stock with a market value of \$1,200 based on the market price of the common stock prior to such acquisition.

**Flip Over.** If our Company is later acquired in a merger or similar transaction after the Distribution Date, all holders of Rights except the Acquiring Person may, for \$600, purchase shares of the acquiring corporation with a market value of \$1,200 based on the market price of the acquiring corporation s stock, prior to such merger.

**Notional Shares.** Shares held by affiliates and associates of an Acquiring Person, and notional shares held by counterparties to a derivatives contract with an Acquiring Person, will be deemed to be beneficially owned by the Acquiring Person.

### *Preferred Share Provisions*

Each one one-hundredth of a Preferred Share, if issued:

will not be redeemable;

will entitle holders to quarterly dividend payments of \$0.01 per share, or an amount equal to the dividend paid on one share of common stock, whichever is greater;

will entitle holders upon liquidation either to receive \$1.00 per share or an amount equal to the payment made on one share of common stock, whichever is greater;



will have the same voting power as one share of common stock; and

if shares of our common stock are exchanged via merger, consolidation, or a similar transaction, will entitle holders to a per share payment equal to the payment made on one share of common stock.

The value of one one-hundredth interest in a Preferred Share should approximate the value of one share of common stock.

*Expiration*

The Rights will expire no later than April 9, 2021, but will expire immediately following certification of the vote at the Annual Meeting if the Rights Plan is not approved by shareholders.

## **Table of Contents**

### *Redemption*

Our Board of Directors may redeem the Rights for \$0.01 per Right at any time before any person or group becomes an Acquiring Person. If our Board of Directors redeems any Rights, it must redeem all of the Rights. Once the Rights are redeemed, the only right of the holders of Rights will be to receive the redemption price of \$0.01 per Right. The redemption price will be adjusted if we have a stock split or stock dividends on our common stock.

### *Qualifying Offer Provision*

The Rights would also not interfere with all-cash, fully financed tender offers for all shares of our common stock that remain open for a minimum of 60 business days, are subject to a minimum condition of a majority of the outstanding shares and provide for a 20-business day subsequent offering period after consummation (such offers are referred to as qualifying offers ). In the event the Company receives a qualifying offer and the Board of Directors has not redeemed the Rights prior to the consummation of such offer, the consummation of the qualifying offer shall not cause the offeror or its affiliates or associates to become an Acquiring Person, and the Rights will immediately expire upon consummation of the qualifying offer.

### *Exchange*

After a person or group becomes an Acquiring Person, but before an Acquiring Person owns 50% or more of our outstanding common stock, our Board of Directors may extinguish the Rights by exchanging one share of common stock or an equivalent security for each Right, other than Rights held by the Acquiring Person.

### *Anti-Dilution Provisions*

Our Board of Directors may adjust the purchase price of the Preferred Share, the number of Preferred Shares issuable and the number of outstanding Rights to prevent dilution that may occur from a stock dividend, a stock split, a reclassification of the Preferred Shares or our common stock. No adjustments to the exercise price of less than 1% will be made.

### *Amendments*

The terms of the Rights Plan may be amended by our Board of Directors without the consent of the holders of the Rights. After a person or group becomes an Acquiring Person, our Board of Directors may not amend the Rights Plan in a way that adversely affects holders of the Rights.

## **Board Recommendation**

**OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS UNANIMOUSLY RECOMMENDS A VOTE FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE SHAREHOLDER RIGHTS PLAN.**

**Table of Contents****PROPOSAL 4: RATIFICATION OF APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT REGISTERED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRM**

The Audit Committee has retained Deloitte & Touche LLP as our independent registered public accounting firm for 2019. Deloitte & Touche LLP has served as our independent registered public accounting firm since 1972.

Representatives of Deloitte & Touche LLP have been requested to attend the Annual Meeting. These representatives will have the opportunity to make a statement if they so desire and are expected to be available to respond to appropriate questions.

If shareholders fail to ratify the appointment of Deloitte & Touche LLP, the Audit Committee will consider any failure to ratify the appointment of Deloitte & Touche LLP but in its discretion may still direct the appointment of Deloitte & Touche LLP. Also, if the ratification of the appointment of Deloitte & Touche LLP is approved, the Audit Committee in its discretion may still direct the appointment of a different independent registered public accounting firm at any time and without shareholder approval if the Audit Committee believes that such a change would be in our best interest and the best interest of our shareholders.

**Board Recommendation**

**OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS RECOMMENDS THAT YOU VOTE FOR THE RATIFICATION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF DELOITTE & TOUCHE LLP AS OUR INDEPENDENT REGISTERED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRM FOR 2019.**

**FEES PAID TO AUDITORS**

The following table sets forth certain fees billed to us by Deloitte & Touche LLP in connection with various services provided to us throughout 2018 and 2017.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Aggregate Fees Billed for FY 2017</b>	<b>Aggregate Fees Billed for FY 2018</b>
Audit Fees(1)	\$ 813,560	\$ 827,850
Audit-Related Fees	\$ 0	\$ 0
Tax Fees	\$ 0	\$ 0
All Other Fees(2)	\$ 2,600	\$ 2,695
<b>Total Fees</b>	<b>\$ 816,160</b>	<b>\$ 830,545</b>

- (1) Represents aggregate fees for professional services rendered for: the audit of our consolidated financial statements contained in our Annual Reports on Form 10-K for 2018 and 2017; review of our condensed consolidated financial statements contained in our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for 2018 and 2017; attestation report related to internal control over financial reporting for 2018 and 2017.
- (2) Represents aggregate expenses for licenses to access a financial accounting technical database.



**Table of Contents**

**AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Audit Committee is responsible for providing independent, objective oversight and review of the Company's accounting functions and internal controls and has primary oversight responsibility for the Company's risk management program. The Audit Committee's functions are described in greater detail on pages 8 and 9 of this proxy statement. Among other things, the Audit Committee recommends to the Board of Directors that the Company's audited financial statements be included in its Annual Report on Form 10-K.

The Audit Committee is comprised of four directors, all of whom are independent as determined in accordance with Nasdaq's listing standards and our Corporate Governance Guidelines. Each member of the Audit Committee is also independent within the meaning of Rule 10A-3 under the Exchange Act. The Board of Directors has determined that all four members of the Audit Committee satisfy the attributes of an audit committee financial expert, as defined by SEC regulations.

In connection with recommending that the Company's audited financial statements be included in its Annual Report on Form 10-K, the Audit Committee took the following steps:

The Audit Committee discussed with the Company's independent registered public accounting firm their judgment as to the quality, not just the acceptability, of the Company's accounting policies and principles and such other matters as are required to be discussed under generally accepted auditing standards, including information concerning the scope and result of the audit. These communications and discussions are intended to assist the Audit Committee in overseeing the financial reporting and disclosure process.

Management represented to the Audit Committee that the Company's audited consolidated financial statements were prepared in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, on a consistent basis, and the Audit Committee reviewed and discussed the quarterly and annual earnings press releases and consolidated financial statements with management and the independent registered public accounting firm. The Audit Committee discussed with the independent registered public accounting firm matters required to be discussed by Auditing Standard No. 1301 ( Communications with Audit Committees ), as adopted by the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board.

The Company's independent registered public accounting firm also provided to the Audit Committee the written disclosures and the letter required by applicable requirements of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, and the Audit Committee discussed with the independent registered public accounting firm the firm's independence from the Company and its management. The Audit Committee also considered whether the independent registered public accounting firm provided non-audit services to the Company and, if so, whether the provision is compatible with maintaining the independent registered public accounting firm's independence. This discussion and disclosure informed the Audit Committee of the independent registered public accounting firm's independence and assisted the Audit Committee in evaluating that independence. The Audit Committee concluded that the independent registered public accounting firm is independent from the Company and its management.

The Audit Committee reviewed and discussed, with the Company's management and independent registered public accounting firm, the Company's audited consolidated balance sheets as of August 3, 2018 and July 28, 2017 and the related consolidated statements of operations, shareholders' equity and cash flows for each of the years in the three-year period ended August 3, 2018, including associated footnotes and Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations.

The Audit Committee reviewed and discussed CEO and CFO certifications concerning the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K.

Based on the discussions with the Company's independent registered public accounting firm concerning the audit, the independence discussions, the financial statement quarterly reviews, and additional matters deemed

**Table of Contents**

relevant and appropriate by the Audit Committee, including internal audit activities, the Audit Committee recommended to the Board of Directors that the Company's audited consolidated financial statements be included in its Annual Report on Form 10-K.

In order to ensure that the Company's independent registered public accounting firm is engaged only to provide audit and non-audit services that are compatible with maintaining independence as defined by applicable laws and regulations, the Audit Committee requires that all services provided and fees charged by the independent registered public accounting firm be pre-approved by the Audit Committee. The authority to grant any pre-approval sought by the Audit Committee during the time period between regularly scheduled Audit Committee meetings is delegated to the Chairman of the Audit Committee. All of the services described above under the caption "FEES PAID TO AUDITORS" were pre-approved by the Audit Committee.

This report has been submitted by the members of the Audit Committee:

Richard J. Dobkin, Chairman

Norman E. Johnson

William W. McCarten

Andrea M. Weiss

This Audit Committee report does not constitute soliciting material and shall not be deemed filed or incorporated by reference into any other filing made by the Company under the Securities Act or the Exchange Act, except to the extent that the Company specifically incorporates this information by reference therein.

**SHAREHOLDER PROPOSALS FOR 2019 ANNUAL MEETING**

If you wish to submit a proposal to be included in our proxy statement for our Annual Meeting of Shareholders, proposals must be submitted by eligible shareholders who have complied with the relevant regulations of the SEC and must be received no later than June 6, 2019. Shareholder proposals should be mailed to Corporate Secretary, Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc., 305 Hartmann Drive, Lebanon, Tennessee 37087.

In addition, the Company's bylaws contain an advance notice provision requiring that, if a shareholder wants to present a proposal (including a nomination) at our 2019 Annual Meeting of Shareholders (whether or not to be included in the proxy statement), the shareholder must provide timely written notice thereof to the Secretary of the Company. In order to be timely, the notice must be delivered to the Secretary of the Company at the principal executive offices of the Company not earlier than the close of business on the 120th day and not later than the close of business on the 90th day prior to the first anniversary of the Annual Meeting. The Company's bylaws set forth detailed information that must be submitted with any shareholder proposal. In the event that the date of the 2018 Annual Meeting is more than 30 days before or more than 60 days after such anniversary date, however, notice by the shareholder must be delivered not earlier than the close of business on the 120th day prior to the date of the 2019 Annual Meeting and not later than the close of business on the later of the 90th day prior to the date of the 2019 Annual Meeting (or, if the first public announcement of the date of the 2019 Annual Meeting is less than 100 days prior to the date of such Annual Meeting, the 10th day following the date on which public announcement of the date of the 2019 Annual Meeting is first made by the Company). In the event that a shareholder proposal intended to be presented for action at an Annual Meeting is not received timely, then the persons designated as proxies in the proxies solicited by the Board of Directors in connection with that Annual Meeting will be permitted to use their discretionary voting authority with respect to the

proposal, whether or not the proposal is discussed in the proxy statement for that Annual Meeting.



**Table of Contents**

**ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

**A copy of our Annual Report on Form 10-K, and a list of all its exhibits, will be supplied without charge to any shareholder upon written request sent to our principal executive offices: Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc., Attention: Investor Relations, 305 Hartmann Drive, Lebanon, Tennessee 37087. Exhibits to the Form 10-K are available for a reasonable fee. You may also view our Annual Report on Form 10-K and its exhibits on-line at the SEC website at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov), or via our website at [www.crackerbarrel.com](http://www.crackerbarrel.com).**

**OTHER BUSINESS**

We are not aware of any other matters to be brought before the Annual Meeting. If, however, any other matters are properly brought before the Annual Meeting, the persons named in the enclosed form of proxy will have discretionary authority to vote all proxies with respect to those matters in accordance with their best judgment.

**Table of Contents**

**Directions to the Annual Meeting**

Take I-40 West from Knoxville, Tennessee or I-40 East from Nashville, Tennessee.

Take the Hartmann Drive exit, Exit 236, and proceed North on Hartmann Drive.

Go North on Hartmann Drive approximately 2.6 miles.

Turn right at the traffic light into the Cracker Barrel campus.

Proceed as indicated by signs to the Operations Services Building 4.

Table of Contents

Annex A

CRACKER BARREL OLD  
COUNTRY STORE, INC.

and

AMERICAN STOCK  
TRANSFER & TRUST  
COMPANY, LLC

**Rights Agreement**

Dated as of April 9, 2018

**Table of Contents**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
1. Definitions	A-1
2. Appointment of Rights Agent	A-4
3. Issue of Right Certificates	A-5
4. Form of Right Certificates	A-6
5. Countersignature and Registration	A-6
6. Transfer, Split Up, Combination and Exchange of Right Certificates; Mutilated, Destroyed, Lost or Stolen Right Certificates	A-6
7. Exercise of Rights; Purchase Price; Expiration Date of Rights	A-7
8. Cancellation and Destruction of Right Certificates	A-7
9. Availability of Preferred Shares	A-8
10. Preferred Shares Record Date	A-8
11. Adjustment of Purchase Price, Number of Shares or Number of Rights	A-8
12. Certificate of Adjusted Purchase Price or Number of Shares	A-13
13. Consolidation, Merger or Sale or Transfer of Assets or Earning Power	A-13
14. Fractional Rights and Fractional Shares	A-14
15. Rights of Action	A-14
16. Agreement of Right Holders	A-15
17. Right Certificate Holder Not Deemed a Shareholder	A-15
18. Concerning the Rights Agent	A-15
19. Merger or Consolidation or Change of Name of Rights Agent	A-15
20. Duties of Rights Agent	A-16
21. Change of Rights Agent	A-17
22. Issuance of New Right Certificates	A-18
23. Redemption	A-18
24. Exchange	A-19
25. Notice of Certain Events	A-19
26. Notices	A-20
27. Supplements and Amendments	A-20

28. Successors	A-21
29. Benefits of this Agreement	A-21
30. Severability	A-21
31. Governing Law	A-21
32. Counterparts	A-21

A-i

**Table of Contents**

	<b>Page</b>
33. Descriptive Headings	A-21
34. Force Majeure	A-21
Signatures	
Exhibit A - Articles of Amendment to the Amended and Restated Charter of the Company	
Exhibit B - Form of Right Certificate	
Exhibit C - Summary of Rights to Purchase Preferred Shares	

---

**Table of Contents**

Agreement, dated as of April 9, 2018, between CRACKER BARREL OLD COUNTRY STORE, INC., a Tennessee corporation (the Company ), and AMERICAN STOCK TRANSFER & TRUST COMPANY, LLC, a New York limited liability trust company, as rights agent (the Rights Agent ). This Agreement shall be effective as of the Effective Time.

The Board of Directors of the Company has authorized and declared a dividend of one preferred share purchase right (a Right ) for each Common Share (as hereinafter defined) of the Company outstanding on April 19, 2018 (the Record Date ), each Right representing the right to purchase one one-hundredth of a Preferred Share (as hereinafter defined), upon the terms and subject to the conditions herein set forth, and has further authorized and directed the issuance of one Right with respect to each Common Share that shall become outstanding between the Record Date and the earliest of the Distribution Date, the Redemption Date and the Final Expiration Date (as such terms are hereinafter defined).

Accordingly, in consideration of the premises and the mutual agreements herein set forth, the parties hereby agree as follows:

**Section 1. Definitions.** For purposes of this Agreement, the following terms have the meanings indicated:

(a) Acquiring Person shall mean any Person who or which, together with all Affiliates and Associates of such Person, shall be the Beneficial Owner of 20% or more of the Common Shares of the Company then outstanding, but shall not include the Company, any Subsidiary of the Company, any employee benefit plan of the Company or any Subsidiary of the Company, or any entity holding Common Shares for or pursuant to the terms of any such plan; provided, however, that no Person who Beneficially Owns, as of the time of the public announcement of this Agreement, 20% or more of the Common Shares of the Company then outstanding shall become an Acquiring Person unless such Person shall, after the time of the public announcement of this Agreement, increase its Beneficial Ownership of the then outstanding Common Shares (other than as a result of an acquisition of Common Shares by the Company) to an amount equal to or greater than the greater of (x) 20% or (y) the sum of (i) the lowest Beneficial Ownership of such Person as a percentage of the outstanding Common Shares as of any time from and after the public announcement of this Agreement plus (ii) 0.001%. Notwithstanding the foregoing, no Person shall become an Acquiring Person as the result of an acquisition of Common Shares by the Company which, by reducing the number of Common Shares of the Company outstanding, increases the proportionate number of Common Shares of the Company Beneficially Owned by such Person to 20% or more of the Common Shares of the Company then outstanding; provided, however, that, if a Person shall become the Beneficial Owner of 20% or more of the Common Shares of the Company then outstanding by reason of share purchases by the Company and shall, after the public announcement of such share purchases by the Company, become the Beneficial Owner of any additional Common Shares of the Company, then such Person shall be deemed to be an Acquiring Person. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the Board of Directors of the Company determines in good faith that a Person who would otherwise be an Acquiring Person, as defined pursuant to the foregoing provisions of this paragraph (a), has become such inadvertently, and such Person divests as promptly as practicable a sufficient number of Common Shares so that such Person would no longer be an Acquiring Person, as defined pursuant to the foregoing provisions of this paragraph (a), then such Person shall not be deemed to be an Acquiring Person for any purposes of this Agreement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if a bona fide swaps dealer who would otherwise be an Acquiring Person has become so as a result of its actions in the ordinary course of its business that the Board of Directors of the Company determines, in its sole discretion, were taken without the intent or effect of evading or assisting any other Person to evade the purposes and intent of this Agreement, or otherwise seeking to control or influence the management or policies of the Company, then, and unless and until the Board of Directors shall otherwise determine, such Person shall not be deemed to be an Acquiring Person for any purposes of this Agreement.

(b) Affiliate shall have the meaning ascribed to such term in Rule 12b-2 of the General Rules and Regulations under the Exchange Act as in effect on the date of this Agreement.

A-1



---

**Table of Contents**

(c) Associate shall have the meaning ascribed to such term in Rule 12b-2 of the General Rules and Regulations under the Exchange Act as in effect on the date of this Agreement.

(d) A Person shall be deemed the Beneficial Owner of and shall be deemed to Beneficially Own any securities:

(i) which such Person or any of such Person's Affiliates or Associates beneficially owns, directly or indirectly;

(ii) which such Person or any of such Person's Affiliates or Associates has (A) the right or the obligation to acquire (whether such right is exercisable, or such obligation is required to be performed, immediately or only after the passage of time) pursuant to any agreement, arrangement or understanding (other than customary agreements with and between underwriters and selling group members with respect to a bona fide public offering of securities), or upon the exercise of conversion rights, exchange rights, rights (other than these Rights), warrants or options, or otherwise; provided, however, that a Person shall not be deemed the Beneficial Owner of, or to Beneficially Own, securities tendered pursuant to a tender or exchange offer made by or on behalf of such Person or any of such Person's Affiliates or Associates until such tendered securities are accepted for purchase or exchange; or (B) the right to vote pursuant to any agreement, arrangement or understanding; provided, however, that a Person shall not be deemed the Beneficial Owner of, or to Beneficially Own, any security if the agreement, arrangement or understanding to vote such security (1) arises solely from a revocable proxy or consent given to such Person in response to a public proxy or consent solicitation made pursuant to, and in accordance with, the applicable rules and regulations promulgated under the Exchange Act and (2) is not also then reportable on Schedule 13D under the Exchange Act (or any comparable or successor report);

(iii) which are beneficially owned, directly or indirectly, by any other Person with which such Person or any of such Person's Affiliates or Associates has any agreement, arrangement or understanding (other than customary agreements with and between underwriters and selling group members with respect to a bona fide public offering of securities) for the purpose of acquiring, holding, voting (except to the extent contemplated by the proviso to Section 1(d)(ii)(B) hereof) or disposing of any securities of the Company; or

(iv) which are beneficially owned, directly or indirectly, by a Counterparty (or any of such Counterparty's Affiliates or Associates) under any Derivatives Contract (without regard to any short or similar position under the same or any other Derivatives Contract) to which such Person or any of such Person's Affiliates or Associates is a Receiving Party (as such terms are defined in the immediately following paragraph); provided, however, that the number of Common Shares that a Person is deemed to Beneficially Own pursuant to this clause (iv) in connection with a particular Derivatives Contract shall not exceed the number of Notional Common Shares with respect to such Derivatives Contract; provided, further, that the number of securities beneficially owned by each Counterparty (including its Affiliates and Associates) under a Derivatives Contract shall for purposes of this clause (iv) be deemed to include all securities that are beneficially owned, directly or indirectly, by any other Counterparty (or any of such other Counterparty's Affiliates or Associates) under any Derivatives Contract to which such first Counterparty (or any of such first Counterparty's Affiliates or Associates) is a Receiving Party, with this proviso being applied to successive Counterparties as appropriate.

A Derivatives Contract is a contract between two parties (the Receiving Party and the Counterparty) that is designed to produce economic benefits and risks to the Receiving Party that correspond substantially to the ownership by the Receiving Party of a number of Common Shares specified or referenced in such contract or, if a number of Common Shares is not so specified or referenced therein, the number of Common Shares that the Board in its discretion may determine to be the number to which such contract relates (the number corresponding to such economic benefits and risks, the Notional Common Shares), regardless of whether obligations under such contract are required or permitted to be settled through the delivery of cash, Common Shares or other property, without regard to any short position

under the same or any other Derivatives Contract. For the avoidance of doubt, interests in broad-based index options, broad-based index futures and broad-based publicly

A-2

**Table of Contents**

traded market baskets of stocks approved for trading by the appropriate federal governmental authority shall not be deemed to be Derivatives Contracts.

Notwithstanding anything in this definition of Beneficial Ownership to the contrary, the phrase then outstanding, when used with reference to a Person's Beneficial Ownership of securities of the Company, shall mean the number of such securities then issued and outstanding together with the number of such securities not then actually issued and outstanding which are issuable by the Company and which such Person would be deemed to Beneficially Own hereunder.

- (e) Business Day shall mean any day other than a Saturday, a Sunday, or a day on which banking institutions in the City of New York, New York are authorized or obligated by law or executive order to close.
- (f) Close of Business on any given date shall mean 5:00 P.M., New York City time, on such date; provided, however, that, if such date is not a Business Day, it shall mean 5:00 P.M., New York City time, on the next succeeding Business Day.
- (g) Common Shares when used with reference to the Company shall mean the shares of common stock, par value \$0.01 per share, of the Company. Common Shares when used with reference to any Person other than the Company shall mean the capital stock (or equity interest) with the greatest voting power of such other Person or, if such other Person is a Subsidiary of another Person, the Person or Persons which ultimately control such first-mentioned Person.
- (h) Distribution Date shall have the meaning set forth in Section 3(a) hereof.
- (i) Effective Time shall mean 5:00 P.M., New York City time, on April 9, 2018.
- (j) Exchange Act shall mean the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.
- (k) Exchange Ratio shall have the meaning set forth in Section 24(a) hereof.
- (l) Exemption Date shall have the meaning set forth in Section 23(c).
- (m) Final Expiration Date shall have the meaning set forth in Section 7(a) hereof.
- (n) Nasdaq shall mean The Nasdaq Stock Market LLC.
- (o) Person shall mean any individual, partnership, firm, corporation, limited liability company, association, trust, unincorporated organization or other entity, and shall include any successor (by merger or otherwise) of such entity, as well as any group under Rule 13d-5(b)(1) of the Exchange Act.
- (p) Preferred Shares shall mean shares of Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock, par value \$0.01 per share, of the Company having the rights and preferences set forth in the Company's Articles of Amendment to the Company's Amended and Restated Charter attached hereto as Exhibit A.
- (q) Purchase Price shall have the meaning set forth in Section 4 hereof.
- (r) Qualifying Offer shall mean an offer having all of the following characteristics:
  - (i) a fully financed all-cash tender offer for all of the Company's outstanding Common Shares;

(ii) an offer that shall remain open for not less than 60 Business Days after the offer has commenced within the meaning of Rule 14d-2(a) under the Exchange Act; provided, however, that such offer need not remain

A-3

**Table of Contents**

open beyond (1) the time for which any other offer satisfying the criteria for a Qualifying Offer is then required to be kept open, or (2) the expiration date, as such date may be extended by public announcement (with prompt written notice to the Rights Agent) in compliance with Rule 14e-1 of the Exchange Act, of any other tender offer for the Company's Common Shares with respect to which the Board of Directors has agreed to redeem the Rights immediately prior to acceptance for payment of Common Shares thereunder (unless such other offer is terminated prior to its expiration without any Common Shares having been purchased thereunder);

(iii) an offer that is conditioned on a minimum number of the Company's Common Shares being tendered and not withdrawn as of the expiration date as would provide the bidder, upon consummation of the offer, with beneficial ownership of at least a majority of the Company's outstanding Common Shares, which condition shall not be waivable; and

(iv) an offer pursuant to which the offeror has made an irrevocable written commitment to provide a subsequent offering period in accordance with Rule 14d-11 of the Exchange Act of 20 Business Days following the consummation of the offer.

For the purposes of the definition of Qualifying Offer, fully financed shall mean that the offeror has sufficient funds for the offer and related expenses which shall be evidenced by (i) firm, binding written commitments from responsible financial institutions having the necessary financial capacity, accepted by the offeror, to provide funds for such offer subject only to customary terms and conditions, (ii) cash or cash equivalents then available to the offeror, set apart and maintained solely for the purpose of funding the offer with an irrevocable written commitment being provided by the offeror to the Board of Directors of the Company to maintain such availability until the offer is consummated or withdrawn, or (iii) a combination of the foregoing; which evidence has been provided to the Company prior to, or upon, commencement of the offer. If an offer becomes a Qualifying Offer in accordance with this definition but subsequently ceases to be a Qualifying Offer as a result of the failure at a later date to continue to satisfy any of the requirements of this definition, such offer shall cease to be a Qualifying Offer and the provisions of Section 23(c) shall no longer be applicable to such offer.

(s) Record Date shall have the meaning set forth in the second paragraph hereof.

(t) Redemption Date shall have the meaning set forth in Section 7(a) hereof.

(u) Redemption Price shall have the meaning set forth in Section 23(a) hereof.

(v) Right shall have the meaning set forth in the second paragraph hereof.

(w) Right Certificate shall have the meaning set forth in Section 3(a) hereof.

(x) Shares Acquisition Date shall mean the first date of public announcement by the Company or an Acquiring Person that an Acquiring Person has become such.

(y) Subsidiary of any Person shall mean any corporation or other entity of which a majority of the voting power of the voting equity securities or equity interest is owned, directly or indirectly, by such Person.

(z) Summary of Rights shall have the meaning set forth in Section 3(b) hereof.

(aa) Trading Day shall have the meaning set forth in Section 11(d) hereof.

**Section 2. Appointment of Rights Agent.** The Company hereby appoints the Rights Agent to act as agent for the Company in accordance with the terms and conditions hereof, and the Rights Agent hereby accepts such appointment. The Company may from time to time appoint such co-Rights Agents as it may deem necessary or desirable, upon ten (10) days prior written notice to the Rights Agent. The Rights Agent shall have no duty to supervise, and shall in no event be liable for the acts or omissions of, any such co-Rights Agent.

A-4

## Table of Contents

### **Section 3. Issue of Right Certificates.**

(a) Until the tenth day after the Shares Acquisition Date (including any such date which is after the date of this Agreement and prior to the issuance of the Rights, the Distribution Date ), (x) the Rights will be evidenced (subject to the provisions of Section 3(b) hereof) by the certificates for Common Shares of the Company registered in the names of the holders thereof (which certificates shall also be deemed to be Right Certificates) and not by separate Right Certificates, and (y) the right to receive Right Certificates will be transferable only in connection with the transfer of Common Shares of the Company. As soon as practicable after the Distribution Date, the Company will prepare and execute, the Rights Agent will countersign, and the Company will send or cause to be sent (and the Rights Agent will, if requested, send) by first-class, insured, postage-prepaid mail, to each record holder of Common Shares of the Company as of the Close of Business on the Distribution Date, at the address of such holder shown on the records of the Company, a Right Certificate, in substantially the form of Exhibit B hereto (a Right Certificate ), evidencing one Right for each Common Share so held, subject to adjustment as provided herein. As of the Distribution Date, the Rights will be evidenced solely by such Right Certificates.

(b) On the Record Date, or as soon as practicable thereafter, the Company will send a copy of a Summary of Rights to Purchase Preferred Shares, in substantially the form of Exhibit C hereto (the Summary of Rights ), by first-class, postage-prepaid mail, to each record holder of Common Shares as of the Close of Business on the Record Date, at the address of such holder shown on the records of the Company. With respect to certificates for Common Shares of the Company outstanding as of the Record Date, until the Distribution Date, the Rights will be evidenced by such certificates registered in the names of the holders thereof together with a copy of the Summary of Rights attached thereto. Until the Distribution Date (or the earlier of the Redemption Date or the Final Expiration Date), the surrender for transfer of any certificate for Common Shares of the Company outstanding on the Record Date, with or without a copy of the Summary of Rights attached thereto, shall also constitute the transfer of the Rights associated with the Common Shares of the Company represented thereby.

(c) Certificates for Common Shares which become outstanding (including, without limitation, reacquired Common Shares referred to in the last sentence of this paragraph (c)) after the Record Date but prior to the earliest of the Distribution Date, the Redemption Date or the Final Expiration Date shall have impressed on, printed on, written on or otherwise affixed to them the following legend:

This certificate also evidences and entitles the holder hereof to certain rights as set forth in an Agreement between Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc. and American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, LLC, dated as of April 9, 2018, as it may be amended from time to time (the Agreement ), the terms of which are hereby incorporated herein by reference and a copy of which is on file at the principal executive offices of Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc. Under certain circumstances, as set forth in the Agreement, such Rights (as defined in the Agreement) will be evidenced by separate certificates and will no longer be evidenced by this certificate. Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc. will mail to the holder of this certificate a copy of the Agreement without charge after receipt of a written request therefor. As set forth in the Agreement, Rights Beneficially Owned by any Person (as defined in the Agreement) who becomes an Acquiring Person (as defined in the Agreement) become null and void.

With respect to such certificates containing the foregoing legend, until the Distribution Date, the Rights associated with the Common Shares of the Company represented by such certificates shall be evidenced by such certificates alone, and the surrender for transfer of any such certificate shall also constitute the transfer of the Rights associated with the Common Shares of the Company represented thereby. In the event that the Company purchases or acquires any Common Shares of the Company after the Record Date but prior to the Distribution Date, any Rights associated with such Common Shares of the Company shall be deemed cancelled and retired so that the Company shall not be entitled to exercise any Rights associated with the Common Shares of the Company which are no longer outstanding.

Notwithstanding this Section 3(c), the omission of a legend shall not affect the enforceability of any part of this Rights Agreement or the rights of any holder of the Rights.

A-5



## **Table of Contents**

**Section 4. Form of Right Certificates.** The Right Certificates (and the forms of election to purchase Preferred Shares and of assignment to be printed on the reverse thereof) shall be substantially the same as Exhibit B hereto, and may have such marks of identification or designation and such legends, summaries or endorsements printed thereon as the Company may deem appropriate and as are not inconsistent with the provisions of this Agreement, or as may be required to comply with any applicable law or with any applicable rule or regulation made pursuant thereto or with any applicable rule or regulation of any stock exchange or the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, or to conform to usage. Subject to the provisions of Section 22 hereof, the Right Certificates shall entitle the holders thereof to purchase such number of one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share as shall be set forth therein at the price per one one-hundredth of a Preferred Share set forth therein (the Purchase Price ), but the number of such one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share and the Purchase Price shall be subject to adjustment as provided herein.

**Section 5. Countersignature and Registration.** The Right Certificates shall be executed on behalf of the Company by its Chairman of the Board, its Chief Executive Officer, its President, any of its Vice Presidents or its Treasurer, either manually or by facsimile signature, shall have affixed thereto the Company's seal or a facsimile thereof, and shall be attested by the Secretary or an Assistant Secretary of the Company, either manually or by facsimile signature. The Right Certificates shall be countersigned, either manually or by facsimile signature, by the Rights Agent and shall not be valid for any purpose unless countersigned. In case any officer of the Company who shall have signed any of the Right Certificates shall cease to be such officer of the Company before countersignature by the Rights Agent and issuance and delivery by the Company, such Right Certificates, nevertheless, may be countersigned by the Rights Agent and issued and delivered by the Company with the same force and effect as though the individual who signed such Right Certificates had not ceased to be such officer of the Company; and any Right Certificate may be signed on behalf of the Company by any individual who, at the actual date of the execution of such Right Certificate, shall be a proper officer of the Company to sign such Right Certificate, although at the date of the execution of this Agreement any such individual was not such an officer.

Following the Distribution Date, the Rights Agent will keep or cause to be kept, at its principal office, books for registration and transfer of the Right Certificates issued hereunder. Such books shall show the names and addresses of the respective holders of the Right Certificates, the number of Rights evidenced on its face by each of the Right Certificates and the date of each of the Right Certificates.

**Section 6. Transfer, Split Up, Combination and Exchange of Right Certificates; Mutilated, Destroyed, Lost or Stolen Right Certificates.** Subject to the provisions of Section 14 hereof, at any time after the Close of Business on the Distribution Date, and at or prior to the Close of Business on the earlier of the Redemption Date or the Final Expiration Date, any Right Certificate or Right Certificates (other than Right Certificates representing Rights that have become void pursuant to Section 11(a)(ii) hereof or that have been exchanged pursuant to Section 24 hereof) may be transferred, split up, combined or exchanged for another Right Certificate or Right Certificates entitling the registered holder to purchase a like number of one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share as the Right Certificate or Right Certificates surrendered then entitled such holder to purchase. Any registered holder desiring to transfer, split up, combine or exchange any Right Certificate or Right Certificates shall make such request in writing delivered to the Rights Agent, and shall surrender the Right Certificate or Right Certificates to be transferred, split up, combined or exchanged at the principal office of the Rights Agent. Thereupon the Rights Agent shall countersign and deliver to the Person entitled thereto a Right Certificate or Right Certificates, as the case may be, as so requested. The Company may require payment of a sum sufficient to cover any tax or charge that may be imposed in connection with any transfer, split up, combination or exchange of Right Certificates.

Upon receipt by the Company and the Rights Agent of evidence reasonably satisfactory to them of the loss, theft, destruction or mutilation of a Right Certificate, and, in case of loss, theft or destruction, of indemnity or security reasonably satisfactory to them, and, at the Company's request, reimbursement to the Company and the Rights Agent

of all reasonable expenses incidental thereto, and upon surrender to the Rights Agent and cancellation of the Right Certificate if mutilated, the Company will make and deliver a new Right Certificate of

A-6

## **Table of Contents**

like tenor to the Rights Agent for delivery to the registered holder in lieu of the Right Certificate so lost, stolen, destroyed or mutilated.

Notwithstanding any other provisions hereof, the Company and the Rights Agent may amend this Rights Agreement to provide for uncertificated Rights in addition to or in place of Rights evidenced by Rights Certificates.

### **Section 7. Exercise of Rights; Purchase Price; Expiration Date of Rights.**

(a) The registered holder of any Right Certificate may exercise the Rights evidenced thereby (except as otherwise provided herein), in whole or in part, at any time after the Distribution Date, upon surrender of the Right Certificate, with the form of election to purchase on the reverse side thereof duly executed, to the Rights Agent at the principal office of the Rights Agent, together with payment of the Purchase Price for each one one-hundredth of a Preferred Share as to which the Rights are exercised, at or prior to the earliest of (i) the earlier to occur of (A) the Close of Business on the day following the certification of the voting results of the Company's 2018 annual meeting of shareholders, if at such shareholder meeting a proposal to approve this Agreement has not received the affirmative vote of the holders of a majority of the Company's Common Shares present in person or represented by proxy, entitled to vote and actually voted on such proposal or (B) Close of Business on April 9, 2021 (such earlier date, the Final Expiration Date ), (ii) the time at which the Rights are redeemed as provided in Section 23 hereof (the Redemption Date ), (iii) the time at which such Rights are exchanged as provided in Section 24 hereof, or (iv) the time at which the Rights expire in connection with the consummation of a Qualifying Offer as provided in Section 23(d) hereof.

(b) The Purchase Price for each one one-hundredth of a Preferred Share purchasable pursuant to the exercise of a Right shall initially be \$600, and shall be subject to adjustment from time to time as provided in Section 11 or 13 hereof, and shall be payable in lawful money of the United States of America in accordance with paragraph (c) below.

(c) Upon receipt of a Right Certificate representing exercisable Rights, with the form of election to purchase duly executed, accompanied by payment of the Purchase Price for the shares to be purchased and an amount equal to any applicable transfer tax required to be paid by the holder of such Right Certificate in accordance with Section 9 hereof by cash or by certified check, cashier's check or money order payable to the order of the Company, the Rights Agent shall thereupon promptly (i) (A) requisition from any transfer agent of the Preferred Shares certificates for the number of Preferred Shares to be purchased and the Company hereby irrevocably authorizes any such transfer agent to comply with all such requests, or (B) requisition from the depositary agent depositary receipts representing such number of one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share as are to be purchased (in which case certificates for the Preferred Shares represented by such receipts shall be deposited by the transfer agent of the Preferred Shares with such depositary agent) and the Company hereby directs such depositary agent to comply with such request; (ii) when appropriate, requisition from the Company the amount of cash to be paid in lieu of issuance of fractional shares in accordance with Section 14 hereof; (iii) after receipt of such certificates or depositary receipts, cause the same to be delivered to or upon the order of the registered holder of such Right Certificate, registered in such name or names as may be designated by such holder; and (iv) when appropriate, after receipt, deliver such cash to or upon the order of the registered holder of such Right Certificate.

(d) In case the registered holder of any Right Certificate shall exercise less than all the Rights evidenced thereby, a new Right Certificate evidencing Rights equivalent to the Rights remaining unexercised shall be issued by the Rights Agent to the registered holder of such Right Certificate or to such holder's duly authorized assigns, subject to the provisions of Section 14 hereof.

**Section 8. Cancellation and Destruction of Right Certificates.** All Right Certificates surrendered for the purpose of exercise, transfer, split up, combination or exchange shall, if surrendered to the Company or to any of its agents, be

Edgar Filing: CRACKER BARREL OLD COUNTRY STORE, INC - Form DEF 14A  
delivered to the Rights Agent for cancellation or in cancelled form, or, if surrendered to the Rights

A-7

## **Table of Contents**

Agent, shall be cancelled by it, and no Right Certificates shall be issued in lieu thereof except as expressly permitted by any of the provisions of this Agreement. The Company shall deliver to the Rights Agent for cancellation and retirement, and the Rights Agent shall so cancel and retire, any other Right Certificate purchased or acquired by the Company otherwise than upon the exercise thereof. The Rights Agent shall deliver all cancelled Right Certificates to the Company, or shall, at the written request of the Company, destroy such cancelled Right Certificates, and, in such case, shall deliver a certificate of destruction thereof to the Company.

**Section 9. Availability of Preferred Shares.** The Company covenants and agrees that it will cause to be reserved and kept available out of its authorized and unissued Preferred Shares or any Preferred Shares held in its treasury the number of Preferred Shares that will be sufficient to permit the exercise in full of all outstanding Rights in accordance with Section 7 hereof. The Company covenants and agrees that it will take all such action as may be necessary to ensure that all Preferred Shares delivered upon exercise of Rights shall, at the time of delivery of the certificates for such Preferred Shares (subject to payment of the Purchase Price), be duly and validly authorized and issued and fully paid and nonassessable shares.

The Company further covenants and agrees that it will pay when due and payable any and all federal and state transfer taxes and charges which may be payable in respect of the issuance or delivery of the Right Certificates or of any Preferred Shares upon the exercise of Rights. The Company shall not, however, be required to pay any transfer tax which may be payable in respect of any transfer or delivery of Right Certificates to a Person other than, or the issuance or delivery of certificates or depositary receipts for the Preferred Shares in a name other than that of, the registered holder of the Right Certificate evidencing Rights surrendered for exercise or to issue or to deliver any certificates or depositary receipts for Preferred Shares upon the exercise of any Rights until any such tax shall have been paid (any such tax being payable by the holder of such Right Certificate at the time of surrender) or until it has been established to the Company's reasonable satisfaction that no such tax is due.

**Section 10. Preferred Shares Record Date.** Each Person in whose name any certificate for Preferred Shares is issued upon the exercise of Rights shall for all purposes be deemed to have become the holder of record of the Preferred Shares represented thereby on, and such certificate shall be dated, the date upon which the Right Certificate evidencing such Rights was duly surrendered and payment of the Purchase Price (and any applicable transfer taxes) was made; provided, however, that, if the date of such surrender and payment is a date upon which the Preferred Shares transfer books of the Company are closed, such Person shall be deemed to have become the record holder of such shares on, and such certificate shall be dated, the next succeeding Business Day on which the Preferred Shares transfer books of the Company are open. Prior to the exercise of the Rights evidenced thereby, the holder of a Right Certificate shall not be entitled to any rights of a holder of Preferred Shares for which the Rights shall be exercisable, including, without limitation, the right to vote, to receive dividends or other distributions or to exercise any preemptive rights, and shall not be entitled to receive any notice of any proceedings of the Company, except as provided herein.

**Section 11. Adjustment of Purchase Price, Number of Shares or Number of Rights.** The Purchase Price, the number of Preferred Shares covered by each Right and the number of Rights outstanding are subject to adjustment from time to time as provided in this Section 11.

(a)

(i) In the event the Company shall at any time after the date of this Agreement (A) declare a dividend on the Preferred Shares payable in Preferred Shares, (B) subdivide the outstanding Preferred Shares, (C) combine the outstanding Preferred Shares into a smaller number of Preferred Shares or (D) issue any shares of its capital stock in a reclassification of the Preferred Shares (including any such reclassification in connection with a share exchange,

consolidation or merger in which the Company is the continuing or surviving corporation), except as otherwise provided in this Section 11(a), the Purchase Price in effect at the time of the record date for such dividend or of the effective date of such subdivision, combination or reclassification, and the number and kind of

A-8

---

**Table of Contents**

shares of capital stock issuable on such date, shall be proportionately adjusted so that the holder of any Right exercised after such time shall be entitled to receive the aggregate number and kind of shares of capital stock which, if such Right had been exercised immediately prior to such date and at a time when the Preferred Shares transfer books of the Company were open, such holder would have owned upon such exercise and been entitled to receive by virtue of such dividend, subdivision, combination or reclassification; provided, however, that in no event shall the consideration to be paid upon the exercise of one Right be less than the aggregate par value of the shares of capital stock of the Company issuable upon exercise of one Right.

(ii) Subject to Section 24 hereof, in the event any Person becomes an Acquiring Person, each holder of a Right shall thereafter have a right to receive, upon exercise thereof at a price equal to the then current Purchase Price multiplied by the number of one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share for which a Right is then exercisable, in accordance with the terms of this Agreement and in lieu of Preferred Shares, such number of Common Shares of the Company as shall equal the result obtained by (A) multiplying the then current Purchase Price by the number of one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share for which a Right is then exercisable and dividing that product by (B) 50% of the then current per share market price of the Common Shares of the Company (determined pursuant to Section 11 (d) hereof) on the date of the occurrence of such event. In the event that any Person shall become an Acquiring Person and the Rights shall then be outstanding, the Company shall not take any action which would eliminate or diminish the benefits intended to be afforded by the Rights.

From and after the occurrence of such event, any Rights that are or were acquired or Beneficially Owned by any Acquiring Person (or any Associate or Affiliate of such Acquiring Person) shall be null and void without any further action, and any holder of such Rights shall thereafter have no right to exercise such Rights under any provision of this Agreement or otherwise. Neither the Company nor the Rights Agent shall have liability to any holder of Right Certificates or other Person as a result of its failure to make any determinations with respect to an Acquiring Person or its Affiliates, Associates or transferees hereunder. No Right Certificate shall be issued pursuant to Section 3 hereof that represents Rights Beneficially Owned by an Acquiring Person whose Rights would be void pursuant to the preceding sentence or any Associate or Affiliate thereof; no Right Certificate shall be issued at any time upon the transfer of any Rights to an Acquiring Person whose Rights would be void pursuant to the preceding sentence or any Associate or Affiliate thereof or to any nominee of such Acquiring Person, Associate or Affiliate or with respect to any Common Shares otherwise deemed to be Beneficially Owned by any of the foregoing; and any Right Certificate delivered to the Rights Agent for transfer to an Acquiring Person or other Person whose Rights would be void pursuant to the preceding sentence shall be cancelled.

(iii) In the event that there shall not be sufficient Common Shares issued but not outstanding or authorized but unissued to permit the exercise in full of the Rights in accordance with subparagraph (ii) above, the Company shall take all such action as may be necessary to authorize additional Common Shares for issuance upon exercise of the Rights. In the event the Company shall, after good faith effort, be unable to take all such action as may be necessary to authorize such additional Common Shares, the Company shall substitute, for each Common Share that would otherwise be issuable upon exercise of a Right, a number of Preferred Shares or fraction thereof such that the current per share market price of one Preferred Share multiplied by such number or fraction is equal to the current per share market price of one Common Share as of the date of issuance of such Preferred Shares or fraction thereof.

(b) In case the Company shall fix a record date for the issuance of rights, options or warrants to all holders of Preferred Shares entitling them (for a period expiring within 45 calendar days after such record date) to subscribe for or purchase Preferred Shares (or shares having the same rights, privileges and preferences as the Preferred Shares (equivalent preferred shares )) or securities convertible into Preferred Shares or equivalent preferred shares at a price per Preferred Share or equivalent preferred share (or having a conversion price per share, if a security convertible into Preferred Shares or equivalent preferred shares) less than the then current per share market price of the Preferred

Shares (as defined in Section 11(d)) on such record date, the Purchase Price to be in effect after such record date shall be determined by multiplying the Purchase Price in effect immediately

A-9



---

**Table of Contents**

prior to such record date by a fraction, the numerator of which shall be the number of Preferred Shares outstanding on such record date plus the number of Preferred Shares which the aggregate offering price of the total number of Preferred Shares and/or equivalent preferred shares so to be offered (and/or the aggregate initial conversion price of the convertible securities so to be offered) would purchase at such current market price and the denominator of which shall be the number of Preferred Shares outstanding on such record date plus the number of additional Preferred Shares and/or equivalent preferred shares to be offered for subscription or purchase (or into which the convertible securities so to be offered are initially convertible); provided, however, that in no event shall the consideration to be paid upon the exercise of one Right be less than the aggregate par value of the shares of capital stock of the Company issuable upon exercise of one Right. In case such subscription price may be paid in a consideration part or all of which shall be in a form other than cash, the value of such consideration shall be as determined in good faith by the Board of Directors of the Company, whose determination shall be described in a statement filed with the Rights Agent and shall be binding on the Rights Agent and holders of the Rights.

Preferred Shares owned by or held for the account of the Company or any Subsidiary of the Company shall not be deemed outstanding for the purpose of any such computation. Such adjustment shall be made successively whenever such a record date is fixed; and, in the event that such rights, options or warrants are not so issued, the Purchase Price shall be adjusted to be the Purchase Price which would then be in effect if such record date had not been fixed.

(c) In case the Company shall fix a record date for the making of a distribution to all holders of the Preferred Shares (including any such distribution made in connection with a share exchange, consolidation or merger in which the Company is the continuing or surviving corporation) of evidences of indebtedness or assets (other than a regular quarterly cash dividend or a dividend payable in Preferred Shares) or subscription rights or warrants (excluding those referred to in Section 11(b) hereof), the Purchase Price to be in effect after such record date shall be determined by multiplying the Purchase Price in effect immediately prior to such record date by a fraction, the numerator of which shall be the then-current per share market price of the Preferred Shares on such record date, less the fair market value (as determined in good faith by the Board of Directors of the Company, whose determination shall be described in a statement filed with the Rights Agent and shall be binding on the Rights Agent and holders of the Rights) of the portion of the assets or evidences of indebtedness so to be distributed or of such subscription rights or warrants applicable to one Preferred Share and the denominator of which shall be such then-current per share market price of the Preferred Shares on such record date; provided, however, that in no event shall the consideration to be paid upon the exercise of one Right be less than the aggregate par value of the shares of capital stock of the Company to be issued upon exercise of one Right. Such adjustments shall be made successively whenever such a record date is fixed; and, in the event that such distribution is not so made, the Purchase Price shall again be adjusted to be the Purchase Price which would then be in effect if such record date had not been fixed.

(d)

(i) For the purpose of any computation hereunder, the current per share market price of any security (a Security for the purpose of this Section 11(d)(i)) on any date shall be deemed to be the average of the daily closing prices per share of such Security for the 30 consecutive Trading Days immediately prior to such date; provided, however, that, in the event that the current per share market price of the Security is determined during a period following the announcement by the issuer of such Security of (A) a dividend or distribution on such Security payable in shares of such Security or Securities convertible into such shares, or (B) any subdivision, combination or reclassification of such Security and prior to the expiration of 30 Trading Days after the ex-dividend date for such dividend or distribution, or the record date for such subdivision, combination or reclassification, then, and in each such case, the current per share market price shall be appropriately adjusted to reflect the current market price per share equivalent of such Security. The closing price for each day shall be the last sale price, regular way, reported at or prior to 4:00 P.M. New York City time or, in case no such sale takes place on such day, the average of the bid and asked prices, regular way, reported as

of 4:00 P.M. New York City

A-10

---

**Table of Contents**

time, in either case, as reported in the principal consolidated transaction reporting system with respect to securities listed or admitted to trading on the New York Stock Exchange or, if the Security is not listed or admitted to trading on the New York Stock Exchange, as reported in the principal consolidated transaction reporting system with respect to securities listed on the principal national securities exchange on which the Security is listed or admitted to trading or, if the Security is not listed or admitted to trading on any national securities exchange, the last quoted price reported at or prior to 4:00 P.M. New York City time or, if not so quoted, the average of the high bid and low asked prices in the over-the-counter market, as reported as of 4:00 P.M. New York City time by Nasdaq or such other system then in use, or, if on any such date the Security is not quoted by any such organization, the average of the closing bid and asked prices as furnished by a professional market maker making a market in the Security selected by the Board of Directors of the Company. The term Trading Day shall mean a day on which the principal national securities exchange on which the Security is listed or admitted to trading is open for the transaction of business, or, if the Security is not listed or admitted to trading on any national securities exchange, a Business Day.

(ii) For the purpose of any computation hereunder, the current per share market price of the Preferred Shares shall be determined in accordance with the method set forth in Section 11(d)(i). If the Preferred Shares are not publicly traded, the current per share market price of the Preferred Shares shall be conclusively deemed to be the current per share market price of the Common Shares as determined pursuant to Section 11(d)(i) hereof (appropriately adjusted to reflect any stock split, stock dividend or similar transaction occurring after the date hereof), multiplied by one hundred. If neither the Common Shares nor the Preferred Shares are publicly held or so listed or traded, current per share market price shall mean the fair value per share as determined in good faith by the Board of Directors of the Company, whose determination shall be described in a statement filed with the Rights Agent.

(e) No adjustment in the Purchase Price shall be required unless such adjustment would require an increase or decrease of at least 1% in the Purchase Price; provided, however, that any adjustments which by reason of this Section 11 (e) are not required to be made shall be carried forward and taken into account in any subsequent adjustment. All calculations under this Section 11 shall be made to the nearest cent or to the nearest one one-millionth of a Preferred Share or one ten-thousandth of any other share or security as the case may be. Notwithstanding the first sentence of this Section 11(e), any adjustment required by this Section 11 shall be made no later than the earlier of (i) three years from the date of the transaction which requires such adjustment or (ii) the date of the expiration of the right to exercise any Rights.

(f) If, as a result of an adjustment made pursuant to Section 11(a) hereof, the holder of any Right thereafter exercised shall become entitled to receive any shares of capital stock of the Company other than Preferred Shares, thereafter the number of such other shares so receivable upon exercise of any Right shall be subject to adjustment from time to time in a manner and on terms as nearly equivalent as practicable to the provisions with respect to the Preferred Shares contained in Section 11(a) through (c) hereof, inclusive, and the provisions of Sections 7, 9, 10 and 13 hereof with respect to the Preferred Shares shall apply on like terms to any such other shares.

(g) All Rights originally issued by the Company subsequent to any adjustment made to the Purchase Price hereunder shall evidence the right to purchase, at the adjusted Purchase Price, the number of one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share purchasable from time to time hereunder upon exercise of the Rights, all subject to further adjustment as provided herein.

(h) Unless the Company shall have exercised its election as provided in Section 11(i) hereof, upon each adjustment of the Purchase Price as a result of the calculations made in Sections 11(b) and (c) hereof, each Right outstanding immediately prior to the making of such adjustment shall thereafter evidence the right to purchase, at the adjusted Purchase Price, that number of one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share (calculated to the nearest one one-millionth of a Preferred Share) obtained by (A) multiplying (x) the number of one one-hundredths of a share covered by a Right

immediately prior to this adjustment by (y) the Purchase Price in effect immediately

A-11

**Table of Contents**

prior to such adjustment of the Purchase Price and (B) dividing the product so obtained by the Purchase Price in effect immediately after such adjustment of the Purchase Price.

(i) The Company may elect, on or after the date of any adjustment of the Purchase Price, to adjust the number of Rights in substitution for any adjustment in the number of one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share purchasable upon the exercise of a Right. Each of the Rights outstanding after such adjustment of the number of Rights shall be exercisable for the number of one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share for which a Right was exercisable immediately prior to such adjustment. Each Right held of record prior to such adjustment of the number of Rights shall become that number of Rights (calculated to the nearest one ten-thousandth) obtained by dividing the Purchase Price in effect immediately prior to adjustment of the Purchase Price by the Purchase Price in effect immediately after adjustment of the Purchase Price. The Company shall make a public announcement of its election to adjust the number of Rights, indicating the record date for the adjustment, and, if known at the time, the amount of the adjustment to be made. This record date may be the date on which the Purchase Price is adjusted or any day thereafter, but, if the Right Certificates have been issued, shall be at least 10 days later than the date of the public announcement. If Right Certificates have been issued, upon each adjustment of the number of Rights pursuant to this Section 11(i), the Company shall, as promptly as practicable, cause to be distributed to holders of record of Right Certificates on such record date Right Certificates evidencing, subject to Section 14 hereof, the additional Rights to which such holders shall be entitled as a result of such adjustment, or, at the option of the Company, shall cause to be distributed to such holders of record in substitution and replacement for the Right Certificates held by such holders prior to the date of adjustment, and upon surrender thereof, if required by the Company, new Right Certificates evidencing all the Rights to which such holders shall be entitled after such adjustment. Right Certificates so to be distributed shall be issued, executed and countersigned in the manner provided for herein, and shall be registered in the names of the holders of record of Right Certificates on the record date specified in the public announcement.

(j) Irrespective of any adjustment or change in the Purchase Price or in the number of one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share issuable upon the exercise of the Rights, the Right Certificates theretofore and thereafter issued may continue to express the Purchase Price and the number of one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share which were expressed in the initial Right Certificates issued hereunder.

(k) Before taking any action that would cause an adjustment reducing the Purchase Price below one one-hundredth of the then par value, if any, of the Preferred Shares issuable upon exercise of the Rights, the Company shall take any corporate action which may, in the opinion of its counsel, be necessary in order that the Company may validly and legally issue fully paid and nonassessable Preferred Shares at such adjusted Purchase Price.

(l) In any case in which this Section 11 shall require that an adjustment in the Purchase Price be made effective as of a record date for a specified event, the Company may elect to defer until the occurrence of such event the issuing to the holder of any Right exercised after such record date of the Preferred Shares and other capital stock or securities of the Company, if any, issuable upon such exercise over and above the Preferred Shares and other capital stock or securities of the Company, if any, issuable upon such exercise on the basis of the Purchase Price in effect prior to such adjustment; provided, however, that the Company shall deliver to such holder a due bill or other appropriate instrument evidencing such holder's right to receive such additional shares upon the occurrence of the event requiring such adjustment.

(m) Anything in this Section 11 to the contrary notwithstanding, the Company shall be entitled to make such reductions in the Purchase Price, in addition to those adjustments expressly required by this Section 11, as and to the extent that it, in its sole discretion, shall determine to be advisable in order that any consolidation or subdivision of the Preferred Shares, issuance wholly for cash of any Preferred Shares at less than the current market price, issuance wholly for cash of Preferred Shares or securities which by their terms are convertible into or exchangeable for

Preferred Shares, dividends on Preferred Shares payable in Preferred Shares or issuance of rights, options or warrants referred to in Section 11(b) hereof, hereafter made by the Company to holders of the Preferred Shares shall not be taxable to such shareholders.

A-12

---

**Table of Contents**

(n) In the event that, at any time after the date of this Agreement and prior to the Distribution Date, the Company shall (i) declare or pay any dividend on the Common Shares payable in Common Shares, or (ii) effect a subdivision, combination or consolidation of the Common Shares (by reclassification or otherwise than by payment of dividends in Common Shares) into a greater or lesser number of Common Shares, then, in any such case, (A) the number of one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share purchasable after such event upon proper exercise of each Right shall be determined by multiplying the number of one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share so purchasable immediately prior to such event by a fraction, the numerator of which is the number of Common Shares outstanding immediately before such event and the denominator of which is the number of Common Shares outstanding immediately after such event, and (B) each Common Share outstanding immediately after such event shall have issued with respect to it that number of Rights which each Common Share outstanding immediately prior to such event had issued with respect to it. The adjustments provided for in this Section 11(n) shall be made successively whenever such a dividend is declared or paid or such a subdivision, combination or consolidation is effected.

**Section 12. Certificate of Adjusted Purchase Price or Number of Shares.** Whenever an adjustment is made as provided in Section 11 or 13 hereof, the Company shall promptly (a) prepare a certificate setting forth such adjustment or describing such event and a brief statement of the facts accounting for such adjustment or describing such event, (b) file with the Rights Agent and with each transfer agent for the Common Shares or the Preferred Shares a copy of such certificate and (c) if such adjustment occurs at any time after the Distribution Date, mail a brief summary thereof to each holder of a Right Certificate in accordance with Section 25 hereof.

**Section 13. Consolidation, Merger or Sale or Transfer of Assets or Earning Power.** In the event, directly or indirectly, at any time after a Person has become an Acquiring Person, (a) the Company shall effect a share exchange, consolidate with, or merge with and into, any other Person, (b) any Person shall effect a share exchange, consolidate with the Company, or merge with and into the Company and the Company shall be the continuing or surviving corporation of such share exchange or merger and, in connection with such merger, all or part of the Common Shares shall be changed into or exchanged for stock or other securities of any other Person (or the Company) or cash or any other property, or (c) the Company shall sell or otherwise transfer (or one or more of its Subsidiaries shall sell or otherwise transfer), in one or more transactions, assets or earning power aggregating 50% or more of the assets or earning power of the Company and its Subsidiaries (taken as a whole) to any other Person other than the Company or one or more of its wholly-owned Subsidiaries, then, and in each such case, proper provision shall be made so that (i) each holder of a Right (except as otherwise provided herein) shall thereafter have the right to receive, upon the exercise thereof at a price equal to the then current Purchase Price multiplied by the number of one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share for which a Right is then exercisable, in accordance with the terms of this Agreement and in lieu of Preferred Shares, such number of result obtained by (A) multiplying the then current Purchase Price by the number of one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share for which a Right is then exercisable and dividing that product by (B) 50% of the then current per share market price of the Common Shares of such other Person (determined pursuant to Section 11(d) hereof) on the date of consummation of such consolidation, merger, sale or transfer; (ii) the issuer of such Common Shares shall thereafter be liable for, and shall assume, by virtue of such consolidation, merger, sale or transfer, all the obligations and duties of the Company pursuant to this Agreement; (iii) the term Company shall thereafter be deemed to refer to such issuer; and (iv) such issuer shall take such steps (including, but not limited to, the reservation of a sufficient number of its Common Shares in accordance with Section 9 hereof) in connection with such consummation as may be necessary to assure that the provisions hereof shall thereafter be applicable, as nearly as reasonably may be, in relation to the Common Shares of the Company thereafter deliverable upon the exercise of the Rights. The Company shall not consummate any such consolidation, merger, sale or transfer unless, prior thereto, the Company and such issuer shall have executed and delivered to the Rights Agent a supplemental agreement so providing. The Company shall not enter into any transaction of the kind referred to in this Section 13 if at the time of such transaction there are any rights, warrants, instruments or securities outstanding or any agreements or arrangements which, as a result of the consummation of such transaction, would eliminate or substantially diminish

the benefits intended to be afforded by the Rights. The provisions of

A-13



---

**Table of Contents**

this Section 13 shall similarly apply to successive mergers, share exchanges, or consolidations or sales or other transfers.

**Section 14. Fractional Rights and Fractional Shares.**

(a) The Company shall not be required to issue fractions of Rights or to distribute Right Certificates which evidence fractional Rights. In lieu of such fractional Rights, there shall be paid to the registered holders of the Right Certificates with regard to which such fractional Rights would otherwise be issuable, an amount in cash equal to the same fraction of the current market value of a whole Right. For the purposes of this Section 14(a), the current market value of a whole Right shall be the closing price of the Rights for the Trading Day immediately prior to the date on which such fractional Rights would have been otherwise issuable. The closing price for any day shall be the last sale price, regular way, or, in case no such sale takes place on such day, the average of the closing bid and asked prices, regular way, in either case, as reported in the principal consolidated transaction reporting system with respect to securities listed or admitted to trading on the New York Stock Exchange or, if the Rights are not listed or admitted to trading on the New York Stock Exchange, as reported in the principal consolidated transaction reporting system with respect to securities listed on the principal national securities exchange on which the Rights are listed or admitted to trading or, if the Rights are not listed or admitted to trading on any national securities exchange, the last quoted price or, if not so quoted, the average of the high bid and low asked prices in the over-the-counter market, as reported by Nasdaq or such other system then in use or, if on any such date the Rights are not quoted by any such organization, the average of the closing bid and asked prices as furnished by a professional market maker making a market in the Rights selected by the Board of Directors of the Company. If on any such date no such market maker is making a market in the Rights, the fair value of the Rights on such date as determined in good faith by the Board of Directors of the Company shall be used.

(b) The Company shall not be required to issue fractions of Preferred Shares (other than fractions which are integral multiples of one one-hundredth of a Preferred Share) upon exercise of the Rights or to distribute certificates which evidence fractional Preferred Shares (other than fractions which are integral multiples of one one-hundredth of a Preferred Share). Fractions of Preferred Shares in integral multiples of one one-hundredth of a Preferred Share may, at the election of the Company, be evidenced by depositary receipts, pursuant to an appropriate agreement between the Company and a depositary selected by it; provided that such agreement shall provide that the holders of such depositary receipts shall have all the rights, privileges and preferences to which they are entitled as beneficial owners of the Preferred Shares represented by such depositary receipts. In lieu of fractional Preferred Shares that are not integral multiples of one one-hundredth of a Preferred Share, the Company shall pay to the registered holders of Right Certificates at the time such Rights are exercised as herein provided an amount in cash equal to the same fraction of the current market value of one Preferred Share. For the purposes of this Section 14(b), the current market value of a Preferred Share shall be the closing price of a Preferred Share (as determined pursuant to the second sentence of Section 11(d)(i) hereof) for the Trading Day immediately prior to the date of such exercise.

(c) The holder of a Right, by the acceptance of the Right, expressly waives such holder's right to receive any fractional Rights or any fractional shares upon exercise of a Right (except as provided above).

**Section 15. Rights of Action.** All rights of action in respect of this Agreement, excepting the rights of action given to the Rights Agent under Section 18 hereof, are vested in the respective registered holders of the Right Certificates (and, prior to the Distribution Date, the registered holders of the Common Shares); and any registered holder of any Right Certificate (or, prior to the Distribution Date, of the Common Shares), without the consent of the Rights Agent or of the holder of any other Right Certificate (or, prior to the Distribution Date, of the Common Shares), may, in such holder's own behalf and for such holder's own benefit, enforce, and may institute and maintain any suit, action or proceeding against the Company to enforce, or otherwise act in respect of, such holder's right to exercise the Rights

evidenced by such Right Certificate in the manner provided in such Right Certificate and in this Agreement. Without limiting the foregoing or any remedies available to the holders

A-14

**Table of Contents**

of Rights, it is specifically acknowledged that the holders of Rights would not have an adequate remedy at law for any breach of this Agreement, and will be entitled to specific performance of the obligations under, and injunctive relief against actual or threatened violations of the obligations of any Person subject to, this Agreement.

**Section 16. Agreement of Right Holders.** Every holder of a Right, by accepting the same, consents and agrees with the Company and the Rights Agent and with every other holder of a Right that:

(a) prior to the Distribution Date, the Rights will be transferable only in connection with the transfer of the Common Shares;

(b) after the Distribution Date, the Right Certificates are transferable only on the registry books of the Rights Agent if surrendered at the principal office of the Rights Agent, duly endorsed or accompanied by a proper instrument of transfer; and

(c) the Company and the Rights Agent may deem and treat the person in whose name the Right Certificate (or, prior to the Distribution Date, the associated Common Shares certificate) is registered as the absolute owner thereof and of the Rights evidenced thereby (notwithstanding any notations of ownership or writing on the Right Certificate or the associated Common Shares certificate made by anyone other than the Company or the Rights Agent) for all purposes whatsoever, and neither the Company nor the Rights Agent shall be affected by any notice to the contrary.

**Section 17. Right Certificate Holder Not Deemed a Shareholder.** No holder, as such, of any Right Certificate shall be entitled to vote, receive dividends or be deemed for any purpose the holder of the Preferred Shares or any other securities of the Company which may at any time be issuable on the exercise of the Rights represented thereby, nor shall anything contained herein or in any Right Certificate be construed to confer upon the holder of any Right Certificate, as such, any of the rights of a shareholder of the Company or any right to vote for the election of directors or upon any matter submitted to shareholders at any meeting thereof, or to give or withhold consent to any corporate action, or to receive notice of meetings or other actions affecting shareholders (except as provided in Section 25 hereof), or to receive dividends or subscription rights, or otherwise, until the Right or Rights evidenced by such Right Certificate shall have been exercised in accordance with the provisions hereof.

**Section 18. Concerning the Rights Agent.** The Company agrees to pay to the Rights Agent reasonable compensation for all services rendered by it hereunder, and, from time to time, on demand of the Rights Agent, its reasonable expenses and counsel fees and other disbursements incurred in the administration and execution of this Agreement and the exercise and performance of its duties hereunder. The Company also agrees to indemnify the Rights Agent for, and to hold it harmless against, any loss, liability, or expense incurred without gross negligence, bad faith or willful misconduct on the part of the Rights Agent, for anything done or omitted by the Rights Agent in connection with the acceptance and administration of this Agreement, including the costs and expenses of defending against any claim of liability in the premises.

The Rights Agent shall be protected and shall incur no liability for, or in respect of any action taken, suffered or omitted by it in connection with, its administration of this Agreement in reliance upon any Right Certificate or certificate for the Preferred Shares or Common Shares or for other securities of the Company, instrument of assignment or transfer, power of attorney, endorsement, affidavit, letter, notice, direction, consent, certificate, statement, or other paper or document believed by it to be genuine and to be signed, executed and, where necessary, verified or acknowledged, by the proper person or persons, or otherwise upon the advice of counsel as set forth in Section 20 hereof.

**Section 19. Merger or Consolidation or Change of Name of Rights Agent.** Any corporation into which the Rights Agent or any successor Rights Agent may be merged or with which it may effect a share exchange, be

A-15

## Table of Contents

converted or consolidated, or any Person resulting from any merger, share exchange, conversion or consolidation to which the Rights Agent or any successor Rights Agent shall be a party, or any Person succeeding to the stock transfer or corporate trust powers of the Rights Agent or any successor Rights Agent, shall be the successor to the Rights Agent under this Agreement without the execution or filing of any paper or document or any further act on the part of any of the parties hereto; provided that such Person would be eligible for appointment as a successor Rights Agent under the provisions of Section 21 hereof. In case at the time such successor Rights Agent shall succeed to the agency created by this Agreement, any of the Right Certificates shall have been countersigned but not delivered, any such successor Rights Agent may adopt the countersignature of the predecessor Rights Agent and deliver such Right Certificates so countersigned; and, in case at that time any of the Right Certificates shall not have been countersigned, any successor Rights Agent may countersign such Right Certificates either in the name of the predecessor Rights Agent or in the name of the successor Rights Agent; and, in all such cases, such Right Certificates shall have the full force provided in the Right Certificates and in this Agreement.

In case at any time the name of the Rights Agent shall be changed and at such time any of the Right Certificates shall have been countersigned but not delivered, the Rights Agent may adopt the countersignature under its prior name and deliver Right Certificates so countersigned; and, in case at that time any of the Right Certificates shall not have been countersigned, the Rights Agent may countersign such Right Certificates either in its prior name or in its changed name; and, in all such cases, such Right Certificates shall have the full force provided in the Right Certificates and in this Agreement.

**Section 20. Duties of Rights Agent.** The Rights Agent undertakes the duties and obligations imposed by this Agreement upon the following terms and conditions, by all of which the Company and the holders of Right Certificates, by their acceptance thereof, shall be bound:

(a) The Rights Agent may consult with legal counsel (who may be legal counsel for the Company), and the opinion of such counsel shall be full and complete authorization and protection to the Rights Agent as to any action taken or omitted by it in good faith and in accordance with such opinion.

(b) Whenever in the performance of its duties under this Agreement the Rights Agent shall deem it necessary or desirable that any fact or matter be proved or established by the Company prior to taking or suffering any action hereunder, such fact or matter (unless other evidence in respect thereof be herein specifically prescribed) may be deemed to be conclusively proved and established by a certificate signed by any one of the Chairman of the Board, the Chief Executive Officer, the President, any Vice President, the Treasurer, the Secretary or any Assistant Secretary of the Company and delivered to the Rights Agent; and such certificate shall be full authorization to the Rights Agent for any action taken or suffered in good faith by it under the provisions of this Agreement in reliance upon such certificate.

(c) The Rights Agent shall be liable hereunder to the Company and any other Person only for its own gross negligence, bad faith or willful misconduct.

(d) The Rights Agent shall not be liable for or by reason of any of the statements of fact or recitals contained in this Agreement or in the Right Certificates (except its countersignature thereof) or be required to verify the same, but all such statements and recitals are and shall be deemed to have been made by the Company only.

(e) The Rights Agent shall not be under any responsibility in respect of the validity of this Agreement or the execution and delivery hereof (except the due execution hereof by the Rights Agent) or in respect of the validity or execution of any Right Certificate (except its countersignature thereof); nor shall it be responsible for any breach by the Company of any covenant or condition contained in this Agreement or in any Right Certificate; nor shall it be responsible for

any change in the exercisability of the Rights (including the Rights becoming void pursuant to Section 11(a)(ii) hereof) or any adjustment in the terms of the Rights (including the manner, method or amount thereof) provided for in Section 3, 11, 13, 23 or 24 hereof, or the ascertaining of the existence of facts

A-16

**Table of Contents**

that would require any such change or adjustment (except with respect to the exercise of Rights evidenced by Right Certificates after receipt of a certificate pursuant to Section 12 describing such change or adjustment); nor shall it by any act hereunder be deemed to make any representation or warranty as to the authorization or reservation of any Preferred Shares to be issued pursuant to this Agreement or any Right Certificate or as to whether any Preferred Shares will, when issued, be validly authorized and issued, fully paid and nonassessable.

(f) The Company agrees that it will perform, execute, acknowledge and deliver or cause to be performed, executed, acknowledged and delivered all such further and other acts, instruments and assurances as may reasonably be required by the Rights Agent for the carrying out or performing by the Rights Agent of the provisions of this Agreement.

(g) The Rights Agent is hereby authorized and directed to accept instructions with respect to the performance of its duties hereunder from any one of the Chairman of the Board, the Chief Executive Officer, the President, any Vice President, the Secretary, any Assistant Secretary, the Treasurer or any Assistant Treasurer of the Company, and to apply to such officers for advice or instructions in connection with its duties, and it shall not be liable for any action taken or suffered by it in good faith in accordance with instructions of any such officer or for any delay in acting while waiting for those instructions.

(h) The Rights Agent and any shareholder, director, officer or employee of the Rights Agent may buy, sell or deal in any of the Rights or other securities of the Company or become pecuniarily interested in any transaction in which the Company may be interested, or contract with or lend money to the Company or otherwise act as fully and freely as though it were not Rights Agent under this Agreement. Nothing herein shall preclude the Rights Agent from acting in any other capacity for the Company or for any other Person.

(i) The Rights Agent may execute and exercise any of the rights or powers hereby vested in it or perform any duty hereunder either itself or by or through its attorneys or agents, and the Rights Agent shall not be answerable or accountable for any act, default, neglect or misconduct of any such attorneys or agents or for any loss to the Company resulting from any such act, default, neglect or misconduct, provided that reasonable care was exercised in the selection and continued employment thereof.

**Section 21. Change of Rights Agent.** The Rights Agent or any successor Rights Agent may resign and be discharged from its duties under this Agreement upon 30 days' notice in writing mailed to the Company and, in the event that the Rights Agent or one of its Affiliates is not also the transfer agent for the Company, to each transfer agent of the Common Shares or Preferred Shares by registered or certified mail. In the event the transfer agency relationship in effect between the Company and the Rights Agent terminates, the Rights Agent will be deemed to have resigned automatically and be discharged from its duties under this Agreement as of the effective date of such termination, and the Company shall be responsible for sending any required notice. The Company may remove the Rights Agent or any successor Rights Agent (with or without cause) upon 30 days' notice in writing, mailed to the Rights Agent or successor Rights Agent, as the case may be, and to each transfer agent of the Common Shares or Preferred Shares by registered or certified mail, and to the holders of the Right Certificates by first-class mail. If the Rights Agent shall resign or be removed or shall otherwise become incapable of acting, the Company shall appoint a successor to the Rights Agent. If the Company shall fail to make such appointment within a period of 30 days after giving notice of such removal or after it has been notified in writing of such resignation or incapacity by the resigning or incapacitated Rights Agent or by the holder of a Right Certificate (which holder shall, with such notice, submit such holder's Right Certificate for inspection by the Company), then the registered holder of any Right Certificate may apply to any court of competent jurisdiction for the appointment of a new Rights Agent. Any successor Rights Agent, whether appointed by the Company or by such a court, shall be either (a) a Person organized and doing business under the laws of the United States or of the State of New York (or of any other state of the United States so long as such corporation is authorized to do business as a banking institution in such state), in good standing which is authorized under such laws

to exercise corporate trust or stock transfer powers and is subject to supervision or examination by federal or state authority and which has at the time of its appointment as Rights Agent a

A-17



## **Table of Contents**

combined capital and surplus of at least \$50 million or (b) an affiliate or direct or indirect wholly-owned Subsidiary of such Person or its wholly-owning parent. After appointment, the successor Rights Agent shall be vested with the same powers, rights, duties and responsibilities as if it had been originally named as Rights Agent without further act or deed; but the predecessor Rights Agent shall deliver and transfer to the successor Rights Agent any property at the time held by it hereunder, and execute and deliver any further assurance, conveyance, act or deed necessary for the purpose. Not later than the effective date of any such appointment, the Company shall file notice thereof in writing with the predecessor Rights Agent and each transfer agent of the Common Shares or Preferred Shares, and mail a notice thereof in writing to the registered holders of the Right Certificates. Failure to give any notice provided for in this Section 21, however, or any defect therein, shall not affect the legality or validity of the resignation or removal of the Rights Agent or the appointment of the successor Rights Agent, as the case may be.

**Section 22. Issuance of New Right Certificates.** Notwithstanding any of the provisions of this Agreement or of the Rights to the contrary, the Company may, at its option, issue new Right Certificates evidencing Rights in such form as may be approved by the Board of Directors of the Company to reflect any adjustment or change in the Purchase Price and the number or kind or class of shares or other securities or property purchasable under the Right Certificates made in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement.

## **Section 23. Redemption.**

(a) The Board of Directors of the Company may, at its option, at any time prior to such time as any Person becomes an Acquiring Person, redeem all but not less than all the then outstanding Rights at a redemption price of \$0.01 per Right, appropriately adjusted to reflect any stock split, stock dividend or similar transaction occurring after the date hereof (such redemption price being hereinafter referred to as the Redemption Price ). The redemption of the Rights by the Board of Directors of the Company may be made effective at such time, on such basis and with such conditions as the Board of Directors of the Company, in its sole discretion, may establish.

(b) Immediately upon the action of the Board of Directors of the Company ordering the redemption of the Rights pursuant to paragraph (a) of this Section 23, and without any further action and without any notice, the right to exercise the Rights will terminate and the only right thereafter of the holders of Rights shall be to receive the Redemption Price. The Company shall promptly give public notice of any such redemption; provided, however, that the failure to give, or any defect in, any such notice shall not affect the validity of such redemption. Within 10 days after such action of the Board of Directors of the Company ordering the redemption of the Rights, the Company shall mail a notice of redemption to all the holders of the then outstanding Rights at their last addresses as they appear upon the registry books of the Rights Agent or, prior to the Distribution Date, on the registry books of the transfer agent for the Common Shares. Any notice which is mailed in the manner herein provided shall be deemed given, whether or not the holder receives the notice. Each such notice of redemption will state the method by which the payment of the Redemption Price will be made. Neither the Company nor any of its Affiliates or Associates may redeem, acquire or purchase for value any Rights at any time in any manner other than that specifically set forth in this Section 23 or in Section 24 hereof, and other than in connection with the purchase of Common Shares prior to the Distribution Date.

(c) In the event the Company receives a Qualifying Offer and, by the end of the 60 Business Days following the commencement (or, if later, the first existence) of a Qualifying Offer, the Board of Directors has not redeemed the outstanding Rights or exempted such offer from the terms of the Agreement, the Qualifying Offer shall be deemed exempt from the application of this Agreement to such Qualifying Offer so long as it remains a Qualifying Offer, such exemption to be effective on the Close of Business on the 60th Business Day following the commencement (or, if later, the first existence) of a Qualifying Offer (the Exemption Date ).

(d) From and after the Close of Business on the Exemption Date, the consummation of the Qualifying Offer shall not cause the offeror or its affiliates or associates to become an Acquiring Person, and the Rights shall immediately expire and have no further force and effect upon such consummation.

A-18

## **Table of Contents**

### **Section 24. Exchange.**

(a) The Board of Directors of the Company may, at its option, at any time after any Person becomes an Acquiring Person, exchange all or part of the then outstanding and exercisable Rights (which shall not include Rights that have become void pursuant to the provisions of Section 11(a)(ii) hereof) for Common Shares at an exchange ratio of one Common Share per Right, appropriately adjusted to reflect any adjustment in the number of Rights pursuant to Section 11(i) (such exchange ratio being hereinafter referred to as the Exchange Ratio ). Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Board of Directors of the Company shall not be empowered to effect such exchange at any time after any Person (other than the Company, any Subsidiary of the Company, any employee benefit plan of the Company or any such Subsidiary, or any entity holding Common Shares for or pursuant to the terms of any such plan), together with all Affiliates and Associates of such Person, becomes the Beneficial Owner of 50% or more of the Common Shares then outstanding.

(b) Immediately upon the action of the Board of Directors of the Company ordering the exchange of any Rights pursuant to paragraph (a) of this Section 24 and without any further action and without any notice, the right to exercise such Rights shall terminate and the only right thereafter of a holder of such Rights shall be to receive that number of Common Shares equal to the number of such Rights held by such holder multiplied by the Exchange Ratio. The Company shall promptly give public notice of any such exchange; provided, however, that the failure to give, or any defect in, such notice shall not affect the validity of such exchange. The Company promptly shall mail a notice of any such exchange to all of the holders of such Rights at their last addresses as they appear upon the registry books of the Rights Agent. Any notice which is mailed in the manner herein provided shall be deemed given, whether or not the holder receives the notice. Each such notice of exchange will state the method by which the exchange of the Common Shares for Rights will be effected, and, in the event of any partial exchange, the number of Rights which will be exchanged. Any partial exchange shall be effected pro rata based on the number of Rights (other than Rights which have become void pursuant to the provisions of Section 11(a)(ii) hereof) held by each holder of Rights.

(c) In the event that there shall not be sufficient Common Shares issued but not outstanding or authorized but unissued to permit any exchange of Rights as contemplated in accordance with this Section 24, the Company shall take all such action as may be necessary to authorize additional Common Shares for issuance upon exchange of the Rights. In the event the Company shall, after good faith effort, be unable to take all such action as may be necessary to authorize such additional Common Shares, the Company shall substitute, for each Common Share that would otherwise be issuable upon exchange of a Right, a number of Preferred Shares or fraction thereof such that the current per share market price of one Preferred Share multiplied by such number or fraction is equal to the current per share market price of one Common Share as of the date of issuance of such Preferred Shares or fraction thereof.

(d) The Company shall not be required to issue fractions of Common Shares or to distribute certificates which evidence fractional Common Shares. In lieu of such fractional Common Shares, the Company shall pay to the registered holders of the Right Certificates with regard to which such fractional Common Shares would otherwise be issuable an amount in cash equal to the same fraction of the current market value of a whole Common Share. For the purposes of this paragraph (d), the current market value of a whole Common Share shall be the closing price of a Common Share (as determined pursuant to the second sentence of Section 11(d)(i) hereof) for the Trading Day immediately prior to the date of exchange pursuant to this Section 24.

### **Section 25. Notice of Certain Events.**

(a) In case the Company shall, at any time after the Distribution Date, propose (i) to pay any dividend payable in stock of any class to the holders of the Preferred Shares or to make any other distribution to the holders of the Preferred Shares (other than a regular quarterly cash dividend), (ii) to offer to the holders of the Preferred Shares rights or

warrants to subscribe for or to purchase any additional Preferred Shares or shares of stock of any class or any other securities, rights or options, (iii) to effect any reclassification of the Preferred

A-19

**Table of Contents**

Shares (other than a reclassification involving only the subdivision of outstanding Preferred Shares), (iv) to effect any share exchange, consolidation or merger into or with, or to effect any sale or other transfer (or to permit one or more of its Subsidiaries to effect any sale or other transfer), in one or more transactions, of 50% or more of the assets or earning power of the Company and its Subsidiaries (taken as a whole) to, any other Person, (v) to effect the liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the Company, or (vi) to declare or pay any dividend on the Common Shares payable in Common Shares or to effect a subdivision, combination or consolidation of the Common Shares (by reclassification or otherwise than by payment of dividends in Common Shares), then, in each such case, the Company shall give to each holder of a Right Certificate, in accordance with Section 26 hereof, a notice of such proposed action, which shall specify the record date for the purposes of such stock dividend, or distribution of rights or warrants, or the date on which such share exchange, reclassification, consolidation, merger, sale, transfer, liquidation, dissolution, or winding up is to take place and the date of participation therein by the holders of the Common Shares and/or Preferred Shares, if any such date is to be fixed, and such notice shall be so given in the case of any action covered by clause (i) or (ii) above at least 10 days prior to the record date for determining holders of the Preferred Shares for purposes of such action, and, in the case of any such other action, at least 10 days prior to the date of the taking of such proposed action or the date of participation therein by the holders of the Common Shares and/or Preferred Shares, whichever shall be the earlier.

(b) In case the event set forth in Section 11(a)(ii) hereof shall occur, then the Company shall, as soon as practicable thereafter, give to each holder of a Right Certificate, in accordance with Section 26 hereof, a notice of the occurrence of such event, which notice shall describe such event and the consequences of such event to holders of Rights under Section 11(a)(ii) hereof.

**Section 26. Notices.** Notices or demands authorized by this Agreement to be given or made by the Rights Agent or by the holder of any Right Certificate to or on the Company shall be sufficiently given or made if sent by overnight delivery service or first-class mail, postage prepaid, addressed (until another address is filed in writing with the Rights Agent) as follows:

Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc.

305 Hartmann Drive

Lebanon, TN 37087

Attention: Corporate Secretary

Subject to the provisions of Section 21 hereof, any notice or demand authorized by this Agreement to be given or made by the Company or by the holder of any Right Certificate to or on the Rights Agent shall be sufficiently given or made if sent by overnight delivery service or first-class mail, postage prepaid, addressed (until another address is filed in writing with the Company) as follows:

American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, LLC

6201 15th Avenue

Brooklyn, New York 11219

Attention: Relationship Manager

with a copy (which shall not constitute notice) to:

American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, LLC

6201 15th Avenue

Brooklyn, New York 11219

Attention: General Counsel

Notices or demands authorized by this Agreement to be given or made by the Company or the Rights Agent to the holder of any Right Certificate shall be sufficiently given or made if sent by first-class mail, postage prepaid, addressed to such holder at the address of such holder as shown on the registry books of the Company.

**Section 27. Supplements and Amendments.** The Company may from time to time supplement or amend this Agreement without the approval of any holders of Right Certificates in order to cure any ambiguity, to

A-20

**Table of Contents**

correct or supplement any provision contained herein which may be defective or inconsistent with any other provisions herein, or to make any other provisions with respect to the Rights which the Company may deem necessary or desirable, any such supplement or amendment to be evidenced by a writing signed by the Company and the Rights Agent; provided, however, that, from and after such time as any Person becomes an Acquiring Person, this Agreement shall not be amended in any manner which would adversely affect the interests of the holders of Rights. Upon the delivery of a certificate from an appropriate officer of the Company which states that the proposed supplement or amendment is in compliance with the terms of this Section 27, the Rights Agent shall execute such supplement or amendment.

**Section 28. Successors.** All the covenants and provisions of this Agreement by or for the benefit of the Company or the Rights Agent shall bind and inure to the benefit of their respective successors and assigns hereunder.

**Section 29. Benefits of this Agreement.** Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed to give to any Person other than the Company, the Rights Agent and the registered holders of the Right Certificates (and, prior to the Distribution Date, the Common Shares) any legal or equitable right, remedy or claim under this Agreement; but this Agreement shall be for the sole and exclusive benefit of the Company, the Rights Agent and the registered holders of the Right Certificates (and, prior to the Distribution Date, the Common Shares).

**Section 30. Severability.** If any term, provision, covenant or restriction of this Agreement is held by a court of competent jurisdiction or other authority to be invalid, void or unenforceable, the remainder of the terms, provisions, covenants and restrictions of this Agreement shall remain in full force and effect and shall in no way be affected, impaired or invalidated.

**Section 31. Governing Law.** This Agreement and each Right Certificate issued hereunder shall be deemed to be a contract made under the laws of the State of Tennessee and for all purposes shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of such state applicable to contracts to be made and performed entirely within such state.

**Section 32. Counterparts.** This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts and each of such counterparts shall for all purposes be deemed to be an original, and all such counterparts shall together constitute but one and the same instrument. A signature to this Agreement transmitted electronically shall have the same authority, effect, and enforceability as an original signature.

**Section 33. Descriptive Headings.** Descriptive headings of the several Sections of this Agreement are inserted for convenience only and shall not control or affect the meaning or construction of any of the provisions hereof.

**Section 34. Force Majeure.** Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained herein, the Rights Agent shall not be liable for any delays or failures in performance resulting from acts beyond its reasonable control including, without limitation, acts of God, terrorist acts, shortage of supply, breakdowns or malfunctions, interruptions or malfunctions of computer facilities, or loss of data due to power failures or mechanical difficulties with information storage or retrieval systems, labor difficulties, war, or civil unrest.

[remainder of page intentionally left blank]

**Table of Contents**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be duly executed and attested, all as of the day and year first above written.

Attest:

CRACKER BARREL OLD COUNTRY STORE, INC.

By: /s/ Richard M. Wolfson  
Name: Richard M. Wolfson  
Title: Senior Vice President, Secretary and  
General Counsel

By: /s/ Jill M. Golder  
Name: Jill M. Golder  
Title: Senior Vice President and Chief Financial  
Officer

Attest:

AMERICAN STOCK TRANSFER & TRUST  
COMPANY, LLC

By /s/ Alexandra Albrecht  
Name: Alexandra Albrecht  
Title: Vice President

By /s/ Michael Nespoli  
Name: Michael Nespoli  
Title: Director

A-22



Table of Contents

Exhibit A

**ARTICLES OF AMENDMENT TO THE  
AMENDED AND RESTATED CHARTER**

**of**

**CRACKER BARREL OLD COUNTRY STORE, INC.**

(Pursuant to Section 48-20-102 of the

Tennessee Business Corporation Act)

In accordance with Sections 48-20-102 and 48-20-106 of the Tennessee Business Corporation Act, the undersigned corporation adopts the following Articles of Amendment (the Articles of Amendment ) to its Amended and Restated Charter (the Charter ):

1. The name of this corporation is Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc.
2. Article 5 of the Charter is hereby amended, pursuant to the authority granted to the Board of Directors of this corporation by Section 5(c) of the Charter, by amending and restating subsection (f) to Article 5 of the Charter in its entirety to read as follows:

(f) Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock:

(i) Designation and Amount. The shares of such series shall be designated as Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock (the Series A Preferred Stock ) and the number of shares constituting the Series A Preferred Stock shall be 300,000. Such number of shares may be increased or decreased by resolution of the Board of Directors; provided, that no decrease shall reduce the number of shares of Series A Preferred Stock to a number less than the number of shares then outstanding plus the number of shares reserved for issuance upon the exercise of outstanding options, rights or warrants or upon the conversion of any outstanding securities issued by the corporation convertible into Series A Preferred Stock.

(ii) Dividends and Distributions.

(A) Subject to the rights of the holders of any shares of any series of Preferred Stock (or any similar stock) ranking prior and superior to the Series A Preferred Stock with respect to dividends, the holders of shares of Series A Preferred Stock, in preference to the holders of Common Stock, par value \$0.01 per share, of the corporation, and of any other junior stock, shall be entitled to receive, when, as and if declared by the Board of Directors out of funds legally available for the purpose, quarterly dividends payable in cash on the first day of March, June, September and December in each year (each such date being referred to herein as a Quarterly Dividend Payment Date ), commencing on the first Quarterly Dividend Payment Date after the first issuance of a share or fraction of a share of Series A Preferred Stock, in an amount per share (rounded to the nearest cent) equal to the greater of (a) \$1 or (b) subject to the provision for adjustment hereinafter set forth, 100 times the aggregate per share amount of all cash dividends, and 100 times the aggregate per share amount (payable in kind) of all non-cash dividends or other distributions, other than a dividend payable in shares of Common Stock or a subdivision of the outstanding shares of Common Stock (by reclassification or otherwise), declared on the Common Stock since the immediately preceding Quarterly Dividend

Payment Date or, with respect to the first Quarterly Dividend Payment Date, since the first issuance of any share or fraction of a share of Series A Preferred Stock. In the event the corporation shall at any time declare or pay any dividend on the Common Stock payable in shares of Common Stock, or effect a subdivision or combination or consolidation of the outstanding shares of Common Stock (by reclassification or otherwise than by payment of a dividend in shares of Common Stock) into a greater or lesser number of shares of Common Stock, then in each such case the amount to which holders of shares of Series A Preferred Stock were entitled immediately prior to such event under clause (b) of the preceding sentence shall be adjusted by multiplying such amount by a fraction, the numerator of which is the number of shares of Common Stock outstanding immediately after such event and the denominator of which is the number of shares of Common Stock that were outstanding immediately prior to such event.

A-23

**Table of Contents**

(B) The corporation shall declare a dividend or distribution on the Series A Preferred Stock as provided in paragraph (A) of this subsection immediately after it declares a dividend or distribution on the Common Stock (other than a dividend payable in shares of Common Stock); provided that, in the event no dividend or distribution shall have been declared on the Common Stock during the period between any Quarterly Dividend Payment Date and the next subsequent Quarterly Dividend Payment Date, a dividend of \$1 per share on the Series A Preferred Stock shall nevertheless be payable on such subsequent Quarterly Dividend Payment Date.

(C) Dividends shall begin to accrue and be cumulative on outstanding shares of Series A Preferred Stock from the Quarterly Dividend Payment Date next preceding the date of issue of such shares, unless the date of issue of such shares is prior to the record date for the first Quarterly Dividend Payment Date, in which case dividends on such shares shall begin to accrue from the date of issue of such shares, or unless the date of issue is a Quarterly Dividend Payment Date or is a date after the record date for the determination of holders of shares of Series A Preferred Stock entitled to receive a quarterly dividend and before such Quarterly Dividend Payment Date, in either of which events such dividends shall begin to accrue and be cumulative from such Quarterly Dividend Payment Date. Accrued but unpaid dividends shall not bear interest. Dividends paid on the shares of Series A Preferred Stock in an amount less than the total amount of such dividends at the time accrued and payable on such shares shall be allocated pro rata on a share-by-share basis among all such shares at the time outstanding. The Board of Directors may fix a record date for the determination of holders of shares of Series A Preferred Stock entitled to receive payment of a dividend or distribution declared thereon, which record date shall be not more than 60 days prior to the date fixed for the payment thereof.

(iii) Voting Rights. The holders of shares of Series A Preferred Stock shall have the following voting rights:

(A) Subject to the provision for adjustment hereinafter set forth, each share of Series A Preferred Stock shall entitle the holder thereof to 100 votes on all matters submitted to a vote of the shareholders of the corporation. In the event the corporation shall at any time declare or pay any dividend on the Common Stock payable in shares of Common Stock, or effect a subdivision or combination or consolidation of the outstanding shares of Common Stock (by reclassification or otherwise than by payment of a dividend in shares of Common Stock) into a greater or lesser number of shares of Common Stock, then in each such case the number of votes per share to which holders of shares of Series A Preferred Stock were entitled immediately prior to such event shall be adjusted by multiplying such number by a fraction, the numerator of which is the number of shares of Common Stock outstanding immediately after such event and the denominator of which is the number of shares of Common Stock that were outstanding immediately prior to such event.

(B) Except as otherwise provided herein, in any other articles of amendment to this Charter creating a series of Preferred Stock or any similar stock, or by law, the holders of shares of Series A Preferred Stock and the holders of shares of Common Stock and any other capital stock of the corporation having general voting rights shall vote together as one class on all matters submitted to a vote of shareholders of the corporation.

(C) Except as set forth herein, or as otherwise provided by law, holders of Series A Preferred Stock shall have no special voting rights and their consent shall not be required (except to the extent they are entitled to vote with holders of Common Stock as set forth herein) for taking any corporate action.

(iv) Certain Restrictions.

(A) Whenever quarterly dividends or other dividends or distributions payable on the Series A Preferred Stock as provided in subsection 5(f)(ii) are in arrears, thereafter and until all accrued and unpaid dividends and distributions, whether or not declared, on shares of Series A Preferred Stock outstanding shall have been paid in full, the corporation

shall not:

(1) declare or pay dividends, or make any other distributions, on any shares of stock ranking junior (either as to dividends or upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up) to the Series A Preferred Stock;

A-24

**Table of Contents**

(2) declare or pay dividends, or make any other distributions, on any shares of stock ranking on a parity (either as to dividends or upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up) with the Series A Preferred Stock, except dividends paid ratably on the Series A Preferred Stock and all such parity stock on which dividends are payable or in arrears in proportion to the total amounts to which the holders of all such shares are then entitled;

(3) redeem or purchase or otherwise acquire for consideration shares of any stock ranking junior (either as to dividends or upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up) to the Series A Preferred Stock, provided that the corporation may at any time redeem, purchase or otherwise acquire shares of any such junior stock in exchange for shares of any stock of the corporation ranking junior (either as to dividends or upon dissolution, liquidation or winding up) to the Series A Preferred Stock; or

(4) redeem or purchase or otherwise acquire for consideration any shares of Series A Preferred Stock, or any shares of stock ranking on a parity with the Series A Preferred Stock, except in accordance with a purchase offer made in writing or by publication (as determined by the Board of Directors) to all holders of such shares upon such terms as the Board of Directors, after consideration of the respective annual dividend rates and other relative rights and preferences of the respective series and classes, shall determine in good faith will result in fair and equitable treatment among the respective series or classes.

(B) The corporation shall not permit any subsidiary of the corporation to purchase or otherwise acquire for consideration any shares of stock of the corporation unless the corporation could, under paragraph (A) of this subsection 5(f)(iv), purchase or otherwise acquire such shares at such time and in such manner.

(v) Reacquired Shares. Any shares of Series A Preferred Stock purchased or otherwise acquired by the corporation in any manner whatsoever shall be retired and cancelled promptly after the acquisition thereof. All such shares shall upon their cancellation become authorized but unissued shares of Preferred Stock and may be reissued as part of a new series of Preferred Stock subject to the conditions and restrictions on issuance set forth herein, or in any other articles of amendment to this Charter creating a series of Preferred Stock or any similar stock or as otherwise required by law.

(vi) Liquidation, Dissolution or Winding Up. Upon any liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the corporation, no distribution shall be made (1) to the holders of shares of stock ranking junior (either as to dividends or upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up) to the Series A Preferred Stock unless, prior thereto, the holders of shares of Series A Preferred Stock shall have received \$100 per share, plus an amount equal to accrued and unpaid dividends and distributions thereon, whether or not declared, to the date of such payment, provided that the holders of shares of Series A Preferred Stock shall be entitled to receive an aggregate amount per share, subject to the provision for adjustment hereinafter set forth, equal to 100 times the aggregate amount to be distributed per share to holders of shares of Common Stock, or (2) to the holders of shares of stock ranking on a parity (either as to dividends or upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up) with the Series A Preferred Stock, except distributions made ratably on the Series A Preferred Stock and all such parity stock in proportion to the total amounts to which the holders of all such shares are entitled upon such liquidation, dissolution or winding up. In the event the corporation shall at any time declare or pay any dividend on the Common Stock payable in shares of Common Stock, or effect a subdivision or combination or consolidation of the outstanding shares of Common Stock (by reclassification or otherwise than by payment of a dividend in shares of Common Stock) into a greater or lesser number of shares of Common Stock, then in each such case the aggregate amount to which holders of shares of Series A Preferred Stock were entitled immediately prior to such event under the proviso in clause (1) of the preceding sentence shall be adjusted by multiplying such amount by a fraction, the numerator of which is the number of shares of Common Stock outstanding immediately after such event and the denominator of which is the number of shares of Common Stock that were outstanding immediately prior to such event.

(vii) Consolidation, Merger, Etc. In case the corporation shall enter into any consolidation, merger, combination or other transaction in which the shares of Common Stock are exchanged for or changed into other stock or securities, cash and/or any other property, then in any such case each share of Series A Preferred Stock

A-25

**Table of Contents**

shall at the same time be similarly exchanged or changed into an amount per share, subject to the provision for adjustment hereinafter set forth, equal to 100 times the aggregate amount of stock, securities, cash and/or any other property (payable in kind), as the case may be, into which or for which each share of Common Stock is changed or exchanged. In the event the corporation shall at any time declare or pay any dividend on the Common Stock payable in shares of Common Stock, or effect a subdivision or combination or consolidation of the outstanding shares of Common Stock (by reclassification or otherwise than by payment of a dividend in shares of Common Stock) into a greater or lesser number of shares of Common Stock, then in each such case the amount set forth in the preceding sentence with respect to the exchange or change of shares of Series A Preferred Stock shall be adjusted by multiplying such amount by a fraction, the numerator of which is the number of shares of Common Stock outstanding immediately after such event and the denominator of which is the number of shares of Common Stock that were outstanding immediately prior to such event.

(viii) No Redemption. The shares of Series A Preferred Stock shall not be redeemable.

(ix) Rank. The Series A Preferred Stock shall rank, with respect to the payment of dividends and the distribution of assets, junior to all series of any other class of the corporation's Preferred Stock.

(x) Amendment. Subsection 5(f) of this Charter shall not be amended in any manner which would materially alter or change the powers, preferences or special rights of the Series A Preferred Stock so as to affect them adversely without the affirmative vote of the holders of at least two-thirds of the outstanding shares of Series A Preferred Stock, voting together as a single class.

3. Except as amended by these Articles of Amendment, the Charter of the Corporation shall remain in full force and effect.

4. These Articles of Amendment were duly adopted by the Board of Directors of the Corporation on April 9, 2012, without shareholder approval as no such approval was required.

5. These Articles of Amendment to the Charter of the Corporation will be effective as of 8:00 a.m. Central Time on April 10, 2012.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, these Articles of Amendment are executed on behalf of the Corporation this 9th day of April, 2012.

CRACKER BARREL OLD COUNTRY  
STORE, INC.

By:

Name:

Title:

Table of Contents

Exhibit B

Form of Right Certificate

Certificate No. R-

\_\_\_\_\_ Rights

**NOT EXERCISABLE AFTER APRIL 9, 2021 OR EARLIER IF  
REDEMPTION, EXCHANGE OR TERMINATION OCCURS. THE RIGHTS ARE  
SUBJECT TO REDEMPTION AT \$0.01 PER RIGHT AND TO EXCHANGE OR  
TERMINATION ON THE TERMS SET FORTH IN THE AGREEMENT.**

Right Certificate

Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc.

This certifies that \_\_\_\_\_, or registered assigns, is the registered owner of the number of Rights set forth above, each of which entitles the owner thereof, subject to the terms, provisions and conditions of the Agreement, dated as of April 9, 2018 (the Agreement), between Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc., a Tennessee corporation (the Company), and American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, LLC (the Rights Agent), to purchase from the Company at any time after the Distribution Date (as such term is defined in the Agreement) and prior to 5:00 P.M., New York City time, on April 9, 2021 (or earlier under certain circumstances set forth in the Agreement) at the principal office of the Rights Agent, or at the office of its successor as Rights Agent, one one-hundredth of a fully paid non-assessable share of Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock, par value \$0.01 per share, of the Company (the Preferred Shares), at a purchase price of \$600 per one one-hundredth of a Preferred Share (the Purchase Price), upon presentation and surrender of this Right Certificate with the Form of Election to Purchase duly executed. The number of Rights evidenced by this Right Certificate (and the number of one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share which may be purchased upon exercise hereof) set forth above, and the Purchase Price set forth above, are the number and Purchase Price as of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, based on the Preferred Shares as constituted at such date. As provided in the Agreement, the Purchase Price and the number of one one-hundredths of a Preferred Share which may be purchased upon the exercise of the Rights evidenced by this Right Certificate are subject to modification and adjustment upon the happening of certain events.

This Right Certificate is subject to all of the terms, provisions and conditions of the Agreement, which terms, provisions and conditions are hereby incorporated herein by reference and made a part hereof and to which Agreement reference is hereby made for a full description of the rights, limitations of rights, obligations, duties and immunities hereunder of the Rights Agent, the Company and the holders of the Right Certificates. Copies of the Agreement are on file at the principal executive offices of the Company and the offices of the Rights Agent.

This Right Certificate, with or without other Right Certificates, upon surrender at the principal office of the Rights Agent, may be exchanged for another Right Certificate or Right Certificates of like tenor and date evidencing Rights entitling the holder to purchase a like aggregate number of Preferred Shares as the Rights evidenced by the Right Certificate or Right Certificates surrendered shall have entitled such holder to purchase. If this Right Certificate shall be exercised in part, the holder shall be entitled to receive upon surrender hereof another Right Certificate or Right



Certificates for the number of whole Rights not exercised.

Subject to the provisions of the Agreement, the Rights evidenced by this Right Certificate (i) may be redeemed by the Company at a redemption price of \$0.01 per Right or (ii) may be exchanged in whole or in part for Preferred Shares or shares of the Company's Common Stock, par value \$0.01 per share.

No fractional Preferred Shares will be issued upon the exercise of any Right or Rights evidenced hereby (other than fractions which are integral multiples of one one-hundredth of a Preferred Share, which may, at the election of the Company, be evidenced by depositary receipts), but, in lieu thereof, a cash payment will be made, as provided in the Agreement.

No holder of this Right Certificate shall be entitled to vote or receive dividends or be deemed for any purpose the holder of the Preferred Shares or of any other securities of the Company which may at any time be

A-27

**Table of Contents**

issuable on the exercise hereof, nor shall anything contained in the Agreement or herein be construed to confer upon the holder hereof, as such, any of the rights of a shareholder of the Company or any right to vote for the election of directors or upon any matter submitted to shareholders at any meeting thereof, or to give or withhold consent to any corporate action, or to receive notice of meetings or other actions affecting shareholders (except as provided in the Agreement), or to receive dividends or subscription rights, or otherwise, until the Right or Rights evidenced by this Right Certificate shall have been exercised as provided in the Agreement.

This Right Certificate shall not be valid or obligatory for any purpose until it shall have been countersigned by the Rights Agent.

A-28

**Table of Contents**

WITNESS the facsimile signature of the proper officers of the Company and its corporate seal. Dated as of \_\_\_\_\_ ,  
20\_\_\_\_\_ .

ATTEST:

CRACKER BARREL OLD COUNTRY STORE, INC.

Name:

By

Title:

Name:

Countersigned:

Title:

AMERICAN STOCK TRANSFER & TRUST COMPANY, LLC

By

Name:

Title:

Form of Reverse Side of Right Certificate

A-29

**Table of Contents**

**FORM OF ASSIGNMENT**

(To be executed by the registered holder if such  
holder desires to transfer the Right Certificate.)

FOR VALUE RECEIVED \_\_\_\_\_ hereby sells, assigns and transfers unto [Please print name and address of transferee] this Right Certificate, together with all right, title and interest therein, and does hereby irrevocably constitute and appoint Attorney, to transfer the within Right Certificate on the books of the within-named Company, with full power of substitution.

Dated:

Signature

Signature Guaranteed:

Signatures must be guaranteed by a member or participant in the Securities Transfer Agent Medallion Program, the New York Stock Exchange Medallion Signature Program, or the Stock Exchange Medallion Program.

The undersigned hereby certifies that the Rights evidenced by this Right Certificate are not Beneficially Owned by an Acquiring Person or an Affiliate or Associate thereof (as defined in the Agreement).

Signature

Form of Reverse Side of Right Certificate continued

A-30

**Table of Contents**

**FORM OF ELECTION TO PURCHASE**

(To be executed if holder desires to exercise  
Rights represented by the Right Certificate.)

To: CRACKER BARREL OLD COUNTRY STORE, INC.

The undersigned hereby irrevocably elects to exercise \_\_\_\_\_ Rights represented by this Right Certificate to purchase the Preferred Shares issuable upon the exercise of such Rights and requests that certificates for such Preferred Shares be issued in the name of:

Please insert social security  
or other identifying number

(Please print name and address)

If such number of Rights shall not be all the Rights evidenced by this Right Certificate, a new Right Certificate for the balance remaining of such Rights shall be registered in the name of and delivered to:

Please insert social security  
or other identifying number

(Please print name and address)

Dated:

Signature

Signature Guaranteed:

Signatures must be guaranteed by a member or participant in the Securities Transfer Agent Medallion Program, the New York Stock Exchange Medallion Signature Program, or the Stock Exchange Medallion Program.

The undersigned hereby certifies that the Rights evidenced by this Right Certificate are not Beneficially Owned by an Acquiring Person or an Affiliate or Associate thereof (as defined in the Agreement).

Signature

A-31

**Table of Contents**

**NOTICE**

The signature in the Form of Assignment or Form of Election to Purchase, as the case may be, must conform to the name as written upon the face of this Right Certificate in every particular, without alteration or enlargement or any change whatsoever.

In the event the certification set forth above in the Form of Assignment or the Form of Election to Purchase, as the case may be, is not completed, the Company and the Rights Agent will deem the Beneficial Owner of the Rights evidenced by this Right Certificate to be an Acquiring Person or an Affiliate or Associate thereof (as defined in the Agreement) and such Assignment or Election to Purchase will not be honored.

A-32

**Table of Contents**

**Exhibit C**

**SUMMARY OF RIGHTS TO PURCHASE**

**PREFERRED SHARES**

**Introduction**

On April 9, 2018, the Board of Directors of our Company, Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc., a Tennessee corporation, declared a dividend of one preferred share purchase right (a Right ) for each outstanding share of common stock, par value \$0.01 per share. The dividend is payable on April 19, 2018 to the shareholders of record on April 19, 2018.

Our Board has adopted this Rights Agreement to protect shareholders from coercive or otherwise unfair takeover tactics. In general terms, it works by imposing a significant penalty upon any person or group which acquires 20% or more of our outstanding common stock without the approval of our Board. The Rights Agreement should not interfere with any merger or other business combination approved by our Board. It also does not apply to a fully financed cash offer for all the Company's shares meeting the requirements that we describe below.

For those interested in the specific terms of the Rights Agreement as made between our Company and American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, LLC, as the Rights Agent, on April 9, 2018, we provide the following summary description. Please note, however, that this description is only a summary, and is not complete, and should be read together with the entire Rights Agreement, which has been filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission as an exhibit to a Registration Statement on Form 8-A dated April 9, 2018. A copy of the agreement is available free of charge from our Company.

*The Rights.* Our Board authorized the issuance of a Right with respect to each outstanding share of common stock on April 19, 2018. The Rights will initially trade with, and will be inseparable from, the common stock. The Rights are evidenced only by certificates that represent shares of common stock. New Rights will accompany any new shares of common stock we issue after April 19, 2018 until the Distribution Date described below.

*Exercise Price.* Each Right will allow its holder to purchase from our Company one one-hundredth of a share of Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock ( Preferred Share ) for \$600, once the Rights become exercisable. This portion of a Preferred Share will give the shareholder approximately the same dividend, voting, and liquidation rights as would one share of common stock. Prior to exercise, the Right does not give its holder any dividend, voting, or liquidation rights.

*Exercisability.* The Rights will not be exercisable until 10 days after the public announcement that a person or group has become an Acquiring Person by obtaining beneficial ownership of 20% or more of our outstanding common stock.

Certain synthetic interests in securities created by derivative positions whether or not such interests are considered to be ownership of the underlying common stock or are reportable for purposes of Regulation 13D of the Securities Exchange Act are treated as beneficial ownership of the number of shares of the company's common stock equivalent to the economic exposure created by the derivative position, to the extent actual shares of the company's common stock are directly or indirectly held by counterparties to the derivatives contracts. Swaps dealers unassociated with any control intent or intent to evade the purposes of the Rights Plan are excepted from such imputed beneficial ownership.



We refer to the date when the Rights become exercisable as the Distribution Date. Until that date, the common stock certificates will also evidence the Rights, and any transfer of shares of common stock will

**Table of Contents**

constitute a transfer of Rights. After that date, the Rights will separate from the common stock and be evidenced by book-entry credits or by Rights certificates that we will mail to all eligible holders of common stock. Any Rights held by an Acquiring Person are void and may not be exercised.

***Consequences of a Person or Group Becoming an Acquiring Person.***

*Flip In.* If a person or group becomes an Acquiring Person, all holders of Rights except the Acquiring Person may, for \$600, purchase shares of our common stock with a market value of \$1,200 based on the market price of the common stock prior to such acquisition.

*Flip Over.* If our Company is later acquired in a merger or similar transaction after the Rights Distribution Date, all holders of Rights except the Acquiring Person may, for \$600, purchase shares of the acquiring corporation with a market value of \$1,200 based on the market price of the acquiring corporation's stock, prior to such merger.

*Notional Shares.* Shares held by Affiliates and Associates of an Acquiring Person, and Notional Shares held by counterparties to a Derivatives Contract with an Acquiring Person, will be deemed to be beneficially owned by the Acquiring Person.

***Preferred Share Provisions.***

Each one one-hundredth of a Preferred Share, if issued:

will not be redeemable.

will entitle holders to quarterly dividend payments of \$0.01 per share, or an amount equal to the dividend paid on one share of common stock, whichever is greater.

will entitle holders upon liquidation either to receive \$1 per share or an amount equal to the payment made on one share of common stock, whichever is greater.

will have the same voting power as one share of common stock.

if shares of our common stock are exchanged via merger, consolidation, or a similar transaction, will entitle holders to a per share payment equal to the payment made on one share of common stock.

The value of one one-hundredth interest in a Preferred Share should approximate the value of one share of common stock.

*Expiration.* The Rights will expire no later than April 9, 2021, but will expire immediately following certification of the vote at the 2018 annual shareholders meeting if the rights plan is not approved by shareholders.

*Redemption.* Our Board may redeem the Rights for \$0.01 per Right at any time before any person or group becomes an Acquiring Person. If our Board redeems any Rights, it must redeem all of the Rights. Once the Rights are redeemed, the only right of the holders of Rights will be to receive the redemption price of \$0.01 per Right. The redemption price will be adjusted if we have a stock split or stock dividends of our common stock.

*Qualifying Offer Provision.* The Rights would also not interfere with all-cash, fully financed tender offers for all shares of common stock that remain open for a minimum of 60 business days, are subject to a minimum condition of a majority of the outstanding shares and provide for a 20 business day subsequent offering period after consummation (such offers are referred to as qualifying offers). In the event the company receives a qualifying offer and the board of directors has not redeemed the Rights prior to the consummation of such offer, the consummation of the qualifying offer shall not cause the offeror or its affiliates or associates to become an Acquiring Person, and the Rights will immediately expire upon consummation of the qualifying offer.

**Table of Contents**

*Exchange.* After a person or group becomes an Acquiring Person, but before an Acquiring Person owns 50% or more of our outstanding common stock, our Board may extinguish the Rights by exchanging one share of common stock or an equivalent security for each Right, other than Rights held by the Acquiring Person.

*Anti-Dilution Provisions.* Our Board may adjust the purchase price of the Preferred Shares, the number of Preferred Shares issuable and the number of outstanding Rights to prevent dilution that may occur from a stock dividend, a stock split, a reclassification of the Preferred Shares or common stock. No adjustments to the Exercise Price of less than 1% will be made.

*Amendments.* The terms of the Rights Agreement may be amended by our Board without the consent of the holders of the Rights. After a person or group becomes an Acquiring Person, our Board may not amend the agreement in a way that adversely affects holders of the Rights.

Table of Contents

**PRELIMINARY COPY SUBJECT TO COMPLETION**

***CRACKER BARREL OLD COUNTRY STORE,  
INC.***

***305 HARTMANN DRIVE***

***LEBANON, TN 37087***

**VOTE BY INTERNET - [www.proxyvote.com](http://www.proxyvote.com)**

Use the Internet to transmit your voting instructions and for electronic delivery of information up until 11:59 P.M. Eastern Time the day before the meeting date. Have your proxy card in hand when you access the web site and follow the instructions to obtain your records and to create an electronic voting instruction form.

**ELECTRONIC DELIVERY OF FUTURE PROXY MATERIALS**

If you would like to reduce the costs incurred by our company in mailing proxy materials, you can consent to receiving all future proxy statements, proxy cards and annual reports electronically via e-mail or the Internet. To sign up for electronic delivery, please follow the instructions above to vote using the Internet and, when prompted, indicate that you agree to receive or access proxy materials electronically in future years.

**VOTE BY PHONE - 1-800-690-6903**

Use any touch-tone telephone to transmit your voting instructions up until 11:59 P.M. Eastern Time the day before the meeting date. Have your proxy card in hand when you call and then follow the instructions.

**VOTE BY MAIL**

Mark, sign and date your proxy card and return it in the postage-paid envelope we have provided or return it to Vote Processing, c/o Broadridge, 51 Mercedes Way, Edgewood, NY 11717.

TO VOTE, MARK BLOCKS BELOW IN BLUE OR BLACK INK AS FOLLOWS:

M96020-TBD

KEEP THIS PORTION FOR YOUR RECORDS

DETACH AND RETURN THIS PORTION ONLY

**THIS PROXY CARD IS VALID ONLY  
WHEN SIGNED AND DATED.**

**CRACKER BARREL OLD COUNTRY STORE, INC.** For All Withhold For All  
All All Except

To withhold authority to vote for any individual nominee(s), mark For All Except and write the number(s) of the nominee(s) on the line below.

**The Board of Directors recommends you vote FOR the following:**

1. To elect nine directors.

**Nominees:**

- 01) James W. Bradford
- 02) Thomas H. Barr
- 03) Sandra B. Cochran
- 04) Meg G. Crofton
- 05) Richard J. Dobkin
- 06) Norman E. Johnson
- 07) William W. McCarten
- 08) Coleman H. Peterson
- 09) Andrea M. Weiss

**The Board of Directors recommends you vote FOR proposal 2.**

**2. TO APPROVE, ON AN ADVISORY BASIS, THE COMPENSATION OF THE COMPANY S NAMED**

**EXECUTIVE OFFICERS.**

FOR       AGAINST       ABSTAIN

**The Board of Directors recommends you vote FOR proposal 3.**

**3. TO APPROVE THE COMPANY S SHAREHOLDER RIGHTS PLAN ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF**

**DIRECTORS ON APRIL 9, 2018.**

FOR       AGAINST       ABSTAIN

**The Board of Directors recommends you vote FOR proposal 4.**

**4. TO RATIFY THE APPOINTMENT OF DELOITTE & TOUCHE LLP AS THE COMPANY S**

**INDEPENDENT REGISTERED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRM FOR THE 2019 FISCAL YEAR.**

FOR       AGAINST       ABSTAIN

For address changes and/or comments, please check this box and write them on the back where indicated.

Please sign exactly as your name(s) appear(s) hereon. When signing as attorney, executor, administrator, or other fiduciary, please give full title as such. Joint owners

should each sign personally. All holders must sign. If a corporation or partnership, please sign in full corporate or partnership name by authorized officer.

Signature [PLEASE SIGN    Date  
WITHIN BOX]

Signature (Joint Owners)    Date

**Table of Contents**

**Important Notice Regarding the Availability of Proxy Materials for the Annual Meeting:**

The Notice and Proxy Statement and Annual Report are available at [www.proxyvote.com](http://www.proxyvote.com).

M96021-TBD

**CRACKER BARREL OLD COUNTRY STORE, INC.**

**Proxy Solicited by and on behalf of the Board of Directors for the**

**Annual Meeting of Shareholders to be held on Thursday, November 15, 2018.**

The shareholder(s) whose signature(s) appear(s) on the reverse side of this proxy form hereby appoint(s) Sandra B. Cochran, James W. Bradford, and Richard M. Wolfson, and each of them, as proxies, with full power of substitution, to vote all shares that the shareholder(s) would be entitled to vote on all matters that may properly come before the Annual Meeting of Shareholders of Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc. (the Company) to be held at 305 Hartmann Drive, Lebanon, TN, on Thursday, November 15, 2018 at 10:00 a.m., Central Time. The proxies shall vote subject to the directions indicated on the reverse side of this card, and proxies are authorized to vote in their discretion upon other business as may properly come before the meeting. The proxies will vote as the Board of Directors recommends where a choice is not specified. The shares will be voted in accordance with your instructions.

THE SHARES WILL BE VOTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH YOUR INSTRUCTIONS. IF NO CHOICE IS SPECIFIED, SHARES WILL BE VOTED FOR ALL BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINEES IN THE ELECTION OF DIRECTORS; TO APPROVE, ON AN ADVISORY BASIS, THE COMPENSATION OF THE COMPANY'S NAMED EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AS DISCLOSED IN THE PROXY STATEMENT THAT ACCOMPANIES THIS NOTICE; TO APPROVE THE COMPANY'S SHAREHOLDER RIGHTS PLAN; TO RATIFY THE



APPOINTMENT OF DELOITTE & TOUCHE LLP AS OUR INDEPENDENT REGISTERED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRM FOR THE 2019 FISCAL YEAR; AND ACCORDING TO THE DISCRETION OF THE PROXY HOLDERS ON ANY OTHER MATTERS THAT MAY PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE ANNUAL MEETING.

**Address Changes/Comments:**

(If you noted any Address Changes/Comments above, please mark corresponding box on the reverse side.)

**Please sign and date this Proxy.**