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Eastern Bank and The Community Bank plan to merge by year end

August 09, 2012 - Financial Digest

Eastern Bank and The Community Bank have plans to merge, combining their resources and building upon Eastern's financial strength to better serve the people and businesses in southeastern Mass. and Cape Cod. Eastern is among the most financially successful and sound banks in New England, making it an attractive partner for The Community Bank, which is headquartered in Brockton. If approved by state and federal regulators, The Community Bank would be merged into Eastern Bank by the end of the year. "The Community Bank has a long, distinguished history of serving its communities, but in recent years the economy has taken its toll on the bank," said Eastern Bank chairman and CEO Richard Holbrook. "This partnership will enable The Community Bank to continue to meet the needs of its customers under the Eastern Bank brand, while enabling Eastern to better serve southeastern Massachusetts and the Cape." The Corporators of both banks and their holding companies, Eastern Bank Corporation and Campello Bancorp, also need to approve the merger. Eastern Bank has 94 banking offices in eastern Mass., in addition to 22 Eastern Insurance offices. It has \$8 billion in assets, \$6.5 billion in deposits and 1,700 employees serving more than 400,000 customers with an array of banking, investment and insurance products and services. Eastern Bank donates 10% of its net income to the Eastern BankCharitable Foundation, which, in 2011, donated \$2.6 million to 1,200 local charities. Founded in 1877, The Community Bank has five branches, including two in Brockton and one each in Bridgewater, Lakeville and Sandwich. As of June 30, it had \$323.9 million in assets and \$278.3 million in deposits. Last year, newly appointed president and CEO John O'Connor III implemented a restructuring plan, which included the closure of three branches, to stabilize the bank. "We made several important decisions that improved the bank's financial position," O'Connor said. "In the end, however, it was clear that we needed a partner in order to meet the needs of our communities. With its financial strength and nearly 200-year history of serving Massachusetts, Eastern was by far the best choice for our customers." Goodwin Procter LLP served as legal counsel to Eastern Bank and K & L Gates LLP served as legal counsel to The Community Bank. Financial advisors were not used, since Eastern Bank is a mutual bank and The Community Bank is a cooperative bank, and no premium was paid.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540