

# First Community Corporation (FCCO)

Neutral

## 4Q23 Earnings Review: Beat on Stronger NII and Lower Expenses; Raise Estimates

### CONCLUSION

FCCO reported a good quarter with stronger NII off of loan growth and lower expenses. Credit remained pristine at FCCO. We raise estimates with more NII optimism (and FCCO would be a beneficiary of rate cuts). With our higher estimates, we raise our price target to \$21, still ~13x our 2024 EPS estimate.

**Reported EPS: \$0.43 | Core: \$0.43 | PSC: \$0.37 | Consensus: \$0.37**

- **Delta vs. expectations:** EPS was \$0.06 ahead of our model on better NII (\$0.04 per share delta), lower expenses (\$0.03) and a lower tax rate (\$0.01), partially offset by lower fees (\$0.02). The provision was in line.
- **1.5% net interest income growth.** While the NIM was down more than expected (down 7 bps to 2.89%), average earning assets were up 4% not annualized with strong loan growth and higher cash balances. We expect to see some more modest compression in 1Q and then for the NIM to inflect higher in the second half of the year. Rate cuts are helpful for FCCO considering fixed rate loans that have not repriced higher yet, while a steeper yield curve would obviously be very helpful.
- **Loans up 4% not annualized.** FCCO ended the year with strong growth, and for the year grew loans 16%. We expect loan growth in 2024 to moderate to the mid-to-high single digits.
- **Expenses down 5%.** This was largely on the salaries and benefits line, which was down 3% linked quarter and 4% year-over-year. Marketing expenses were also lower, and we expect expenses to tick back up in the 1Q and for expense growth of 4% in 2024.
- **4 bps of NPAs.** The company has minimal NPAs and recorded essentially zero NCOs all year. Reserve-to-loans was stable at 1.08%.
- **TBV up 7%.** The TCE ratio is 6.4%, vs. 6.1% last quarter. We don't expect the company to be active with buybacks, and we have the TCE ratio growing with 2% balance sheet growth.

### RISKS TO ACHIEVEMENT OF PT & RECOMMENDATION

Deterioration in FCCO's credit quality, interest rate risk, a general decline in bank valuations, and a capital raise.

### COMPANY DESCRIPTION

First Community is a \$1.8B-in-asset bank based in the Columbia, SC MSA.

| YEAR  | EARNINGS PER SHARE (US\$) |      |      |      |      |        |
|-------|---------------------------|------|------|------|------|--------|
|       | Mar                       | Jun  | Sep  | Dec  | FY   | FY P/E |
| 2023A | 0.45                      | 0.42 | 0.36 | 0.43 | 1.66 | 11.8x  |
| 2024E | 0.35                      | 0.36 | 0.44 | 0.50 | 1.65 | 11.9x  |
| 2025E | 0.45                      | 0.49 | 0.51 | 0.53 | 1.98 | 9.9x   |

**PRICE: US\$19.60**

**TARGET: US\$21.00**

~13x our 2024 EPS estimate

**Casey Orr Whitman**

Managing Director, Piper Sandler & Co.

212 466-8061, casey.whitman@psc.com

| Changes   | Previous  | Current   |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Rating    | —         | Neutral   |
| Price Tgt | US\$20.00 | US\$21.00 |
| FY24E EPS | US\$1.57  | US\$1.65  |
| FY25E EPS | US\$1.78  | US\$1.98  |

|                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Market Cap. (mil)       | US\$149.1             |
| Book Value/Share        | US\$17.23             |
| Tang. Book/Share        | \$15.23               |
| Price/Book              | 114%                  |
| Price/Tang.Book         | 129%                  |
| 52-Week High / Low      | US\$22.00 / US\$16.30 |
| Avg Daily Vol (000)     | 15                    |
| Div Yield               | 2.86%                 |
| Total Assets (\$mil)    | 1,812                 |
| ROTCE                   | 12.05%                |
| Shares Out (mil)        | 7.6                   |
| Div (ann)               | US\$0.56              |
| Institutional Ownership | 56.2%                 |
| Insider Ownership       | 5.4%                  |
| Fiscal Year End         | Dec                   |

### Price Performance - 1 Year



Source: Bloomberg

Piper Sandler does and seeks to do business with companies covered in its research reports. As a result, investors should be aware that the firm may have a conflict of interest that could affect the objectivity of this report. Investors should consider this report as only a single factor in making their investment decisions. This report should be read in conjunction with important disclosure information, including an attestation under Regulation Analyst Certification, found on pages 4 - 5 of this report or at the following site: <http://www.pipersandler.com/researchdisclosures>.

**First Community Corporation (FCCO)**

|                                                | Historical    |               |               |               | 4Q23          |               | Variance             |                 | Q/Q Change |            | Y/Y Change  |             |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|-----------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
|                                                | 4Q22          | 1Q23          | 2Q23          | 3Q23          | Actual        | Expected      | Beat / Miss (\$000s) | (per share)     | Actual     | Expected   | Actual      | Expected    |
| <b>INCOME STATEMENT (\$000s)</b>               |               |               |               |               |               |               |                      |                 |            |            |             |             |
| FTE Net Interest Income                        | 13,486        | 12,455        | 12,213        | 12,165        | 12,343        | 11,976        | 367                  | \$0.04          | 1%         | -2%        | -8%         | -11%        |
| Net Interest Margin                            | 3.42%         | 3.19%         | 3.02%         | 2.96%         | 2.89%         | 2.93%         | -4 bps               |                 | -7 bps     | -3 bps     | -53 bps     | -49 bps     |
| Average Earning Assets                         | 1,563         | 1,582         | 1,622         | 1,628         | 1,695         | 1,623         | 72                   |                 | 4%         | 0%         | 8%          | 4%          |
| Loan Loss Provision                            | 25            | 70            | 186           | 474           | 399           | 411           | (12)                 | \$0.00          | -16%       | -13%       | 1496%       | 1544%       |
| Deposit Service Charges                        | 190           | 232           | 220           | 240           | 271           | 247           | 24                   | \$0.00          | 13%        | 3%         | 43%         | 30%         |
| Mortgage Banking Income                        | 290           | 155           | 371           | 508           | 372           | 457           | (85)                 | (\$0.01)        | -27%       | -10%       | 28%         | 58%         |
| Wealth Management                              | 1,033         | 1,067         | 1,081         | 1,187         | 1,176         | 1,211         | (35)                 | (\$0.00)        | -1%        | 2%         | 14%         | 17%         |
| Other Income                                   | 1,076         | 1,121         | 1,258         | 1,178         | 1,112         | 1,202         | (90)                 | (\$0.01)        | -6%        | 2%         | 3%          | 12%         |
| <b>Noninterest Income</b>                      | <b>2,589</b>  | <b>2,575</b>  | <b>2,930</b>  | <b>3,113</b>  | <b>2,931</b>  | <b>3,117</b>  | <b>(186)</b>         | <b>(\$0.02)</b> | <b>-6%</b> | <b>0%</b>  | <b>13%</b>  | <b>20%</b>  |
| <b>Operating Revenues</b>                      | <b>16,075</b> | <b>15,030</b> | <b>15,143</b> | <b>15,278</b> | <b>15,274</b> | <b>15,093</b> | <b>181</b>           | <b>\$0.02</b>   | <b>0%</b>  | <b>-1%</b> | <b>-5%</b>  | <b>-6%</b>  |
| Salaries & Employee Benefits                   | 6,690         | 6,331         | 6,508         | 6,613         | 6,412         | 6,613         | (201)                | \$0.02          | -3%        | 0%         | -4%         | -1%         |
| Occupancy & Equipment                          | 1,076         | 1,166         | 1,190         | 1,192         | 1,175         | 1,168         | 7                    | (\$0.00)        | -1%        | -2%        | 9%          | 9%          |
| Marketing & Public Relations                   | 289           | 346           | 370           | 609           | 171           | 426           | (255)                | \$0.03          | -72%       | -30%       | -41%        | 48%         |
| FDIC Assessment                                | 112           | 182           | 221           | 211           | 290           | 222           | 68                   | (\$0.01)        | 37%        | 5%         | 159%        | 98%         |
| Other Real Estate Expenses                     | 213           | -133          | -30           | 21            | 30            | 21            | 9                    | (\$0.00)        | 43%        | 0%         | -86%        | -90%        |
| Amortization of Intangibles                    | 40            | 39            | 40            | 39            | 40            | 39            | 1                    | (\$0.00)        | 3%         | -1%        | 0%          | -3%         |
| Other Expenses                                 | 2,274         | 2,505         | 2,456         | 2,588         | 2,562         | 2,459         | 103                  | (\$0.01)        | -1%        | -5%        | 13%         | 8%          |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>                          | <b>10,694</b> | <b>10,436</b> | <b>10,755</b> | <b>11,273</b> | <b>10,680</b> | <b>10,947</b> | <b>(267)</b>         | <b>\$0.03</b>   | <b>-5%</b> | <b>-3%</b> | <b>0%</b>   | <b>2%</b>   |
| <b>Pre-tax, Pre-Provision Operating Income</b> | <b>5,381</b>  | <b>4,594</b>  | <b>4,388</b>  | <b>4,005</b>  | <b>4,594</b>  | <b>4,146</b>  | <b>448</b>           | <b>\$0.05</b>   | <b>15%</b> | <b>4%</b>  | <b>-15%</b> | <b>-23%</b> |
| <b>Pre-tax Operating Income</b>                | <b>5,356</b>  | <b>4,524</b>  | <b>4,202</b>  | <b>3,531</b>  | <b>4,195</b>  | <b>3,735</b>  | <b>460</b>           | <b>\$0.05</b>   | <b>19%</b> | <b>6%</b>  | <b>-22%</b> | <b>-30%</b> |
| Securities Gains                               | 0             | 0             | 0             | (1,249)       | 0             | 0             |                      |                 |            |            |             |             |
| Other Nonrecurring Items                       | (76)          | 0             | 121           | 0             | 0             | 0             |                      |                 |            |            |             |             |
| Income before Taxes                            | 5,280         | 4,524         | 4,323         | 2,282         | 4,195         | 3,735         | 460                  | \$0.05          | 84%        | 64%        | -21%        | -29%        |
| Income Taxes                                   | 1,116         | 963           | 920           | 464           | 850           |               |                      |                 |            |            |             |             |
| Income Taxes + FTE Adjustment                  | 1,237         | 1,061         | 996           | 526           | 898           | 878           | 20                   |                 | 71%        | 67%        | -27%        | -29%        |
| FTE Tax Rate                                   | 23%           | 23%           | 23%           | 23%           | 21%           | 24%           | -2%                  | \$0.01          |            |            |             |             |
| <b>Net Income</b>                              | <b>4,043</b>  | <b>3,463</b>  | <b>3,327</b>  | <b>1,756</b>  | <b>3,297</b>  | <b>2,857</b>  | <b>440</b>           | <b>\$0.06</b>   | <b>88%</b> | <b>63%</b> | <b>-18%</b> | <b>-29%</b> |
| <b>PER SHARE INFORMATION</b>                   |               |               |               |               |               |               |                      |                 |            |            |             |             |
| Diluted EPS                                    | \$0.53        | \$0.45        | \$0.43        | \$0.23        | \$0.43        | \$0.37        | \$0.06               | \$0.06          | 88%        | 63%        | -19%        | -30%        |
| <b>Operating EPS</b>                           | <b>\$0.54</b> | <b>\$0.45</b> | <b>\$0.42</b> | <b>\$0.36</b> | <b>\$0.43</b> | <b>\$0.37</b> | <b>\$0.06</b>        | <b>\$0.06</b>   | <b>20%</b> | <b>4%</b>  | <b>-20%</b> | <b>-31%</b> |
| Book Value / Share                             | 15.62         | 16.29         | 16.35         | 16.26         | 17.23         | 16.40         | 0.83                 |                 | 6%         | 1%         | 10%         | 5%          |
| Tangible Book Value / Share                    | 13.59         | 14.26         | 14.33         | 14.25         | 15.23         | 14.49         | 0.73                 |                 | 7%         | 2%         | 12%         | 7%          |
| Dividend                                       | 0.13          | 0.14          | 0.14          | 0.14          | 0.14          | 0.14          | 0.00                 |                 |            |            |             |             |
| Dividend Payout Ratio                          | 25%           | 31%           | 32%           | 61%           | 33%           | 38%           | -5%                  |                 |            |            |             |             |
| Avg. Diluted Shares                            | 7,620         | 7,644         | 7,655         | 7,655         | 7,659         | 7,655         | 4                    |                 | 0%         | 0%         | 1%          | 0%          |
| Shares Outstanding                             | 7,578         | 7,588         | 7,594         | 7,600         | 7,606         | 7,600         | 6                    |                 | 0%         | 0%         | 0%          | 0%          |
| <b>PROFITABILITY</b>                           |               |               |               |               |               |               |                      |                 |            |            |             |             |
| PTPP Operating ROA                             | 1.27%         | 1.10%         | 1.01%         | 0.91%         | 1.01%         | 0.95%         | +6 bps               |                 | +10 bps    | +4 bps     | -26 bps     | -32 bps     |
| Operating ROAA                                 | 0.97%         | 0.83%         | 0.75%         | 0.62%         | 0.72%         | 0.65%         | +7 bps               |                 | +10 bps    | +3 bps     | -25 bps     | -32 bps     |
| Operating ROAE                                 | 14.10%        | 11.70%        | 10.44%        | 8.70%         | 10.48%        | 9.09%         | +139 bps             |                 | +178 bps   | +39 bps    | -362 bps    | -501 bps    |
| Operating ROATCE                               | 16.39%        | 13.54%        | 12.02%        | 10.02%        | 12.05%        | 9.09%         | +296 bps             |                 | +203 bps   | -93 bps    | -434 bps    | -730 bps    |
| Net Interest Margin                            | 3.42%         | 3.19%         | 3.02%         | 2.96%         | 2.89%         | 2.93%         | -4 bps               |                 | -7 bps     | -3 bps     | -53 bps     | -49 bps     |
| Efficiency Ratio                               | 66.5%         | 69.4%         | 71.0%         | 73.8%         | 69.9%         | 72.5%         |                      |                 |            |            |             |             |
| Fee Income / Operating Revenues                | 16%           | 17%           | 19%           | 20%           | 19%           | 21%           |                      |                 |            |            |             |             |
| TCE / TA                                       | 6.21%         | 6.29%         | 6.31%         | 6.09%         | 6.39%         | 6.21%         | +18 bps              |                 | +30 bps    | +12 bps    | +18 bps     | +0 bps      |
| NCO Ratio                                      | 0.00%         | 0.00%         | 0.00%         | 0.00%         | 0.00%         | 0.10%         | -10 bps              |                 | -0 bps     |            | -0 bps      |             |
| Allowance/Loans                                | 1.16%         | 1.15%         | 1.12%         | 1.08%         | 1.08%         | 1.14%         | -6 bps               |                 | -0 bps     | +6 bps     | -8 bps      | -2 bps      |
| NPAs                                           | 5.829         | 5.060         | 1.009         | 727           | 649           |               |                      |                 | -11%       |            | -89%        |             |
| NPAs/Assets                                    | 0.35%         | 0.29%         | 0.06%         | 0.04%         | 0.04%         |               |                      |                 | -0 bps     |            | -31 bps     |             |

Source: Company Reports and PSC

|                                 | \$0.45 |         | \$0.42 |         | \$0.36  |        | \$0.43 |  | \$1.66  | \$0.35  |         | \$0.36 |        | \$0.44 |         | \$0.50 |         | \$1.65 | \$0.45  |        | \$0.49 |        | \$0.51 |        | \$0.53 |        | \$1.98 |        |         |         |  |
|---------------------------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|--|
| Real + Forecast Inputs          | 1Q23A  | Δ       | 2Q23A  | Δ       | 3Q23A   | Δ      | 4Q23A  |  | 2023A   | Δ       | 1Q24E   | Δ      | 2Q24E  | Δ      | 3Q24E   | Δ      | 4Q24E   | 2024E  | Δ       | 1Q25E  | Δ      | 2Q25E  | Δ      | 3Q25E  | Δ      | 4Q25E  | 2025E  |        |         |         |  |
| ASSUMPTIONS (\$mil.)            |        |         |        |         |         |        |        |  |         |         |         |        |        |        |         |        |         |        |         |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |         |         |  |
| Average Cash Equivalents        | 30     | 41.3%   | 43     | -30.8%  | 29      | 134.8% | 69     |  | 43      | -15%    | -5.0%   | 66     | -5.0%  | 62     | -5.0%   | 59     | -5.0%   | 56     | 61      | 42%    | 0.0%   | 56     | 0.0%   | 56     | 0.0%   | 56     | 0.0%   | 56     | -8%     |         |  |
| Average Securities              | 565    | -0.4%   | 563    | -5.2%   | 533     | -5.4%  | 504    |  | 541     | -5%     | -2.0%   | 494    | -2.0%  | 484    | -2.0%   | 475    | -2.0%   | 465    | 480     | -11%   | -2.0%  | 456    | -2.0%  | 447    | -2.0%  | 438    | -2.0%  | 429    | -8%     |         |  |
| Average Non PPP Loans           | 986    | 3.1%    | 1,017  | 4.8%    | 1,066   | 5.2%   | 1,121  |  | 1,048   | 14%     | 2.0%    | 1,144  | 2.0%   | 1,167  | 2.0%    | 1,190  | 2.0%    | 1,214  | 1,178   | 12%    | 1.5%   | 1,232  | 2.0%   | 1,256  | 2.0%   | 1,282  | 2.0%   | 1,307  | 8%      |         |  |
| Average Interest Earning Assets | 1,582  | 2.6%    | 1,622  | 0.4%    | 1,628   | 4.1%   | 1,695  |  | 1,632   | 6%      | 0.5%    | 1,704  | 0.6%   | 1,713  | 0.6%    | 1,724  | 0.7%    | 1,735  | 1,719   | 5%     | 0.5%   | 1,744  | 0.9%   | 1,760  | 0.9%   | 1,776  | 1.0%   | 1,793  | 3%      |         |  |
| Average Assets                  | 1,696  | 2.4%    | 1,737  | 0.4%    | 1,745   | 3.7%   | 1,810  |  | 1,747   | 6%      | 0.5%    | 1,819  | 0.6%   | 1,830  | 0.6%    | 1,841  | 0.7%    | 1,853  | 1,836   | 5%     | 0.5%   | 1,862  | 0.9%   | 1,879  | 0.9%   | 1,896  | 1.0%   | 1,914  | 3%      |         |  |
| Net Interest Margin             | 3.19%  | -17 bps | 3.02%  | -6 bps  | 2.96%   | -7 bps | 2.89%  |  | 3.01%   | -13 bps | -3 bps  | 2.86%  | +2 bps | 2.88%  | +14 bps | 3.02%  | +12 bps | 3.14%  | 2.98%   | -3 bps | -2 bps | 3.12%  | +6 bps | 3.18%  | -1 bps | 3.17%  | +3 bps | 3.20%  | 3.17%   | +19 bps |  |
| NIM (ex PPP)                    | 3.19%  | -17 bps | 3.02%  | -6 bps  | 2.96%   | -7 bps | 2.89%  |  | 3.02%   | -12 bps | -3 bps  | 2.86%  | +2 bps | 2.88%  | +14 bps | 3.02%  | +12 bps | 3.14%  | 2.98%   | -4 bps | -2 bps | 3.12%  | +6 bps | 3.18%  | -1 bps | 3.17%  | +3 bps | 3.20%  | 3.17%   | +19 bps |  |
| Provision / Average Loans       | 0.03%  | +4 bps  | 0.07%  | +11 bps | 0.18%   | -4 bps | 0.14%  |  | 0.11%   |         | +1 bps  | 0.15%  | +2 bps | 0.17%  | 0 bps   | 0.17%  | -2 bps  | 0.15%  | 0.16%   |        | 0 bps  | 0.15%  | 0 bps  | 0.15%  | 0 bps  | 0.15%  | 0 bps  | 0.15%  | 0.15%   |         |  |
| NCO Ratio                       | 0.00%  | +0 bps  | 0.00%  | 0 bps   | 0.00%   | 0 bps  | 0.00%  |  | 0.00%   |         | +10 bps | 0.10%  | +5 bps | 0.15%  | 0 bps   | 0.15%  | -2 bps  | 0.13%  | 0.13%   |        | -3 bps | 0.10%  | 0 bps  | 0.10%  | 0 bps  | 0.10%  | 0 bps  | 0.10%  | 0.10%   |         |  |
| Allowance/Loans                 | 1.15%  |         | 1.12%  |         | 1.08%   |        | 1.08%  |  | 1.08%   |         | 1.07%   |        | +5 bps | 1.06%  | 0 bps   | 1.04%  | 1.03%   | 1.03%  |         |        | 1.02%  |        | 1.02%  |        | 1.01%  | 1.00%  | 1.00%  | 1.00%  | 1.00%   |         |  |
| INCOME STATEMENT (\$000s)       |        |         |        |         |         |        |        |  |         |         |         |        |        |        |         |        |         |        |         |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |         |         |  |
| FTE Net Interest Income         | 12,455 | -1.9%   | 12,213 | -0.4%   | 12,165  | 1.5%   | 12,343 |  | 49,176  | 1%      | -1.8%   | 12,127 | 1.2%   | 12,271 | 6.6%    | 13,078 | 4.8%    | 13,707 | 51,183  | 4%     | -2.1%  | 13,424 | 4.0%   | 13,956 | 1.8%   | 14,207 | 1.9%   | 14,479 | 56,066  | 10%     |  |
| Loan Loss Provision             | 70     |         | 186    |         | 474     |        | 399    |  | 1,129   |         |         | 427    |        | 493    |         | 508    |         | 458    | 1,886   |        |        | 456    |        | 470    |        | 485    | 494    | 1,904  |         |         |  |
| Deposit Service Charges         | 232    | -5.2%   | 220    | 9.1%    | 240     | 12.9%  | 271    |  | 963     | 0%      | -5.0%   | 257    | 4.0%   | 268    | 3.0%    | 276    | 3.0%    | 284    | 1,085   | 13%    | -5.0%  | 270    | 4.0%   | 281    | 3.0%   | 289    | 298    | 1,137  | 5%      |         |  |
| Mortgage Banking Income         | 155    | 139.4%  | 371    | 36.9%   | 508     | -26.8% | 372    |  | 1,406   | -26%    | -15.0%  | 316    | 30.0%  | 411    | 5.0%    | 432    | 0.0%    | 432    | 1,590   | 13%    | -25.0% | 324    | 25.0%  | 405    | 8.0%   | 437    | 0.0%   | 437    | 1,602   | 1%      |  |
| Wealth Management               | 1,067  | 1.3%    | 1,081  | 9.8%    | 1,187   | -0.9%  | 1,176  |  | 4,511   | 1%      | 1.0%    | 1,188  | 1.0%   | 1,200  | 1.0%    | 1,212  | 1.0%    | 1,224  | 4,823   | 7%     | 1.0%   | 1,236  | 1.0%   | 1,248  | 1.0%   | 1,261  | 1,273  | 5,019  | 4%      |         |  |
| Other Income                    | 1,121  | 12.2%   | 1,258  | -6.4%   | 1,178   | -5.6%  | 1,112  |  | 4,669   | 8%      | 1.0%    | 1,123  | -2.0%  | 1,101  | 3.0%    | 1,134  | 3.0%    | 1,168  | 4,525   | -3%    | 1.0%   | 1,179  | -2.0%  | 1,156  | 3.0%   | 1,190  | 3.0%   | 1,226  | 4,752   | 5%      |  |
| Noninterest Income              | 2,575  | 13.8%   | 2,930  | 6.2%    | 3,113   | -5.8%  | 2,931  |  | 11,549  | -1%     | -1.6%   | 2,885  | 3.3%   | 2,979  | 2.5%    | 3,053  | 1.8%    | 3,107  | 12,023  | 4%     | -3.2%  | 3,009  | 2.7%   | 3,089  | 2.8%   | 3,177  | 1.8%   | 3,234  | 12,510  | 4%      |  |
| Operating Revenue               | 15,030 | 0.8%    | 15,143 | 0.9%    | 15,278  | 0.0%   | 15,274 |  | 60,725  | 1%      | -1.7%   | 15,011 | 1.6%   | 15,250 | 5.8%    | 16,131 | 4.2%    | 16,814 | 63,207  | 4%     | -2.3%  | 16,433 | 3.7%   | 17,045 | 2.0%   | 17,384 | 1.9%   | 17,714 | 68,576  | 8%      |  |
| Salaries & Employee Benefits    | 6,331  | 2.8%    | 6,508  | 1.6%    | 6,613   | -3.0%  | 6,412  |  | 25,864  | 2%      | 3.0%    | 6,604  | 0.0%   | 6,604  | 0.0%    | 6,604  | 1.0%    | 6,670  | 26,483  | 2%     | 2.0%   | 6,804  | 1.0%   | 6,872  | 1.0%   | 6,941  | 1.0%   | 7,010  | 27,626  | 4%      |  |
| Occupancy & Equipment           | 1,166  | 2.1%    | 1,190  | 0.2%    | 1,192   | -1.4%  | 1,175  |  | 4,723   | 9%      | -1.5%   | 1,157  | 2.5%   | 1,186  | 1.5%    | 1,204  | 1.0%    | 1,216  | 4,764   | 1%     | -1.5%  | 1,198  | 2.5%   | 1,228  | 1.5%   | 1,246  | 1,259  | 4,931  | 4%      |         |  |
| Marketing & Public Relations    | 346    | 6.9%    | 370    | 64.6%   | 609     | -71.9% | 171    |  | 1,496   | 19%     | 150.0%  | 428    | 0.0%   | 428    | 0.0%    | 428    | 0.0%    | 428    | 1,710   | 14%    | 0.0%   | 428    | 0.0%   | 428    | 0.0%   | 428    | 0.0%   | 428    | 1,710   | 0%      |  |
| FDIC Assessment                 | 182    | 21.4%   | 221    | -4.5%   | 211     | 37.4%  | 290    |  | 904     | 93%     | 0.3%    | 291    | 0.3%   | 292    | 6.0%    | 309    | 0.3%    | 310    | 1,202   | 33%    | 0.3%   | 311    | 0.3%   | 312    | 6.0%   | 331    | 0.3%   | 332    | 1,286   | 7%      |  |
| Other Real Estate Expenses      | (133)  | 77.4%   | (30)   | 170.0%  | 21      | 42.9%  | 30     |  | (112)   | -136%   | 0.0%    | 30     | 0.0%   | 30     | 0.0%    | 30     | 0.0%    | 30     | 120     | 207%   | 0.0%   | 30     | 0.0%   | 30     | 0.0%   | 30     | 0.0%   | 30     | 120     | 0%      |  |
| Amortization of Intangibles     | 39     | 2.6%    | 40     | -2.5%   | 39      | 2.6%   | 40     |  | 158     | 0%      | 0.0%    | 40     | -0.5%  | 40     | -0.5%   | 40     | -0.5%   | 39     | 159     | 1%     | 0.0%   | 39     | -0.5%  | 39     | -0.5%  | 39     | -0.5%  | 39     | 156     | -1%     |  |
| Other Expenses                  | 2,505  | -2.0%   | 2,456  | 5.4%    | 2,588   | -1.0%  | 2,562  |  | 10,111  | 8%      | -1.0%   | 2,536  | 2.5%   | 2,600  | 2.0%    | 2,652  | 2.0%    | 2,705  | 10,493  | 4%     | -1.0%  | 2,678  | 2.5%   | 2,745  | 2.0%   | 2,800  | 2,856  | 11,078 | 6%      |         |  |
| Noninterest Expense             | 40,436 | 3.1%    | 40,755 | 4.8%    | 41,273  | -5.3%  | 40,680 |  | 163,144 | 5%      | 3.8%    | 40,755 | 4.8%   | 41,180 | 0.8%    | 41,267 | 1.2%    | 41,398 | 164,931 | 4%     | 0.8%   | 41,487 | 1.4%   | 41,653 | 1.4%   | 41,814 | 1.2%   | 41,952 | 166,907 | 4%      |  |
| PTPP Operating Income           | 4,594  | -4.5%   | 4,388  | -8.7%   | 4,005   | 14.7%  | 4,594  |  | 17,581  | -7%     | -14.6%  | 3,925  | 3.7%   | 4,071  | 19.5%   | 4,864  | 11.3%   | 5,416  | 18,276  | 4%     | -8.7%  | 4,945  | 9.0%   | 5,392  | 3.3%   | 5,571  | 3.4%   | 5,761  | 21,670  | 19%     |  |
| Pretax Operating Income         | 4,524  | -7.1%   | 4,202  | -16.0%  | 3,531   | 18.8%  | 4,195  |  | 16,452  | -14%    | -16.6%  | 3,498  | 2.3%   | 3,577  | 21.8%   | 4,356  | 13.8%   | 4,958  | 16,390  | 0%     | -9.5%  | 4,490  | 9.6%   | 4,922  | 3.3%   | 5,086  | 3.6%   | 5,267  | 19,765  | 21%     |  |
| Securities Gains                | 0      |         | 0      |         | (1,249) |        | 0      |  | (1,249) |         | 0       | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0       | 0      | 0       | 0      | 0       |        | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0       |         |  |
| Other Nonrecurring Items        | 0      |         | 121    |         | 0       |        | 0      |  | 121     |         | 0       | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0       | 0      | 0       | 0      | 0       |        | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0       |         |  |
| Pretax Income                   | 4,524  | -4.4%   | 4,323  | -47.2%  | 2,282   | 83.8%  | 4,195  |  | 15,324  | -19%    | -16.6%  | 3,498  | 2.3%   | 3,577  | 21.8%   | 4,356  | 13.8%   | 4,958  | 16,390  | 7%     | -9.5%  | 4,490  | 9.6%   | 4,922  | 3.3%   | 5,086  | 3.6%   | 5,267  | 19,765  | 21%     |  |
| Income Taxes + FTE Adjustment   | 1,061  |         | 996    |         | 526     |        | 898    |  | 3,481   | -19%    |         | 822    |        | 841    |         | 1,024  | 1,165   | 3,852  | 3,852   | 11%    |        | 1,055  |        | 1,157  |        | 1,195  | 1,238  | 4,645  | 21%     |         |  |
| FTE Tax Rate                    | 23.5%  |         | 23.0%  |         | 23.0%   |        | 21.4%  |  | 22.7%   |         | 23.5%   |        | 23.5%  |        | 23.5%   |        | 23.5%   | 23.5%  | 23.5%   |        |        | 23.5%  |        | 23.5%  |        | 23.5%  | 23.5%  | 23.5%  | 23.5%   | 23.5%   |  |
| Avg. Diluted Shares             | 7,644  | 0.1%    | 7,655  | 0.0%    | 7,655   | 0.0%   | 7,659  |  | 7,653   | 1%      | 0       | 7,659  | 0      | 7,659  | 0       | 7,659  | 0       | 7,659  | 7,659   | 0%     | 0      | 7,659  | 0      | 7,659  | 0      | 7,659  | 0      | 7,659  | 7,659   | 0%      |  |
| Shares Outstanding              | 7,588  | 0.1%    | 7,594  | 0.1%    | 7,600   | 0.1%   | 7,606  |  | 7,606   | 0%      | 0       | 7,606  | 0      | 7,606  | 0       | 7,606  | 0       | 7,606  | 7,606   | 0%     | 0      | 7,606  | 0      | 7,606  | 0      | 7,606  | 0      | 7,606  | 7,606   | 0%      |  |
| Dividend                        | 0.14   |         | 0.14   |         | 0.14    |        | 0.14   |  | 0.14    |         | 0.14    |        | 0.14   |        | 0.14    |        | 0.14    | 0.14   | 0.14    |        |        | 0.14   |        | 0.14   |        | 0.14   | 0.14   | 0.14   | 0.14    |         |  |
| Dividend Payout Ratio           | 30.9%  |         | 32.2%  |         | 61.0%   |        | 32.5%  |  | 36.4%   |         | 40.1%   |        | 39.2%  |        | 32.2%   |        | 28.3%   | 33.9%  | 33.9%   |        |        | 31.2%  |        | 28.5%  |        | 27.6%  | 26.6%  | 28.3%  | 28.3%   |         |  |
| EPS - Diluted                   | \$0.45 | -4.1%   | \$0.43 | -47.2%  | \$0.23  | 87.7%  | \$0.43 |  | \$1.54  | -20%    | -18.8%  | \$0.35 | 2.3%   | \$0.36 | 21.8%   | \$0.44 | 13.8%   | \$0.50 | \$1.65  | 7%     | -9.5%  | \$0.45 | 9.6%   | \$0.49 | 3.3%   | \$0.51 | 3.6%   | \$0.53 | \$1.98  | 20%     |  |
| Operating EPS                   | \$0.45 | -6.8%   | \$0.42 | -15.1%  | \$0.36  | 20.2%  | \$0.43 |  | \$1.66  | -14%    | -18.8%  | \$0.35 | 2.3%   | \$0.36 | 21.8%   | \$0.44 | 13.8%   | \$0.50 | \$1.65  | -1%    | -9.5%  | \$0.45 | 9.6%   | \$0.49 | 3.3%   | \$0.51 | 3.6%   | \$0.53 | \$1.98  | 20%     |  |
| PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS            |        |         |        |         |         |        |        |  |         |         |         |        |        |        |         |        |         |        |         |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |         |         |  |
| Operating ROAA                  | 0.83%  |         | 0.75%  |         | 0.62%   |        | 0.72%  |  | 0.73%   |         | 0.59%   |        | 0.60%  |        | 0.72%   |        | 0.81%   | 0.68%  |         |        | 0.75%  |        | 0.80%  |        | 0.81%  |        | 0.84%  | 0.80%  |         |         |  |
| PTPP Operating ROAA             | 1.1%   |         | 1.0%   |         | 0.9%    |        | 1.0%   |  | 1.0%    |         | 0.9%    |        | 0.9%   |        | 1.1%    |        | 1.2%    | 1.0%   |         |        | 1.1%   |        | 1.2%   |        | 1.2%   |        | 1.2%   | 1.1%   |         |         |  |
| Operating ROATCE                | 13.5%  |         | 12.0%  |         | 10.0%   |        | 12.0%  |  | 11.9%   |         | 9.3%    |        | 9.3%   |        | 12.2%   |        | 10.5%   | 10.5%  |         |        | 11.1%  |        | 11.8%  |        | 11.9%  |        | 11.9%  | 11.6%  |         |         |  |
| Net Interest Margin             | 3.19%  |         | 3.02%  |         | 2.96%   |        | 2.89%  |  | 3.01%   |         | 2.86%   |        | 2.88%  |        | 3.02%   |        | 3.14%   | 2.98%  |         |        | 3.12%  |        | 3.18%  |        | 3.17%  |        | 3.20%  | 3.17%  |         |         |  |
| Fee Income / Operating Revenue  | 17.1%  |         | 19.3%  |         | 20.4%   |        | 19.2%  |  | 19.2%   |         | 19.2%   |        | 19.5%  |        | 18.9%   |        | 18.5%   | 19.0%  |         |        | 18.3%  |        | 18.1%  |        | 18.    |        |        |        |         |         |  |

## IMPORTANT RESEARCH DISCLOSURES



Created by: BlueMatrix

Notes: The boxes on the Rating and Price Target History chart above indicate the date of the fundamental Equity Research Note, the rating and the price target. Each box represents a date on which an analyst made a change to a rating or price target, except for the first box, which may only represent the first Note written during the past three years.

Legend:

I: Initiating Coverage  
R: Resuming Coverage  
T: Transferring Coverage  
D: Discontinuing Coverage  
S: Suspending Coverage  
OW: Overweight  
N: Neutral  
UW: Underweight  
NA: Not Available  
UR: Under Review

| Distribution of Ratings/IB Services<br>Piper Sandler |       |         |                       |         |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------|-----------------------|---------|
| Rating                                               | Count | Percent | IB Serv./Past 12 Mos. |         |
|                                                      |       |         | Count                 | Percent |
| BUY [OW]                                             | 558   | 56.71   | 129                   | 23.12   |
| HOLD [N]                                             | 381   | 38.72   | 37                    | 9.71    |
| SELL [UW]                                            | 45    | 4.57    | 1                     | 2.22    |

Note: Distribution of Ratings/IB Services shows the number of companies currently covered by fundamental equity research in each rating category from which Piper Sandler and its affiliates received compensation for investment banking services within the past 12 months. FINRA rules require disclosure of which ratings most closely correspond with "buy," "hold," and "sell" recommendations. Piper Sandler ratings are not the equivalent of buy, hold or sell, but instead represent recommended relative weightings. Nevertheless, Overweight corresponds most closely with buy, Neutral with hold and Underweight with sell. See Stock Rating definitions below.

### Analyst Certification

The analyst Casey Orr Whitman, primarily responsible for the preparation of this research report, attests to the following:

The views expressed in this report accurately reflect my personal views about the subject company and the subject security. In addition, no part of my compensation was, is, or will be directly or indirectly related to the specific recommendations or views contained in this report.

Piper Sandler research analysts receive compensation that is based, in part, on overall firm revenues, which include investment banking revenues.

Time of dissemination: 26 January 2024 13:41EST.

## Research Disclosures

Piper Sandler was a registered market maker in the securities of First Community Corporation at the time this research report was published.

Piper Sandler has had a client relationship with First Community Corporation and has received compensation for non-investment banking securities related products or services in the past 12 months.

Affiliate disclosures: Piper Sandler is the trade name and registered trademark under which the corporate and investment banking products and services of Piper Sandler Companies and its subsidiaries Piper Sandler & Co. and Piper Sandler Ltd. are marketed. This report has been prepared by Piper Sandler & Co. and/or its affiliate Piper Sandler Ltd. Piper Sandler & Co. is regulated by FINRA, NYSE and the United States Securities and Exchange Commission, and its headquarters are located at 800 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN 55402. Piper Sandler Ltd. is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, and is located at 6th Floor, 2 Gresham Street, London EC2V 7AD. Disclosures in this section and in the Other Important Information section referencing Piper Sandler include all affiliated entities unless otherwise specified.

## Rating Definitions

**Stock Ratings:** Piper Sandler fundamental research ratings are indicators of expected total return (price appreciation plus dividend) within the next 12 months. At times analysts may specify a different investment horizon or may include additional investment time horizons for specific stocks. Stock performance is measured relative to the group of stocks covered by each analyst. Lists of the stocks covered by each are available at [www.pipersandler.com/researchdisclosures](http://www.pipersandler.com/researchdisclosures). Stock ratings and/or stock coverage may be suspended from time to time in the event that there is no active analyst opinion or analyst coverage, but the opinion or coverage is expected to resume. Research reports and ratings should not be relied upon as individual investment advice. As always, an investor's decision to buy or sell a security must depend on individual circumstances, including existing holdings, time horizons and risk tolerance. Piper Sandler sales and trading personnel may provide written or oral commentary, trade ideas, or other information about a particular stock to clients or internal trading desks reflecting different opinions than those expressed by the research analyst. In addition, Piper Sandler offers technical research products that are based on different methodologies, may contradict the opinions contained in fundamental research reports, and could impact the price of the subject security. Recommendations based on technical analysis are intended for the professional trader, while fundamental opinions are typically suited for the longer-term institutional investor.

**Overweight (OW):** Anticipated to outperform relative to the median of the group of stocks covered by the analyst.

**Neutral (N):** Anticipated to perform in line relative to the median of the group of stocks covered by the analyst.

**Underweight (UW):** Anticipated to underperform relative to the median of the group of stocks covered by the analyst.

## Other Important Information

The material regarding the subject company is based on data obtained from sources we deem to be reliable; it is not guaranteed as to accuracy and does not purport to be complete. This report is solely for informational purposes and is not intended to be used as the primary basis of investment decisions. Piper Sandler has not assessed the suitability of the subject company for any person. Because of individual client requirements, it is not, and it should not be construed as, advice designed to meet the particular investment needs of any investor. This report is not an offer or the solicitation of an offer to sell or buy any security. Unless otherwise noted, the price of a security mentioned in this report is the most recently available closing market price. Piper Sandler does not maintain a predetermined schedule for publication of research and will not necessarily update this report. Piper Sandler policy generally prohibits research analysts from sending draft research reports to subject companies; however, it should be presumed that the fundamental equity analyst(s) who authored this report has had discussions with the subject company to ensure factual accuracy prior to publication, and has had assistance from the company in conducting diligence, including visits to company sites and meetings with company management and other representatives. Notice to customers: This material is not directed to, or intended for distribution to or use by, any person or entity if Piper Sandler is prohibited or restricted by any legislation or regulation in any jurisdiction from making it available to such person or entity. Customers in any of the jurisdictions where Piper Sandler and its affiliates do business who wish to effect a transaction in the securities discussed in this report should contact their local Piper Sandler representative, or as otherwise noted below. Canada: Piper Sandler & Co. is not registered as a dealer in Canada and relies on the "international dealer exemption" set forth in National Instrument 31-103 – Registration Requirements, Exemptions and Ongoing Registrant Obligations of the Canadian Securities Administrators. This research report has not been prepared in accordance with the disclosure requirements of Dealer Member Rule 3400 – Research Restrictions and Disclosure Requirements of the Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada. Europe: This material is for the use of intended recipients only and only for distribution to professional and institutional investors, i.e., persons who are authorised persons or exempted persons within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 of the United Kingdom, or persons who have been categorised by Piper Sandler Ltd. as professional clients under the rules of the Financial Conduct Authority. United States: This report is distributed in the United States by Piper Sandler & Co., member SIPC, FINRA and NYSE, Inc., which accepts responsibility for its contents. The securities described in this report may not have been registered under the U.S. Securities Act of 1933 and, in such case, may not be offered or sold in the United States or to U.S. persons unless they have been so registered, or an exemption from the registration requirements is available. This report is produced for the use of Piper Sandler customers and may not be reproduced, re-distributed or passed to any other person or published in whole or in part for any purpose without the prior consent of Piper Sandler & Co. Additional information is available upon request. Copyright 2024 Piper Sandler. All rights reserved.