

BGC Partners, Inc.
Form 8-K
April 29, 2015

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

FORM 8-K

CURRENT REPORT
PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE
SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

Date of Report (Date of Earliest Event Reported): April 29, 2015

BGC Partners, Inc.

(Exact name of Registrant as specified in its charter)

Delaware
(State or other jurisdiction
of incorporation)

0-28191, 1-35591
(Commission
File Numbers)
499 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10022

13-4063515
(I.R.S. Employer
Identification No.)

(Address of principal executive offices)

Registrant's telephone number, including area code: (212) 610-2200

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions (see General Instruction A.2. below):

- ☐ Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)
- ☐ Soliciting material pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)
- ☐ Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(b))
- ☐ Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))

Item 1.01. Entry into a Material Definitive Agreement.

The information required by this Item 1.01 is set forth under Item 8.01 and is incorporated by reference in response to this Item.

Item 2.02. Results of Operations and Financial Condition.

On April 29, 2015, BGC Partners, Inc. (the Registrant, we, us, BGC Partners, BGC, or the Company) issued release announcing its financial results for the quarter ended March 31, 2015. A copy of the press release is attached as Exhibit 99.1 to this Current Report on Form 8-K and is incorporated by reference herein.

Except as indicated below, the information in this Item 2.02 and the Exhibit attached to this Current Report on Form 8-K are being furnished under Item 2.02 of Form 8-K. Such information shall not be deemed filed for purposes of Section 18 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act), or otherwise subject to the liabilities of that section, nor shall it be deemed incorporated by reference in any filing under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the Securities Act), or the Exchange Act, except as expressly set forth by specific reference in such filing and as set forth below.

In the press release, the Registrant uses non-GAAP financial measures including revenues for distributable earnings, pre-tax distributable earnings and post-tax distributable earnings, which are supplemental measures of operating performance that are used by management to evaluate the financial performance of the Company and its consolidated subsidiaries. BGC Partners believes that distributable earnings best reflect the operating earnings generated by the Company on a consolidated basis and are the earnings which management considers available for distribution to BGC Partners, Inc. and its common stockholders, as well as to holders of BGC Holdings, L.P. (BGC Holdings) partnership units during any period.

As compared with income (loss) from operations before income taxes, net income (loss) for fully diluted shares, and fully diluted earnings (loss) per share, all prepared in accordance with GAAP, distributable earnings calculations primarily exclude certain non-cash compensation and other expenses which generally do not involve the receipt or outlay of cash by the Company, which do not dilute existing stockholders, and which do not have economic consequences, as described below. In addition, distributable earnings calculations exclude certain gains and charges that management believes do not best reflect the ordinary operating results of BGC.

Revenues for distributable earnings are defined as GAAP revenues excluding the impact of BGC Partners, Inc.'s non-cash earnings or losses related to its equity investments. Revenues for distributable earnings include the collection of receivables which would have been recognized for GAAP other than for the effect of acquisition accounting. Revenues for distributable earnings also exclude certain one-time or unusual gains that are recognized under GAAP, because the Company does not believe such gains are reflective of its ongoing, ordinary operations.

Pre-tax distributable earnings are defined as GAAP income (loss) from operations before income taxes excluding items that are primarily non-cash, non-dilutive, and non-economic, such as:

Non-cash stock-based equity compensation charges for REUs granted or issued prior to the merger of BGC Partners, Inc. with and into eSpeed, Inc., as well as post-merger non-cash, non-dilutive equity-based compensation related to partnership unit exchange or conversion.

Allocations of net income to founding/working partner and other limited partnership units, including REUs, RPU, PSUs, LPUs, and PSIs.

Non-cash asset impairment charges, if any.

Distributable earnings calculations also exclude charges related to purchases, cancellations or redemptions of partnership interests and certain unusual, one-time or non-recurring items, if any.

Compensation and employee benefits expense for distributable earnings will also include broker commission payouts relating to the aforementioned collection of receivables.

BGC's definition of distributable earnings also excludes certain gains and charges with respect to acquisitions, dispositions, or resolutions of litigation. This exclusion pertains to the one-time gain related to the NASDAQ OMX transaction. Management believes that excluding these gains and charges best reflects the operating performance of BGC. However, because NASDAQ OMX is expected to pay BGC in an equal amount of stock on a regular basis for 15 years as part of the transaction, the payments associated with BGC's receipt of such stock are expected to be included in the Company's calculation of distributable earnings. To make quarter-to-quarter comparisons more meaningful, one-quarter of the annual contingent earn-out amount will be included in the Company's calculation of distributable earnings each quarter as other revenues.

Since distributable earnings are calculated on a pre-tax basis, management intends to also report post-tax distributable earnings and post-tax distributable earnings per fully diluted share :

Post-tax distributable earnings are defined as pre-tax distributable earnings adjusted to assume that all pre-tax distributable earnings were taxed at the same effective rate.

Post-tax distributable earnings per fully diluted share are defined as post-tax distributable earnings divided by the weighted-average number of fully diluted shares for the period.

BGC's distributable earnings per share calculations assume either that:

The fully diluted share count includes the shares related to the dilutive instruments, such as the Convertible Senior Notes, but excludes the associated interest expense, net of tax, when the impact would be dilutive; or

The fully diluted share count excludes the shares related to these instruments, but includes the associated interest expense, net of tax.

Each quarter, the dividend to BGC Partners, Inc. common stockholders is expected to be determined by the Company's Board of Directors with reference to post-tax distributable earnings per fully diluted share. In addition to the Company's quarterly dividend to common stockholders, BGC Partners expects to pay a pro-rata distribution of net income to BGC Holdings founding/working partner and other limited partnership units, including REUs, RPUs, LPUs, PSUs and PSIs, and to Cantor for its noncontrolling interest. The amount of all of these payments is expected to be determined using the above definition of pre-tax distributable earnings per share.

Certain employees who are holders of RSUs are granted pro-rata payments equivalent to the amount of dividends paid to common stockholders. Under GAAP, a portion of the dividend equivalents on RSUs is required to be taken as a compensation charge in the period paid. However, to the extent that they represent cash payments made from the prior periods' distributable earnings, they do not dilute existing stockholders and are therefore excluded from the calculation of distributable earnings.

Distributable earnings is not meant to be an exact measure of cash generated by operations and available for distribution, nor should it be considered in isolation or as an alternative to cash flow from operations or GAAP net income (loss). The Company views distributable earnings as a metric that is not necessarily indicative of liquidity or the cash available to fund its operations.

Pre- and post-tax distributable earnings are not intended to replace the Company's presentation of GAAP financial results. However, management believes that they help provide investors with a clearer understanding of BGC Partners' financial performance and offer useful information to both management and investors regarding certain financial and business trends related to the Company's financial condition and results of operations. Management believes that distributable earnings and the GAAP measures of financial performance should be considered together.

Management does not anticipate providing an outlook for GAAP revenues, income (loss) from operations before income taxes, net income (loss) for fully diluted shares, and fully diluted earnings (loss) per share, because the items previously identified as excluded from pre-tax distributable earnings and post-tax distributable earnings are difficult to forecast. Management will instead provide its outlook only as it relates to revenues for distributable earnings, pre-tax distributable earnings and post-tax distributable earnings.

For more information on this topic, please see the tables in the most recent BGC financial results press release entitled "Reconciliation of Revenues Under GAAP and Distributable Earnings," and "Reconciliation of GAAP Income to Distributable Earnings," which provide a summary reconciliation between pre- and post-tax distributable earnings and the corresponding GAAP measures for the Company in the periods discussed in the attached press release. The reconciliations for prior periods do not include the results of GFI.

Adjusted EBITDA Defined

BGC also provides an additional non-GAAP financial measure, adjusted EBITDA, which it defines as GAAP income from operations before income taxes, adjusted to add back interest expense as well as the following non-cash items:

- Employee loan amortization;
- Fixed asset depreciation and intangible asset amortization;
- Non-cash impairment charges;
- Charges relating to grants of exchangeability to limited partnership interests;

Charges related to redemption of units;
Charges related to issuance of restricted shares; and
Non-cash earnings or losses related to BGC's equity investments.

The Company's management believes that this measure is useful in evaluating BGC's operating performance compared to that of its competitors, because the calculation of adjusted EBITDA generally eliminates the effects of financing and income taxes and the accounting effects of capital spending and acquisitions, which would include impairment charges of goodwill and intangibles created from acquisitions. Such items may vary for different companies for reasons unrelated to overall operating performance. As a result, the Company's management uses these measures to evaluate operating performance and for other discretionary purposes. BGC believes that adjusted EBITDA is useful to investors to assist them in getting a more complete picture of the Company's financial results and operations.

Since adjusted EBITDA is not a recognized measurement under GAAP, investors should use adjusted EBITDA in addition to GAAP measures of net income when analyzing BGC's operating performance. Because not all companies use identical EBITDA calculations, the Company's presentation of adjusted EBITDA may not be comparable to similarly titled measures of other companies. Furthermore, adjusted EBITDA is not intended to be a measure of free cash flow, because adjusted EBITDA does not consider certain cash requirements such as tax and debt service payments.

For a reconciliation of adjusted EBITDA to GAAP income (Loss) from operations before income taxes, the most comparable financial measure calculated and presented in accordance with GAAP, see the section of this document titled "Reconciliation of GAAP Income (loss) to Adjusted EBITDA (and Comparison to Pre-Tax Distributable Earnings.)"

Item 2.03. Creation of a Direct Financial Obligation or an Obligation under an Off-Balance Sheet Arrangement of a Registrant.

The information required by this Item 2.03 is set forth under Item 8.01 and is incorporated by reference in response to this Item.

Item 8.01. Other Events.

Purchase of Additional GFI Shares

On April 28, 2015, a subsidiary of BGC purchased from GFI approximately 43.0 million newly issued shares of GFI's common stock (the "New Shares") at that date's closing price of \$5.81 per share, for an aggregate purchase price of \$250 million. The purchase price was paid to GFI in the form of a note due on June 19, 2018 that bears an interest rate of LIBOR plus 200 basis points. Due to intercompany eliminations, the New Shares and the note will have no impact on the consolidated balance sheet of BGC. GFI expects

that any funds received in payment of the principal of the note would be earmarked for repayment of GFI's existing \$240 million senior notes due July 2018 (the "GFI Notes") or potentially be the basis of collateral with respect to the GFI Notes. Following the issuance of the New Shares, BGC owns approximately 67.0 percent of GFI's outstanding common stock.

Discussion of Forward-Looking Statements About BGC Partners and GFI

Statements in the attached press release regarding BGC Partners' and GFI's businesses that are not historical facts are forward-looking statements that involve risks and uncertainties. Except as required by law, BGC and GFI undertake no obligation to release any revisions to any forward-looking statements. For a discussion of additional risks and uncertainties, which could cause actual results to differ from those contained in the forward-looking statements, see BGC's and GFI's respective Securities and Exchange Commission filings, including, but not limited to, the risk factors set forth in their respective public filings, including their most recent Forms 10-K and any updates to such risk factors contained in subsequent Forms 10-Q or Forms 8-K.

ITEM 9.01. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND EXHIBITS

(d) Exhibits.

99.1 BGC Partners, Inc. press release, dated April 29, 2015

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned hereunto duly authorized.

BGC PARTNERS, INC.

Date: April 29, 2015

By: /s/ Howard W. Lutnick

Name: Howard W. Lutnick

Title: Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

[Signature Page to Form 8-K, dated April 29, 2015, regarding the Company's first quarter 2015 earnings release and the Purchase of Stock of GFI Group Inc. by the Company]

EXHIBIT INDEX

Exhibit Number	Description
99.1	BGC Partners, Inc. press release, dated April 29, 2015