## BANKWELL FINANCIAL GROUP REPORTS RECORD QUARTERLY NET INCOME OF \$5.1 MILLION OR \$0.65 PER SHARE FOR THE FIRST QUARTER AND DECLARES SECOND QUARTER DIVIDEND

*New Canaan, CT – April 24, 2019 –* Bankwell Financial Group, Inc. (NASDAQ: BWFG) reported GAAP net income of \$5.1 million or 0.65 per share for the first quarter of 2019, versus 4.6 million or 0.59 per share for the same period in 2018.

The Company's Board of Directors declared a \$0.13 per share cash dividend, payable May 24, 2019 to shareholders of record on May 14, 2019.

Notes Bankwell Financial Group President and CEO, Christopher R. Gruseke:

"I'm happy to announce a strong start to 2019. With another quarter of loan originations in excess of \$90 million, our team has managed to excel without succumbing to a competitive pricing environment."

## First Quarter 2019 Highlights:

- First quarter diluted earnings per share were \$0.65, an increase of 10% compared to the first quarter of 2018.
- First quarter total revenue (net interest income plus noninterest income) was \$15.6 million versus \$15.0 million in the same period last year, a 4% increase.
- Loan originations totaled \$93.2 million with \$61.8 million of loan fundings for the first quarter of 2019.
- Tax equivalent net interest margin was 3.19% for the first quarter of 2019.
- Total noninterest income was \$1.3 million for the first quarter of 2019, or 8% of total revenue.
- The efficiency ratio was 57.5% for the first quarter of 2019 compared to 62.0% for the same period in 2018.
- Return on average assets for the first quarter of 2019 totaled 1.10% compared to 1.03% for the same period in 2018.
- Return on average stockholders' equity for the first quarter of 2019 totaled 11.60% compared to 11.35% for the same period in 2018.
- The tangible common equity ratio and tangible book value per share was 9.18% and \$22.38, respectively.
- Total gross loans were \$1.6 billion for the first quarter of 2019.
- The allowance for loan losses was \$15.4 million and represents 0.97% of total loans.
- Investment securities totaled \$119.8 million and represent 6% of total assets.
- Total deposits exceeded \$1.5 billion and grew at an annualized rate of 5% during the first quarter of 2019.

## Earnings

Revenues (net interest income plus noninterest income) for the quarter ended March 31, 2019 were \$15.6 million, an increase of 4% compared to the quarter ended March 31, 2018. Net interest income for the quarter ended March 31, 2019 was \$14.3 million, an increase of 4% compared to the quarter ended March 31, 2018. Net income for the quarter ended March 31, 2019 was \$5.1 million, an increase of 10% compared to the quarter ended March 31, 2018. The increase in revenues, net interest income and net income was aided by income recognized from fees as a result of elevated loan prepayments. Specifically, the Company recognized just under \$1.0 million in fees as a result of an early pay-off from one lending relationship.

Basic and diluted earnings per share were each \$0.65 for the quarter ended March 31, 2019 compared to \$0.59 for the quarter ended March 31, 2018.

The Company's efficiency ratios for the quarters ended March 31, 2019 and March 31, 2018 were 57.5% and 62.0%, respectively. The decrease in the efficiency ratio was driven by the aforementioned increase in revenues and a decrease in noninterest expense from continued disciplined expense management.

## Noninterest Income and Expense

Noninterest income remained flat, totaling \$1.3 million for the quarter ended March 31, 2019 and March 31, 2018. Other noninterest income increased \$0.5 million primarily resulting from income recognized from an interest rate swap fee recognized in the first quarter of 2019. This increase was offset by a decrease of \$0.3 million in gains and fees from sales of loans and a decrease of \$0.2 million in gains on the sales of securities as compared to the quarter ended March 31, 2018.

Noninterest expense decreased \$0.2 million or 2% for the quarter ended March 31, 2019 compared to the quarter ended March 31, 2018. The decrease was primarily driven by a decrease in salaries and employee benefits and professional services. Salaries and employee benefits totaled \$4.8 million for the quarter ended March 31, 2019 compared to \$5.0 million for the same period in 2018, a decrease of \$0.2 million. The decrease in salaries and employee benefits was primarily driven by a slight reduction in full time equivalent employees and an increase in deferred loan origination costs as a result of higher loan volume as compared to the quarter ended March 31, 2018. Full time equivalent employees totaled 140 at March 31, 2019 compared to 144 at March 31, 2018. Professional services totaled \$0.6 million for the quarter ended March 31, 2018, a decrease of \$0.2 million. The decrease in professional services was primarily driven by a decline in audit related fees. Noninterest expense was negatively impacted by \$0.3 million as a result of increased occupancy and equipment cost related to prior year's branch expansion and overall investment in technology.

## **Financial Condition**

Assets totaled \$1.90 billion at March 31, 2019, an annualized increase of 5% compared to assets of \$1.87 billion at December 31, 2018. Total gross loans were \$1.6 billion at March 31, 2019 and December 31, 2018, with loan originations being offset by elevated loan pre-payments during the first quarter of 2019. Deposits increased to \$1.52 billion compared to \$1.50 billion at December 31, 2018, an annualized increase of 5% over December 31, 2018.

## Asset Quality

Nonperforming assets as a percentage of total assets was 0.70% at March 31, 2019, down from 0.75% at December 31, 2018. Net charge-offs to average loans decreased to 0.01% for the quarter ended March 31, 2019 compared to 0.41% for the quarter ended December 31, 2018. The allowance for loan losses at March 31, 2019 was \$15.4 million, representing 0.97% of total loans. The Company continues to work on the resolution of its previously disclosed large nonperforming lending relationship and progress to date has been in line with the Company's estimates.

## Capital

Shareholders' equity totaled \$176.8 million as of March 31, 2019, an increase of \$2.6 million compared to December 31, 2018, primarily a result of net income for the quarter ended March 31, 2019 of \$5.1 million, offset by dividends paid of \$1.0 million and a \$2.1 million impact to accumulated other comprehensive income driven by fair value marks related to hedge positions involving interest rate swaps. As of March 31, 2019, the tangible common equity ratio and tangible book value per share were 9.18% and \$22.38, respectively.

## About Bankwell Financial Group

Bankwell is a commercial bank that serves the banking needs of residents and businesses throughout Fairfield and New Haven Counties, Connecticut. For more information about this press release, interested parties may contact Christopher R. Gruseke, President and Chief Executive Officer or Penko Ivanov, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Bankwell Financial Group at (203) 652-0166.

For more information, visit www.mybankwell.com.

This press release may contain certain forward-looking statements about the Company. Forward-looking statements include statements regarding anticipated future events and can be identified by the fact that they do not relate strictly to historical or current facts. They often include words such as "believe," "expect," "anticipate," "estimate," and "intend" or future or conditional verbs such as "will," "would," "should," "could," or "may." Forward-looking statements, by their nature, are subject to risks and uncertainties. Certain factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from expected results include increased competitive pressures, changes in the interest rate environment, general economic conditions or conditions within the securities markets, and legislative and regulatory changes that could adversely affect the business in which the Company and its subsidiaries are engaged.

### Non-GAAP Financial Measures

In addition to evaluating the Company's financial performance in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles ("GAAP"), management may evaluate certain non-GAAP financial measures, such as the efficiency ratio. A computation and reconciliation of certain non-GAAP financial measures used for these purposes is contained in the accompanying Reconciliation of GAAP to Non-GAAP Measures tables. We believe that providing certain non-GAAP financial measures provides investors with information useful in understanding our financial performance, our performance trends and financial position. For example, the Company believes that the efficiency ratio is useful in the assessment of financial performance, including noninterest expense control. The Company believes that tangible common equity and tangible book value per share is useful to evaluate the relative strength of the Company's capital position. We utilize these measures for internal planning and forecasting purposes. These non-GAAP financial measures should not be considered a substitute for GAAP basis measures and results, and we strongly encourage investors to review our consolidated financial statements in their entirety and not to rely on any single financial measure.

## **BANKWELL FINANCIAL GROUP, INC.** CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEETS (unaudited)

(Dollars in thousands, except share data)

	March 31, 2019			December 31, 2018	March 31, 2018		
Assets							
Cash and due from banks	\$	88,827	\$	75,411	\$	81,249	
Federal funds sold		4,764		2,701		2,121	
Cash and cash equivalents		93,591		78,112		83,370	
Investment Securities							
Marketable equity securities, at fair value		2,049		2,009		_	
Available for sale investment securities, at fair value		96,423		93,154		99,050	
Held to maturity investment securities, at amortized							
cost		21,364		21,421		21,546	
Total investment securities		119,836		116,584		120,596	
Loans receivable (net of allowance for loan losses of \$15,430, \$15,462 and \$18,801 at March 31, 2019, December 31, 2018 and March 31, 2018, respectively)		1,578,609		1,586,775		1,534,565	
Foreclosed real estate				····		487	
Accrued interest receivable		6,534		6,375		5,331	
Federal Home Loan Bank stock, at cost		7,475		8,110		9,310	
Premises and equipment, net		29,629		19,771		19,207	
Bank-owned life insurance		40,925		40,675		39,880	
Goodwill		2,589		2,589		2,589	
Other intangible assets		2,303		2,309		358	
Deferred income taxes, net		4,835		4,347		4,716	
Other assets		13,465		10,037		10,834	
Total assets	\$	1,897,758	\$	1,873,665	\$	1,831,243	
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Liabilities & Shareholders' Equity							
Liabilities							
Deposits							
Noninterest bearing deposits	\$	161,844	\$	173,198	\$	161,641	
Interest bearing deposits		1,359,521		1,329,046		1,264,886	
Total deposits		1,521,365		1,502,244		1,426,527	
Advances from the Federal Home Loan Bank		150,000		160,000		199,000	
Subordinated debentures		25,168		25,155		25,116	
Accrued expenses and other liabilities		24,384		12,070		14,653	
Total liabilities		1,720,917		1,699,469		1,665,296	
Shareholders' equity							
Common stock, no par value; 10,000,000 shares authorized, 7,873,471, 7,842,271, and 7,831,804 shares issued and outstanding at March 31, 2019, December 31, 2018 and March 31, 2018, respectively		120,750		120,527		119,363	
Retained earnings		59,247		54,706		44,695	
Accumulated other comprehensive (loss) income		(3,156)		(1,037)		1,889	
Total shareholders' equity		176,841		174,196		165,947	
Total liabilities and shareholders' equity	\$	1,897,758	\$	1,873,665	\$	1,831,243	

# BANKWELL FINANCIAL GROUP, INC. CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF INCOME (unaudited) (Dollars in thousands, except share data)

		Fo	or the Quarter Ended	
	 March 31, 2019		December 31, 2018	March 31, 2018
Interest and dividend income	 			
Interest and fees on loans	\$ 20,096	\$	20,030	\$ 17,418
Interest and dividends on securities	997		1,009	935
Interest on cash and cash equivalents	383		504	254
Total interest and dividend income	 21,476		21,543	 18,607
Interest expense				
Interest expense on deposits	6,100		5,942	3,656
Interest expense on borrowings	1,103		1,134	1,246
Total interest expense	7,203		7,076	 4,902
Net interest income	14,273		14,467	13,705
Provision for loan losses	 195		2,795	 13
Net interest income after provision for loan losses	 14,078		11,672	 13,692
Noninterest income				
Service charges and fees	249		284	256
Bank owned life insurance	249		262	263
Gains and fees from sales of loans	89		149	370
Net gain on sale of available for sale securities	_		_	222
Other	721		(94)	222
Total noninterest income	1,308		601	 1,333
Noninterest expense				
Salaries and employee benefits	4,836		4,503	5,028
Occupancy and equipment	1,887		1,671	1,617
Professional services	590		583	775
Data processing	512		487	525
Marketing	193		416	297
Director fees	189		295	215
FDIC insurance	123		159	214
Amortization of intangibles	19		20	24
Other	 626		662	 508
Total noninterest expense	 8,975		8,796	 9,203
Income before income tax expense	6,411		3,477	5,822
Income tax expense	 1,331		216	 1,222
Net income	\$ 5,080	\$	3,261	\$ 4,600
Earnings Per Common Share:				
Basic	\$ 0.65	\$	0.42	\$ 0.59
Diluted	\$ 0.65	\$	0.41	\$ 0.59
Weighted Average Common Shares Outstanding:				
Basic	7,760,460		7,749,616	7,676,813
Diluted	7,776,378		7,781,153	7,722,120
Dividends per common share	\$ 0.13	\$	0.12	\$ 0.12

#### **BANKWELL FINANCIAL GROUP, INC. CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS (unaudited)** (Dollars in thousands, except share data)

	For the Quarter Ended						
	March 31, 2019	December 31, 2018	March 31, 2018				
Performance ratios:							
Return on average assets	1.10%	0.69%	1.03%				
Return on average stockholders' equity	11.60%	7.28%	11.35%				
Return on average tangible common equity	11.80%	7.40%	11.56%				
Net interest margin	3.19%	3.20%	3.15%				
Efficiency ratio <sup>(1)</sup>	57.5%	58.2%	62.0%				
Net loan charge-offs as a % of average loans	0.01%	0.41%	0.01%				

	As of					
		March 31, 2019		December 31, 2018	March 31, 2018	
Capital ratios:						
Total Common Equity Tier 1 Capital to Risk-Weighted Assets <sup>(2)</sup>		12.00%		11.56%		11.18%
Total Capital to Risk-Weighted Assets <sup>(2)</sup>		12.94%		12.50%		12.35%
Tier I Capital to Risk-Weighted Assets <sup>(2)</sup>		12.00%		11.56%		11.18%
Tier I Capital to Average Assets <sup>(2)</sup>		10.53%		10.14%		9.90%
Tangible common equity to tangible assets		9.18%		9.16%		8.92%
Tangible book value per common share <sup>(3)</sup>	\$	22.38	\$	22.06	\$	21.12
Asset quality:						
Nonaccrual loans	\$	13,233	\$	14,082	\$	20,374
Other real estate owned						487
Total nonperforming assets	\$	13,233	\$	14,082	\$	20,861
Nonperforming loans as a % of total loans		0.83%		0.88%		1.31%
Nonperforming assets as a % of total assets		0.70%		0.75%		1.14%
Allowance for loan losses as a % of total loans		0.97%		0.96%		1.21%
Allowance for loan losses as a % of nonperforming loans		116.60%		109.80%		92.28%

(1) Efficiency ratio is defined as noninterest expense, less other real estate owned expenses and amortization of intangible assets, divided by our operating revenue, which is equal to net interest income plus noninterest income excluding gains and losses on sales of securities and gains and losses on other real estate owned. In our judgment, the adjustments made to operating revenue allow investors and analysts to better assess our operating expenses in relation to our core operating revenue by removing the volatility that is associated with certain one-time items and other discrete items that are unrelated to our core business.

(2) Represents Bank ratios. Current period capital ratios are preliminary subject to finalization of the FDIC Call Report.

(3) Excludes unvested restricted shares of 99,061, 77,624, and 114,336 as of March 31, 2019, December 31, 2018, and March 31, 2018, respectively.

## BANKWELL FINANCIAL GROUP, INC. LOAN & DEPOSIT PORTFOLIO (unaudited) (Dollars in thousands)

Period End Loan Composition	March 31, 2019	December 31, 2018	% Change	
Residential Real Estate	\$ 174,054	\$ 178,079	(2.3)%	
Commercial Real Estate <sup>(1)</sup>	1,097,354	1,094,066	0.3 %	
Construction	88,653	73,191	21.1 %	
Total Real Estate Loans	 1,360,061	1,345,336	1.1 %	
Commercial Business	236,110	258,978	(8.8)%	
Consumer	248	412	(39.8)%	
Total Loans	\$ 1,596,419	\$ 1,604,726	(0.5)%	

(1) Includes owner occupied commercial real estate.

Period End Deposit Composition	March 31, 2019			December 31, 2018	% Change		
Noninterest bearing demand	\$	161,844	\$	173,198	(6.6)%		
NOW		61,719		61,869	(0.2)%		
Money Market		469,095		471,968	(0.6)%		
Savings		178,960		180,487	(0.8)%		
Time		649,747		614,722	5.7 %		
Total Deposits	\$	1,521,365	\$	1,502,244	1.3 %		

## BANKWELLFINANCIALGROUP, INC. NONINTEREST INCOME & EXPENSE - QTD (unaudited) (Dollars in thousands)

	For	• the	Quarter En	ded			
Noninterest income	urch 31, 2019	Dec	cember 31, 2018		March 31, 2018	Mar 19 vs. Dec 18 % Change	Mar 19 vs. Mar 18 % Change
Service charges and fees	\$ 249	\$	284	\$	256	(12.3)%	(2.7)%
Bank owned life insurance	249		262		263	(5.0)%	(5.3)%
Gains and fees from sales of loans	89		149		370	(40.3)%	(75.9)%
Net gain on sale of available for sale securities			_		222	%	(100.0)%
Other	721		(94)		222	867.0 %	224.8 %
Total noninterest income	\$ 1,308	\$	601	\$	1,333	117.6 %	(1.9)%

	For	r the	Quarter En	ded				
Noninterest expense	arch 31, 2019	De	December 31, March 31, 2018 2018		,	Mar 19 vs. Dec 18 % Change	Mar 19 vs. Mar 18 % Change	
Salaries and employee benefits	\$ 4,836	\$	4,503	\$	5,028	7.4 %	(3.8)%	
Occupancy and equipment	1,887		1,671		1,617	12.9 %	16.7 %	
Professional services	590		583		775	1.2 %	(23.9)%	
Data processing	512		487		525	5.1 %	(2.5)%	
Marketing	193		416		297	(53.6)%	(35.0)%	
Director fees	189		295		215	(35.9)%	(12.1)%	
FDIC insurance	123		159		214	(22.6)%	(42.5)%	
Amortization of intangibles	19		20		24	(5.0)%	(20.8)%	
Other	626		662		508	(5.4)%	23.2 %	
Total noninterest expense	\$ 8,975	\$	8,796	\$	9,203	2.0 %	(2.5)%	

## BANKWELL FINANCIAL GROUP, INC. RECONCILIATION OF GAAP TO NON-GAAP MEASURES (unaudited) (

	As of									
Computation of Tangible Common Equity to Tangible Assets		March 31, 2019	December 31, 2018			March 31, 2018				
Total Equity	\$	176,841	\$	174,196	\$	165,947				
Less:										
Goodwill		2,589		2,589		2,589				
Other intangibles		270		290		358				
Tangible Common Equity	\$	173,982	\$	171,317	\$	163,000				
Total Assets	\$	1,897,758	\$	1,873,665	\$	1,831,243				
Less:										
Goodwill		2,589		2,589		2,589				
Other intangibles		270		290		358				
Tangible Assets	\$	1,894,899	\$	1,870,786	\$	1,828,296				
Tangible Common Equity to Tangible Assets		9.18%	,	9.16%	)	8.92%				

	As of									
Computation of Tangible Book Value per Common Share	March 31, 2019			December 31, 2018	March 31, 2018					
Total shareholders' equity	\$	176,841	\$	174,196	\$	165,947				
Less:										
Preferred stock				—						
Common shareholders' equity		176,841		174,196		165,947				
Less:										
Goodwill		2,589		2,589		2,589				
Other intangibles		270		290		358				
Tangible common shareholders' equity		173,982		171,317		163,000				
Common shares issued		7,873,471		7,842,271		7,831,804				
Less:										
Shares of unvested restricted stock		99,061		77,624		114,336				
Common shares outstanding		7,774,410		7,764,647		7,717,468				
Book value per share	\$	22.75	\$	22.43	\$	21.50				
Less:										
Effects of intangible assets	\$	0.37	\$	0.37	\$	0.38				
Tangible Book Value per Common Share	\$	22.38	\$	22.06	\$	21.12				

## BANKWELL FINANCIAL GROUP, INC. RECONCILIATION OF GAAP TO NON-GAAP MEASURES (unaudited) - Continued

(Dollars in thousands, except share data)

	For the Quarter Ended								
Computation of Efficiency Ratio		March 31, 2019	December 31, 2018			March 31, 2018			
Noninterest expense	\$	8,975	\$	8,796	\$	9,203			
Less:									
Amortization of intangible assets		19		20		24			
Adjusted noninterest expense	\$	8,956	\$	8,776	\$	9,179			
Net interest income	\$	14,273	\$	14,467	\$	13,705			
Noninterest income		1,308		601		1,333			
Less:									
Net gain on sale of available for sale securities		—				222			
Adjusted operating revenue	\$	15,581	\$	15,068	\$	14,816			
Efficiency ratio		57.5%		58.2%	62.0%				
		For the Quarter Ended							
Computation of Return on Average Tangible Common Equity		March 31, 2019	December 31, 2018			March 31, 2018			
Net Income Attributable to Common Shareholders	\$	5,080	\$	3,261	\$	4,600			
Net Income Attributable to Common Shareholders Total average shareholders' equity	\$ \$	5,080	<u>\$</u> \$	3,261 177,685	\$	4,600			
Total average shareholders' equity									
Total average shareholders' equity Less:		177,532		177,685		164,369			

Annualized Return on Average Tangible Common Equity 11.80% 7.40%

11.56%

### BANKWELL FINANCIAL GROUP, INC. NET INTEREST MARGIN ANALYSIS ON A FULLY TAX EQUIVALENT BASIS (Dellars in theusends)

(Dollars in thousands)

	For the Quarter Ended									
	March 31, 2019					March 31, 2018				
		Average Balance		Interest	Yield/ Rate <sup>(5)</sup>		Average Balance		Interest	Yield/ Rate <sup>(5)</sup>
Assets:										
Cash and Fed funds sold	\$	73,128	\$	383	2.12%	\$	69,164	\$	254	1.49%
Securities <sup>(1)</sup>		117,575		932	3.17%		117,084		888	3.04%
Loans:										
Commercial real estate		1,065,636		12,426	4.66%		976,294		10,868	4.45%
Residential real estate		176,490		1,703	3.86%		197,897		1,799	3.64%
Construction <sup>(2)</sup>		81,136		1,124	5.54%		95,384		1,146	4.81%
Commercial business		276,744		4,838	6.99%		280,812		3,597	5.12%
Consumer		323		5	6.42%		637		8	4.97%
Total loans		1,600,329		20,096	5.02%		1,551,024		17,418	4.49%
Federal Home Loan Bank stock		7,587		137	7.30%		9,306		118	5.12%
Total earning assets		1,798,619	\$	21,548	4.79%		1,746,578	\$	18,678	4.28%
Other assets		78,903	_				66,794	_		
Total assets	\$	1,877,522				\$	1,813,372			
Liabilities and shareholders' equity:										
Interest bearing liabilities:										
NOW	\$	58,812	\$	47	0.33%	\$	58,329	\$	19	0.13%
Money market		473,084		1,981	1.70%		466,653		1,162	1.01%
Savings		180,367		769	1.73%		93,947		196	0.85%
Time		627,510		3,303	2.13%		625,728		2,279	1.48%
Total interest bearing deposits		1,339,773	_	6,100	1.85%		1,244,657		3,656	1.19%
Borrowed Money		175,515		1,103	2.51%		224,108		1,246	2.22%
Total interest bearing liabilities		1,515,288	\$	7,203	1.93%		1,468,765	\$	4,902	1.35%
Noninterest bearing deposits		163,558	_				166,289	-		
Other liabilities		21,144					13,949			
Total liabilities		1,699,990					1,649,003			
Shareholders' equity		177,532					164,369			
Total liabilities and shareholders' equity	\$	1,877,522	•			\$	1,813,372			
Net interest income <sup>(3)</sup>	_		\$	14,345		_		\$	13,776	
Interest rate spread			_	,	2.86%			_	,	2.93%
Net interest margin <sup>(4)</sup>					3.19%					3.15%
6										

(1) Average balances and yields for securities are based on amortized cost.

(2) Includes commercial and residential real estate construction.

(3) The adjustment for securities and loans taxable equivalency amounted to \$72 thousand and \$71 thousand, respectively, for

the three months ended March 31, 2019 and 2018.

(4) Net interest income as a percentage of earning assets.

(5) Yields are calculated using the contractual day count convention for each respective product type.