

# A Note From Your Advisors

BAIRD

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THE MAIN, GOWIN, FISCHER, RICE GROUP

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April 11, 2023

Around midnight on Friday, March 31st, I received a call in my hotel room from the owners of our Baird office building. Although I always love talking to Doug and Paula Molin, you can imagine at that time of night my stomach sank when I saw who was calling. Doug reported to me that severe storms (likely a tornado) had ripped the roof entirely off the building.

My first relief came from learning that everyone (including the young woman who rents an apartment upstairs from our office) was safe. I learned years ago that any tornado which doesn't kill or injure anyone is "a good one!" The initial report from the fire marshal, who quickly inspected our space, was that we hadn't suffered any significant damage and that the building and its contents were secure.

By Saturday morning, four members from our team and a couple dedicated spouses were onsite with flashlights to make sure everything was under lock and key, and/or removed from the office as appropriate. I'd like to thank JoAnn Fischer, Debbie Burke, Molly Piercefield and Amy Rice (and Mike & Greg) for stepping up to the plate immediately. Miraculously, although we had water damage to a few walls, carpet and ceiling tiles, no equipment or furniture were damaged. I was able to inspect the office myself on Sunday to confirm and catalogue that the damage was minor.

What followed was a display of commitment and resources that astonished me and many others. Baird's business continuity, network IT, and Facilities crews were in touch with me in my hotel room Saturday morning – and our confidential client data was migrated immediately to a virtual server, securely accessible to our team from anywhere. By Monday afternoon, contractors had already erected a temporary roof frame, and were able to quickly cover that to make the building water tight. That really became important the next day, as more rain and wind came through the area (no new water or damage). Duke Energy's crews had the electricity back on by Tuesday afternoon. The gas lines were tested and turned back on Wednesday. And the city inspected the building and issued a certificate of safe occupancy by Thursday morning. Lastly, Baird's network specialists were able to turn on and reconnect all our local server and other equipment on Thursday.

In the meantime, the six of us continued to reach out and respond to our clients, from home office and remote locations, and conduct normal business for everyone with no issues. I'd like to thank my teammates and partners: JoAnn Fischer, Tom Gowin, Amy Rice, Debbie Burke, and Molly Piercefield. Nobody ever worked with anyone more talented or enjoyable! We'd like to extend a huge shout out to Doug and Paula Molin of Artesian Group LLC. We owe our business partners at Baird a massive thanks – their expertise and reach have been crucial. Thanks to the First Responders in the City of Martinsville. And of course, thank you to our amazing clients. So many of you have reached out to us to extend concern and offer a helping hand. It is a privilege to work for you!!

Here's the main point I'd like to emphasize: We are planners, and we had a plan for this! No plan can fully imagine or prevent everything which could ever go wrong. But in the moment of crisis, we knew what our top priorities and commitments were. We knew who and what were our important resources, and how to contact or access them. And most importantly, we knew that as professionals and human beings we are resilient and capable of adjusting as needed.

This is very similar to the value of planning in financial matters. We have encountered a painful bear market, and likely will continue to experience more periods of pain. Do you have a plan for enduring and reaching your goals? If so, this can be a great time to review that plan with your advisor. If not, we recommend not waiting for disaster to strike before making one...

- The Main, Gowin, Fischer, Rice Group

