

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
(Release No. 34-99025; File No. SR-C2-2023-023)

November 28, 2023

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Cboe C2 Exchange, Inc.; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of a Proposed Rule Change Relating to Amend its Fees Schedule

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the “Act”),¹ and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,² notice is hereby given that on November 15, 2023, Cboe C2 Exchange, Inc. (the “Exchange” or “C2”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “Commission”) the proposed rule change as described in Items I, II, and III below, which Items have been prepared by the Exchange. The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change from interested persons.

I. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement of the Terms of Substance of the Proposed Rule Change

Cboe C2 Exchange, Inc. (the “Exchange” or “C2”) proposes to amend its Fee Schedule. The text of the proposed rule change is in Exhibit 5.

The text of the proposed rule change is also available on the Exchange’s website (http://markets.cboe.com/us/options/regulation/rule_filings/ctwo/), at the Exchange’s Office of the Secretary, and at the Commission’s Public Reference Room.

II. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

In its filing with the Commission, the Exchange included statements concerning the purpose of and basis for the proposed rule change and discussed any comments it received on the proposed rule change. The text of these statements may be examined at the places

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

specified in Item IV below. The Exchange has prepared summaries, set forth in sections A, B, and C below, of the most significant aspects of such statements.

A. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

1. Purpose

The Exchange proposes to update its Fee Schedule to provide a 20% discount on fees assessed to Exchange Members and non-Members that purchase \$20,000 or more of historical Open-Close Data, effective November 15, 2023 through December 31, 2023.

By way of background, the Exchange currently offers End-of-Day (“EOD”) and Intraday Open-Close Data (collectively, “Open-Close Data”). EOD Open-Close Data is an end-of-day volume summary of trading activity on the Exchange at the option level by origin (customer, professional customer, broker-dealer, and market maker), side of the market (buy or sell), price, and transaction type (opening or closing). The customer and professional customer volume is further broken down into trade size buckets (less than 100 contracts, 100-199 contracts, greater than 199 contracts). The EOD Open-Close Data is proprietary Exchange trade data and does not include trade data from any other exchange. It is also a historical data product and not a real-time data feed. The Exchange also offers Intraday Open-Close Data, which provides similar information to that of EOD Open-Close Data but is produced and updated every 10 minutes during the trading day. Data is captured in “snapshots” taken every 10 minutes throughout the trading day and is available to subscribers within five minutes of the conclusion of each 10-minute period.³

³ For example, subscribers to the intraday product will receive the first calculation of intraday data by approximately 9:42 a.m. ET, which represents data captured from 9:30 a.m. to 9:40 a.m. Subscribers will receive the next update at 9:52 a.m., representing the data previously provided together with data captured from 9:40 a.m. through 9:50 a.m., and so forth. Each update will represent the aggregate data captured from the current “snapshot” and all previous “snapshots.”

The Intraday Open-Close Data provides a volume summary of trading activity on the Exchange at the option level by origin (customer, professional customer, broker-dealer, and market maker), side of the market (buy or sell), and transaction type (opening or closing). The customer and professional customer volume are further broken down into trade size buckets (less than 100 contracts, 100-199 contracts, greater than 199 contracts). The Intraday Open-Close Data is proprietary Exchange trade data and does not include trade data from any other exchange. All Open-Close Data products are completely voluntary products, in that the Exchange is not required by any rule or regulation to make this data available and that potential customers may purchase it on an ad-hoc basis only if they voluntarily choose to do so.

Cboe LiveVol, LLC (“LiveVol”), a wholly owned subsidiary of the Exchange’s parent company, Cboe Global Markets, Inc., makes the Open-Close Data available for purchase to Members and non-Members on the LiveVol DataShop website (datashop.cboe.com). Customers may currently purchase Open-Close Data on a subscription basis (monthly or annually) or by ad hoc request for a specified month (historical file, e.g., request for Intraday Open-Close Data for month of June 2023 or End-of-Day Open-Close Data for month of June 2023). An ad-hoc request can be for any number of months for which the data is available.

Open-Close Data is subject to direct competition from similar end-of-day and intraday options trading summaries offered by several other options exchanges.⁴ All of

⁴ These substitute products are: Nasdaq PHLX Options Trade Outline, Nasdaq Options Trade Outline, ISE Profile, GEMX Trade Profile data; open-close data from Cboe Options, EDGX, and BZX; Open Close Reports from MIAX Options, Pearl, and Emerald; and NYSE Options Open-Close Volume Summary.

these exchanges offer essentially the same end-of-day and intraday options trading summary information.

The Exchange proposes to provide a temporary pricing incentive program in which Members or Non-Members that purchase historical Open-Close Data will receive a percentage fee discount where specific purchase thresholds are met. Specifically, the Exchange proposes to provide a 20% discount for ad-hoc purchases of historical Open-Close Data of \$20,000 or more.⁵ The proposed program will apply to all market participants irrespective of whether the market participant is a new or current purchaser; however, the discount cannot be combined with any other discounts offered by the Exchange, including the academic discount provided for Qualifying Academic Purchasers of historical Open-Close Data. The Exchange intends to introduce the discount program beginning November 15, 2023, with the program remaining in effect through December 31, 2023.⁶

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the “Act”) and the rules and regulations thereunder applicable to the Exchange and, in particular, the requirements of Section 6(b) of the Act.⁷

Specifically, the Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the

⁵ The discount will apply on an order-by-order basis. To qualify for the discount, an order must contain End-of-Day Ad-hoc Requests (historical data) and/or Intraday Ad-hoc Requests (historical data) and must total \$20,000 or more; the Exchange will not aggregate purchases made throughout a billing cycle for purposes of the incentive program. The discount will apply to the total purchase price, once the \$20,000 minimum purchase is satisfied (for example, a qualifying order of \$25,000 would be discounted to \$20,000, i.e. receive a 20% discount of \$5,000).

⁶ As part of the proposed rule change, the Exchange also proposes to delete obsolete language related to a free trial that was offered for the months of September through December 2022 for up to 3 months of Intraday Open-Close Historical Data, as the offering is no longer in effect.

⁷ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

Section 6(b)(5)⁸ requirements that the rules of an exchange be designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices, to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to foster cooperation and coordination with persons engaged in regulating, clearing, settling, processing information with respect to, and facilitating transactions in securities, to remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system, and, in general, to protect investors and the public interest. Additionally, the Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Section 6(b)(5)⁹ requirement that the rules of an exchange not be designed to permit unfair discrimination between customers, issuers, brokers, or dealers.

In adopting Regulation NMS, the Commission granted self-regulatory organizations (“SROs”) and broker-dealers increased authority and flexibility to offer new and unique market data to the public. It was believed that this authority would expand the amount of data available to consumers, and also spur innovation and competition for the provision of market data. The Exchange believes the proposed fee changes will further broaden the availability of U.S. option market data to investors consistent with the principles of Regulation NMS. Open-Close Data is designed to help investors understand underlying market trends to improve the quality of investment decisions. Indeed, purchasers of the data may be able to enhance their ability to analyze option trade and volume data and create and test trading models and analytical strategies. The Exchange believes Open-Close Data provides a valuable tool that purchasers can use to gain comprehensive insight into the trading activity in a particular series, but also

⁸ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

⁹ Id.

emphasizes such data is not necessary for trading and as noted above, is entirely optional. Moreover, several other exchanges offer a similar data product which offer same type of data content through end-of-day or intraday reports.¹⁰

The Exchange also operates in a highly competitive environment. Indeed, there are currently 17 registered options exchanges that trade options. Based on publicly available information, no single options exchange has more than 15% of the market share.¹¹ The Commission has repeatedly expressed its preference for competition over regulatory intervention in determining prices, products, and services in the securities markets. Particularly, in Regulation NMS, the Commission highlighted the importance of market forces in determining prices and SRO revenues and, also, recognized that current regulation of the market system “has been remarkably successful in promoting market competition in its broader forms that are most important to investors and listed companies.”¹² Making similar data products available to market participants fosters competition in the marketplace, and constrains the ability of exchanges to charge supracompetitive fees. In the event that a market participant views one exchange’s data product as more or less attractive than the competition they can and do switch between similar products. The proposed fees are a result of the competitive environment, as the Exchange seeks to adopt fees to attract purchasers of historical Open-Close Data. The Exchange believes that the proposed incentive program for any Member or non-Member who purchases historical Open-Close Data is reasonable because such

¹⁰ See supra note 2.

¹¹ See Cboe Global Markets U.S. Options Market Month-to-Date Volume Summary (November 8, 2023), available at https://markets.cboe.com/us/options/market_statistics/.

¹² See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 51808 (June 9, 2005), 70 FR 37496, 37499 (June 29, 2005) (“Regulation NMS Adopting Release”).

purchasers would receive a 20% discount for purchasing \$20,000 or more worth of historical Open-Close Data. The Exchange believes the proposed discount is reasonable as it will give purchasers the ability to use and test the historical Open-Close Data at a discounted rate, prior to purchasing additional months or a monthly subscription, and will therefore encourage and promote users to purchase the historical Open-Close Data. Further, the proposed discount is intended to promote increased use of the Exchange's historical Open-Close Data by defraying some of the costs a purchaser would ordinarily have to expend before using the data product. The Exchange believes that the proposed discount is equitable and not unfairly discriminatory because it will apply equally to all Members and non-Members who purchase historical Open-Close Data. Lastly, the purchase of this data product is discretionary and not compulsory. Indeed, no market participant is required to purchase the historical Open-Close Data, and the Exchange is not required to make the historical Open-Close Data available to all investors. Potential purchasers may request the data at any time if they believe it to be valuable or may decline to purchase such data.

B. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. The Exchange operates in a highly competitive environment in which the Exchange must continually adjust its fees to remain competitive. Because competitors are free to modify their own fees in response, the Exchange believes that the degree to which fee changes in this market may impose any burden on competition is extremely limited. As discussed above, Open-Close Data is subject to direct competition from several other options exchanges that offer substitutes to Open-Close Data. Moreover, purchase of Open-

Close Data is optional. It is designed to help investors understand underlying market trends to improve the quality of investment decisions, but is not necessary to execute a trade.

The proposed rule changes are grounded in the Exchange's efforts to compete more effectively. In this competitive environment, potential purchasers are free to choose which, if any, similar product to purchase to satisfy their need for market information. As a result, the Exchange believes this proposed rule change permits fair competition among national securities exchanges. Further, the Exchange believes that these changes will not cause any unnecessary or inappropriate burden on intermarket competition, as the proposed incentive program applies uniformly to any purchaser of historical Open-Close Data.

C. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Comments on the Proposed Rule Change Received from Members, Participants, or Others

The Exchange neither solicited nor received comments on the proposed rule change.

III. Date of Effectiveness of the Proposed Rule Change and Timing for Commission Action

The foregoing rule change has become effective pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act¹³ and paragraph (f) of Rule 19b-4¹⁴ thereunder. At any time within 60 days of the filing of the proposed rule change, the Commission summarily may temporarily suspend such rule change if it appears to the Commission that such action is necessary or appropriate in the public interest, for the protection of investors, or otherwise in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. If the Commission takes such action, the

¹³ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

¹⁴ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f).

Commission will institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule change should be approved or disapproved.

IV. Solicitation of Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views and arguments concerning the foregoing, including whether the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

Electronic Comments:

- Use the Commission's internet comment form (<https://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>); or
- Send an email to rule-comments@sec.gov. Please include file number SR-C2-2023-023 on the subject line.

Paper Comments:

- Send paper comments in triplicate to Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549-1090.

All submissions should refer to file number SR-C2-2023-023. This file number should be included on the subject line if email is used. To help the Commission process and review your comments more efficiently, please use only one method. The Commission will post all comments on the Commission's internet website (<https://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>). Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for

website viewing and printing in the Commission’s Public Reference Room, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549, on official business days between the hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Copies of the filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. Do not include personal identifiable information in submissions; you should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. We may redact in part or withhold entirely from publication submitted material that is obscene or subject to copyright protection. All submissions should refer to file number SR-C2-2023-023 and should be submitted on or before [INSERT DATE 21 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*].

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.¹⁵

Sherry R. Haywood,

Assistant Secretary.

¹⁵ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).