

FIRST RELIANCE BANCSHARES INC  
Form 10KSB  
March 31, 2006

---

**UNITED STATES  
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549**

---

**FORM 10-KSB**

(Mark One)

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

For the fiscal year ended December 31, 2005

OR

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

For the transition period from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
Commission File Number: 000-49757

---

**FIRST RELIANCE BANCSHARES, INC.**

*(Exact Name of Small Business Issuer in its Charter)*

**South Carolina**  
*(State of Incorporation or Organization)*

**80-0030931**  
*(I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)*

**2170 W. Palmetto Street, Florence, South Carolina**  
*(Address of Principal Executive Offices)*

**29501**  
*(Zip Code)*

**(843) 656-5000**  
*(Registrant's telephone number, including area code)*

Securities Registered Pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:  
**None**

Securities Registered Pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act:  
**Common Stock, \$0.01 Par Value**

Check whether the issuer is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act.

Check whether the issuer: (1) filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days.

YesNo

Check if there is no disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-B contained in this form, and no disclosure will be contained, to the best of registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-KSB or any amendment to this Form 10-KSB.

Edgar Filing: FIRST RELIANCE BANCSHARES INC - Form 10KSB

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act).

YesNo

x

The issuer's revenue for its most recent fiscal year was approximately \$26,002,399. As of December 31, 2005, there were 3,306,117 shares of common stock issued and outstanding. The aggregate market value of the registrant's outstanding common stock held by nonaffiliates of the registrant as of December 31, 2005, was approximately \$45,179,726.

**DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE**

<b>Document</b>	<b>Parts Into Which Incorporated</b>
Annual Report to Shareholders for the Year Ended December 31, 2005	Part II
Proxy Statement for the Annual Meeting of Shareholders to be held June 15, 2006	Part III
Transitional Small Business Disclosure Format (check one):	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>PART I</u>		3
ITEM 1.	<u>DESCRIPTION OF BUSINESS</u>	3
ITEM 2.	<u>DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTIES</u>	15
ITEM 3.	<u>LEGAL PROCEEDINGS</u>	16
ITEM 4.	<u>SUBMISSION OF MATTERS TO A VOTE OF SECURITY HOLDERS</u>	16
<u>PART II</u>		16
ITEM 5.	<u>MARKET FOR REGISTRANT'S COMMON EQUITY AND RELATED STOCKHOLDER MATTERS</u>	16
ITEM 6.	<u>MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL CONDITION AND RESULTS OF OPERATIONS</u>	16
ITEM 7.	<u>FINANCIAL STATEMENTS</u>	17
ITEM 8.	<u>CHANGES IN AND DISAGREEMENTS WITH ACCOUNTANTS ON ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE</u>	17
ITEM 8A.	<u>CONTROLS AND PROCEDURES</u>	17
ITEM 8B.	<u>OTHER INFORMATION</u>	17
<u>PART III</u>		18
ITEM 9.	<u>DIRECTORS, EXECUTIVE OFFICERS, PROMOTERS AND CONTROL PERSONS; COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 16(a) OF THE EXCHANGE ACT</u>	18
ITEM 10.	<u>EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION</u>	18
ITEM 11.	<u>SECURITY OWNERSHIP OF CERTAIN BENEFICIAL OWNERS AND MANAGEMENT</u>	18
ITEM 12.	<u>CERTAIN RELATIONSHIPS AND RELATED TRANSACTIONS</u>	19
ITEM 13.	<u>EXHIBITS, LISTS AND REPORTS ON FORM 10-KSB</u>	20
ITEM 14.	<u>PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTANT FEES AND SERVICES</u>	20

---

**PART I**

**ITEM 1. DESCRIPTION OF BUSINESS**

**Special Cautionary Notice Regarding Forward-Looking Statements**

This Report contains statements that constitute forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. Various matters discussed in this document and in documents incorporated by reference herein, including matters discussed under the caption Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations, may constitute forward-looking statements for purposes of the Securities Act and the Securities Exchange Act. These forward-looking statements are based on many assumptions and estimates and are not guarantees of future performance, and may involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors which may cause the actual results, performance or achievements of First Reliance Bancshares, Inc. (the

Company ) or its wholly owned subsidiary, First Reliance Bank (the Bank ), to be materially different from future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. The words expect, anticipate, intend, plan, believe, seek, estimate, similar expressions are intended to identify such forward-looking statements. The Company's and the Bank's actual results may differ materially from the results anticipated in these forward-looking statements due to a variety of factors, including, without limitation:

significant increases in competitive pressure in the banking and financial services industries;

changes in the interest rate environment that could reduce anticipated or actual margins;

changes in political conditions or the legislative or regulatory environment;

general economic conditions, either nationally or regionally and especially in our primary service area, becoming less favorable than expected resulting in, among other things, a deterioration in credit quality;

changes occurring in business conditions and inflation;

changes in technology;

changes in monetary and tax policies;

the level of allowance for loan loss;

the rate of delinquencies and amounts of charge-offs;

the rates of loan growth;

adverse changes in asset quality and resulting credit risk-related losses and expenses;

changes in the securities markets; and

other risks and uncertainties detailed from time to time in our filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

All written or oral forward-looking statements attributable to the Company are expressly qualified in their entirety by these cautionary statements.

**PART I**

**ITEM 1. BUSINESS**

**General**

The Company was incorporated under the laws of the State of South Carolina on April 12, 2001 to be the holding company for First Reliance Bank (the "Bank"), and acquired all of the shares of the Bank on April 1, 2002 in a statutory share exchange. The Bank, a South Carolina banking corporation, is the Company's only subsidiary, and the Company conducts no business other than through its ownership of the Bank. The Company has no indirect subsidiaries or special purpose entities. The Bank commenced operations in August 1999 and currently operates out of its main office and two branch offices. The Bank serves the Florence, Lexington, and Charleston, South Carolina areas as an independent, community-oriented commercial bank emphasizing high-quality, responsive and personalized service. The Bank provides a broad range of consumer and commercial banking services, concentrating on individuals and small and medium-sized businesses desiring a high level of personalized services.

**Marketing Focus**

The Bank advertises aggressively, using popular forms of media and direct mail, to target market segments and emphasizes the Bank's substantial local ownership, community bank nature, locally oriented operations and ability to provide prompt, knowledgeable and personalized service.

**Location and Service Area**

The executive or main office facilities of the Company and the Bank are located at 2170 W. Palmetto Street, Florence, South Carolina 29501. The Bank also has branches located at 411 Second Loop Road, Florence, South Carolina, 709 North Lake Drive, Lexington, South Carolina, 800 South Shelmore Blvd., Mount Pleasant, South Carolina and 51 State Street, Suite 101, Charleston, South Carolina. The Bank's primary market areas are the Cities of Florence, Lexington, and Charleston and the surrounding areas of Florence, Lexington, and Charleston Counties, South Carolina.

According to the South Carolina Department of Commerce, in 2000, Florence County had an estimated population of 125,761. Florence County, which covers approximately 805 square miles, is located in the eastern portion of South Carolina and is bordered by Darlington, Marlboro, Dillon, Williamsburg, Marion, Clarendon, Sumter and Lee Counties. Florence County has a number of large employers, including, Wellman, Inc., Honda, Nan Ya Plastics, ESAB, and McLeod Regional Medical Center. The principal components of the economy of Florence County are the wholesale and retail trade sector, the manufacturing sector, the services sector and the financial, insurance and real estate sector.

First Reliance Bank opened a branch office at 709 North Lake Drive, Lexington, South Carolina in 2004. Lexington County had an estimated population in 2003 of 226,528. The primary market area is the City of Lexington and the surrounding areas of Lexington County, South Carolina. Lexington County is centrally located in the Midlands of South Carolina just outside the capital city in Columbia and is bordered by Richland, Newberry, Saluda, Aiken, Orangeburg and Calhoun Counties. Lexington County has a number of large employers, including, Westinghouse Electric Corporation, Michelin North America, Mack Trucks, Inc.-Winnsboro Assembly Opera, Amick Farms, Inc., and Bose Corporation. Lexington County is a major transportation crossroads for the Midlands with I-26, I-77 and I-20 bordering or running through the county. The Columbia Metropolitan Airport is located in Lexington County, just 10 miles from the town of Lexington, and is the Southeastern hub for United Parcel Service. The principal components of the economy of Lexington County are the wholesale and retail trade sector, the manufacturing sector, the government sector, the services sector and the financial, insurance and real estate sector.

First Reliance Bank opened a branch office in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina as well a branch office in Charleston, South Carolina in 2005. Charleston County has a population of 309,969 and the Metro Area has a population of 549,033 according to the 2000 census. Charleston is located on the central and southern east coast surrounded by Berkeley and Dorchester counties. Major employers in the area include US Navy, Medical University of South Carolina, and the Charleston Air Force Base.

## Banking Services

The Bank strives to provide its customers with the breadth of products and services comparable to those offered by large regional banks, while maintaining the quick response and personal service of a locally owned and managed bank. In addition to offering a full range of deposit services and commercial and personal loans, the Bank offers investment services and products such as mortgage loan origination, wholesale mortgage services and title insurance services.

The Bank seeks to promote continuous long-term relationships. Because management of the Bank is located in Florence and Lexington, South Carolina, all credit and related decisions are made locally, which facilitates prompt responses by persons familiar with the borrower's local business environment.

**Deposit Services.** The Bank offers a full range of deposit services that are typically available in most banks and savings and loan associations, including checking accounts, NOW accounts, savings accounts and other time deposits of various types, ranging from daily money market accounts to longer-term certificates of deposit. The transaction accounts and time certificates are tailored to the Bank's principal market area at rates competitive to those offered by other banks in the area. In addition, the Bank offers certain retirement account services, such as Individual Retirement Accounts. The bank also offers free courier service for business accounts. All deposit accounts are insured by the FDIC up to the maximum amount allowed by law. The Bank solicits these accounts from individuals, businesses, associations and organizations and governmental authorities.

**Loan Products.** The Bank offers a full range of commercial and consumer loans, as well as real estate construction and acquisition loans as discussed below. Commercial loans are extended primarily to small and middle market customers. Such loans include both secured and unsecured loans for working capital needs (including loans secured by inventory and accounts receivable), business expansion (including acquisition of real estate and improvements), asset acquisition and agricultural purposes. Term loans will generally not exceed a five-year maturity with a ten-year amortization schedule. The extensions of term loans are based upon (1) the ability and stability of current management; (2) stable earnings and upward trends in cash flow to support repayment; (3) earnings projections based on reasonable assumptions; (4) the financial strength of the industry and the business itself and (5) the value and marketability of the collateral. In considering loans for accounts receivable and inventory, the Bank uses a declining scale for advances based on an aging report. Loans for inventory are limited to 50% for hard goods, 25% for soft goods and 0% for perishables. With respect to loans for the acquisition of equipment and other assets, the loan terms depend on the economic life of the respective assets.

As of December 31, 2005, the classification of the commercial loans of the Bank and the respective percentage of the Bank's total loan portfolio of each are as follows:

Description	Total Outstanding as of December 31, 2005	Percentage of Total Loan Portfolio
Loans to finance agricultural production and other farm loans	\$ 20,151.00	< 1%
Commercial and industrial loans	\$ 50,320,434.10	16%

Commercial loans involve significant risk because there is generally a small market available for an asset held as collateral that needs to be liquidated. Commercial loans for working capital needs are typically difficult to monitor.

As of December 31, 2005, the classification of the consumer loans of the Bank and the respective percentage of the Bank's total loan portfolio of each are as follows:

Description	Total Outstanding as of December 31, 2005	Percentage of Total Loan Portfolio
Individuals (household, personal, single pay, installment and other)	\$ 12,073,252.11	4%
Individuals (household, family, personal credit cards and overdraft protection)	\$ 1,880,380.48	1%
All other consumer loans	\$ 2,141,433.18	1%

## Edgar Filing: FIRST RELIANCE BANCSHARES INC - Form 10KSB

The risks associated with consumer lending are largely related to economic conditions and increase during economic downturns. Other major risk factors relating to consumer loans include high debt to income ratios and poor loan-to-value ratios. All of the consumer loans set forth above require a debt service income ratio of no greater than 36% based on gross income.

The Bank's lending activities are subject to a variety of lending limits imposed by federal law. Under South Carolina law, loans by the Bank to a single customer may not exceed 10% of the Bank's unimpaired capital, except that by two-thirds vote of the directors of the Bank such limit may be increased to 15% of the Bank's unimpaired capital. The Bank's Board of Directors has approved that increase in its lending limit. Based on the Bank's unimpaired capital as of December 31, 2005, the Bank's lending limit to a single customer is approximately \$6.3 million. Even with the increase, the size of the loans that the Bank is able to offer to potential customers is less than the size of the loans that the Bank's competitors with larger lending limits are able to offer. This limit affects the ability of the Bank to seek relationships with the area's larger businesses. However, the Bank may request other banks to participate in loans to customers when requested loan amounts exceed the Bank's legal lending limit.

**Mortgage Loan Division.** The Bank has established a mortgage loan division through which it has broadened the range of services that it offers to its customers. The mortgage loan division originates secured real estate loans to purchase existing or to construct new homes and to refinance existing mortgages. The following are the types of real estate loans originated by the Bank and the general loan-to-value limits set by the Bank with respect to each type.

Raw Land	65%
Land Development	75%
Commercial, multifamily and other nonresidential construction	80%
One to four family residential construction	85%
Improved property	85%
Owner occupied, one to four family and home equity	90% (or less)
Commercial property	80% (or less)

As of December 31, 2005, the classification of the mortgage loans of the Bank and the respective percentage of the Bank's total loan portfolio of each are as follows:

Description	Total Amount as of December 31, 2005	Percentage of Total Loan Portfolio
Secured by non-farm, non-residential properties	\$ 103,446,936.65	33%
Construction and land development	\$ 52,267,759.09	16%
Farmland (including farm residential and other improvements)	\$ 2,678,166.35	1%

## Edgar Filing: FIRST RELIANCE BANCSHARES INC - Form 10KSB

Description	Total Amount as of December 31, 2005	Percentage of Total Loan Portfolio
Revolving, open end loans secured by 1-4 family extended under line of credit	\$ 24,570,163.10	8%
All other loans secured by 1-4 family residential (1 <sup>st</sup> lien)	\$ 50,937,658.02	16%
All other loans secured by 1-4 family residential (junior lien)	\$ 4,885,095.05	2%
Secured by multi-family (5 or more) residential properties condos and apartments	\$ 6,322,956.66	2%

Of the loan types listed above, commercial real estate loans are generally more risky because they are the most difficult to liquidate. Construction loans also involve risks due to weather delays and cost overruns.

The Bank generates additional fee income by selling most of its mortgage loans in the secondary market and cross-selling its other products and services to its mortgage customers. In 2005, the Bank sold mortgage loans in a total amount of approximately \$74,459,914 or 37.5% of the total number of mortgage loans originated by the Bank.

All FHA, VA and State Housing loans sold by the Bank involve the right to recourse. The FHA and VA loans are subject to recourse if the loan shows 60 days or more past due in the first 4 months or goes in to foreclosure within the first 12 months. The State Housing loans are subject to recourse if the loan becomes delinquent prior to purchase by State Housing or if final documentation is not delivered within 90 days of purchase. All investors have a right to require the Bank to repurchase a loan in the event the loan involved fraud. In 2005, of the 546 loans sold by the Bank, 17 were FHA or VA loans and 46 were State Housing loans. Such loans represented 7.4% of the dollar volume or 11.5% of the total number of loans sold by the Bank in 2005.

In addition, an increase in interest rates may decrease the demand for consumer and commercial credit, including real estate loans. Net Fees from residential mortgage originations were \$878 thousand, or 3.4% of gross revenue in 2005. We expect to originate more real estate loans in 2006 with the addition of more mortgage originators. Accordingly, a period of rising interest rates could negatively affect our residential mortgage origination business.

**Other Banking Services.** First Reliance Bank focuses heavily on personal customer service and offers a full range of financial services. Personal products include checking and savings accounts, money market accounts, CDs and IRAs, and personal mortgage loans, while business products include checking and savings accounts, commercial lending services, money market accounts, and business deposit courier service. In September 2004, the Company began offering Wholesale Mortgage Services and Title Insurance Services. In December 2004, the Company began offering business customers a courier service. The Company also provides Internet banking, electronic bill paying services and an overdraft privilege to its customers. The Company's stock is traded on the OTC Bulletin Board under the symbol FSRL. Information about the Company is available on our website at <http://firstreliance.com>.

First Reliance's growth has been excellent and has been driven by expansion into new markets as well as organic growth. Further, much of that growth has come in low or no cost deposit accounts, which leverages the investment the Bank has made in customer service initiatives and provides a low cost of funds for the Bank. Two of the initiatives the Bank has implemented to achieve its strong growth are extended hours and an incentive plan that rewards employees at the customer contact level. The extended hours initiative, known as First Reliance's 8 to 8 program, continues to receive positive responses from customers, and the Company's goal is to eventually have an 8 to 8 operation for each of the geographic regions in which it operates. Management attributes part of the rapid growth in core deposits to the recent introduction of its Balanced Scorecard, which focuses on driving profitability, growth and improving efficiencies. During the quarter, its customers rewarded the Bank with a 94% customer satisfaction rating.

First Reliance's strong balance sheet growth led it to be recognized as one of South Carolina's Top 25 Fastest Growing Companies by Elliot Davis, LLC, in association with the SC Chamber of Commerce. The most recent award is the third time First Reliance has received this distinction, and it is the only SC bank to receive this honor this many times. Over the past year, (from December 31, 2004 to December 31, 2005), total assets increased 41%, net loans (excluding loans held for sale) grew 31% and deposits were up 48%.

**Investments.** In addition to its loan operations, the Bank makes other investments primarily in obligations of the United States or obligations guaranteed as to principal and interest by the United States and other taxable securities. The Bank also invests in certificates of deposits in other financial institutions. The amount invested in such time deposits, as viewed on an institution by institution basis, does not exceed \$100,000. Therefore, the amounts invested in certificates of deposit are fully insured by the FDIC. No investment held by the Bank exceeds any applicable limitation imposed by law or regulation. Our asset and liability management committee reviews the investment portfolio on an ongoing basis to ascertain investment profitability and to verify compliance with the Bank's investment policies.

**Other Services.** In addition to its banking services, the Bank offers securities brokerage services and life insurance products to its customers through a financial services division of the Bank. The Bank obtained an insurance agency license under South Carolina law to sell life insurance and has relationships with brokers and carriers. The Bank's financial services division uses professional money managers who diversify a client's portfolio into several different asset classes. Some of the products offered are mutual funds, annuities, stocks, bonds, insurance, IRAs and 401(k) rollovers.

### **Competition**

The Bank faces strong competition for deposits, loans and other financial services from numerous other banks, thrifts, credit unions, other financial institutions and other entities that provide financial services, some of which are not subject to the same degree of regulation as the Bank. Because South Carolina law permits statewide branching by banks and savings and loan associations, many financial institutions in the state have branch networks. In addition, subject to certain conditions, South Carolina law permits interstate banking. Reflecting this opportunity provided by law plus the growth prospects of the Florence Lexington and Charleston markets, all of the five largest (in terms of local deposits) commercial banks in our market are branches of or affiliated with regional or super-regional banks.

As of June 30, 2005, 24 banks and five savings institutions operated 214 offices within Charleston, Florence and Lexington Counties. All of these institutions aggressively compete for business in the Bank's market area. Most of these competitors have been in business for many years, have established customer bases, are substantially larger than the Bank, have substantially higher lending limits than the Bank has and are able to offer certain services, including trust and international banking services, that the Bank is able to offer only through correspondents, if at all.

The Bank attempts to compete by providing its customers with high-quality, prompt and knowledgeable personalized service at competitive rates, which is a combination that the Bank believes customers generally find lacking at larger institutions. The Bank also attempts to offer a wide variety of financial products and services at fees that are competitive with other financial institutions.

### **Employees**

The Bank currently has 123 full-time employees and 7 part-time employee. The executive officers of the Company are the only officers of the Company, but they receive no compensation from the Company. The Company has no employees.

### **Supervision and Regulation**

Both the Company and the Bank are subject to extensive state and federal banking regulations that impose restrictions on and provide for general regulatory oversight of their operations. These laws generally are intended to protect depositors and not shareholders. The following discussion describes the material elements of the regulatory framework that applies to us.

#### **First Reliance Bancshares, Inc.**

Since the Company owns all of the capital stock of the Bank, it is a bank holding company under the federal Bank Holding Company Act of 1956. As a result, the Company is primarily subject to the supervision, examination, and reporting requirements of the Bank Holding Company Act and the regulations of the Federal Reserve.

**Acquisitions of Banks.** The Bank Holding Company Act requires every bank holding company to obtain the Federal Reserve's prior approval before:

acquiring direct or indirect ownership or control of any voting shares of any bank if, after the acquisition, the bank holding company will directly or indirectly own or control more than 5% of the bank's voting shares;

acquiring all or substantially all of the assets of any bank; or

merging or consolidating with any other bank holding company.

Additionally, the Bank Holding Company Act provides that the Federal Reserve may not approve any of these transactions if it would result in or tend to create a monopoly or, substantially lessen competition or otherwise function as a restraint of trade, unless the anti-competitive effects of the proposed transaction are clearly outweighed by the public interest in meeting the convenience and needs of the community to be served. The Federal Reserve is also required to consider the financial and managerial resources and future prospects of the bank holding companies and banks concerned and the convenience and needs of the community to be served. The Federal Reserve's consideration of financial resources generally focuses on capital adequacy, which is discussed below.

Under the Bank Holding Company Act, if adequately capitalized and adequately managed, the Company or any other bank holding company located in South Carolina may purchase a bank located outside of South Carolina. Conversely, an adequately capitalized and adequately managed bank holding company located outside of South Carolina may purchase a bank located inside South Carolina. In each case, however, restrictions may be placed on the acquisition of a bank that has only been in existence for a limited amount of time or will result in specified concentrations of deposits. For example, South Carolina law prohibits a bank holding company from acquiring control of a financial institution until the target financial institution has been incorporated for five years. As a result, no bank holding company may acquire control of the Company until after the fifth anniversary date of the Bank's incorporation. Because the Bank has not been incorporated for more than five years, this limitation does apply to the Bank and the Company.

Additionally, In July 1994, South Carolina enacted legislation which effectively provided that, after June 30, 1996, out-of-state bank holding companies may acquire other banks or bank holding companies in South Carolina, subject to certain conditions. Accordingly, effective July 1, 1996, South Carolina law was amended to permit interstate branching but not de novo branching by an out-of-state bank. The Company believes that the foregoing legislation has increased takeover activity of South Carolina financial institutions by out-of-state financial institutions.

**Change in Bank Control.** Subject to various exceptions, the Bank Holding Company Act and the Change in Bank Control Act, together with related regulations, require Federal Reserve approval prior to any person or company acquiring control of a bank holding company. Control is conclusively presumed to exist if an individual or company acquires 25% or more of any class of voting securities of the bank holding company. Control is rebuttably presumed to exist if a person or company acquires 10% or more, but less than 25%, of any class of voting securities and either:

the bank holding company has registered securities under Section 12 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934; or

no other person owns a greater percentage of that class of voting securities immediately after the transaction.

Our common stock is registered under Section 12 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. The regulations provide a procedure for challenging any rebuttable presumption of control.

**Permitted Activities.** A bank holding company is generally permitted under the Bank Holding Company Act, to engage in or acquire direct or indirect control of more than 5% of the voting shares of any company engaged in the following activities:

banking or managing or controlling banks; and

any activity that the Federal Reserve determines to be so closely related to banking as to be a proper incident to the business of banking.

Activities that the Federal Reserve has found to be so closely related to banking as to be a proper incident to the business of banking include:

## Edgar Filing: FIRST RELIANCE BANCSHARES INC - Form 10KSB

factoring accounts receivable;

making, acquiring, brokering or servicing loans and usual related activities;

leasing personal or real property;

operating a non-bank depository institution, such as a savings association;

trust company functions;

financial and investment advisory activities;

conducting discount securities brokerage activities;

underwriting and dealing in government obligations and money market instruments;

providing specified management consulting and counseling activities;

performing selected data processing services and support services;

acting as agent or broker in selling credit life insurance and other types of insurance in connection with credit transactions; and

performing selected insurance underwriting activities.

Despite prior approval, the Federal Reserve may order a bank holding company or its subsidiaries to terminate any of these activities or to terminate its ownership or control of any subsidiary when it has reasonable cause to believe that the bank holding company's continued ownership, activity or control constitutes a serious risk to the financial safety, soundness, or stability of it or any of its bank subsidiaries.

The Financial Services Modernization Act of 1999, or the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, revised and expanded the provisions of the Bank Holding Company Act by permitting a bank holding company to qualify and elect to become a financial holding company. A financial holding company may engage in activities that are financial in nature or incidental or complementary to financial activity. Under the regulations implementing the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, the following activities are considered financial in nature:

lending, trust and other banking activities;

insuring, guaranteeing, or indemnifying against loss or harm, or providing and issuing annuities, and acting as principal, agent, or broker for these purposes, in any state;

providing financial, investment, or advisory services;

issuing or selling instruments representing interests in pools of assets permissible for a bank to hold directly;

underwriting, dealing in or making a market in securities;

other activities that the Federal Reserve may determine to be so closely related to banking or managing or controlling banks as to be a proper incident to managing or controlling banks;

foreign activities permitted outside of the United States if the Federal Reserve has determined them to be usual in connection with banking operations abroad;

merchant banking through securities or insurance affiliates; and

insurance company portfolio investments.

To qualify to become a financial holding company, the Bank and any other depository institution subsidiary of the Company must be well capitalized and well managed and must have a Community Reinvestment Act rating of at least satisfactory. Additionally, the Company must file an election with the Federal Reserve to become a financial holding company and must provide the Federal Reserve with 30 days' written notice prior to engaging in a permitted financial activity. While the Company meets the qualification standards applicable to financial holding companies, the Company has not elected to become a financial holding company at this time.

**Support of Subsidiary Institutions.** Under Federal Reserve policy, the Company is expected to act as a source of financial strength for the Bank and to commit resources to support the Bank. This support may be required at times when, without this Federal Reserve policy, the Company might not be inclined to provide it. In addition, any capital loans made by the Company to the Bank will be repaid only after its deposits and various other obligations are repaid in full. In the unlikely event of the Company's bankruptcy, any commitment by it to a federal

bank regulatory agency to maintain the capital of the Bank will be assumed by the bankruptcy trustee and entitled to a priority of payment.

**South Carolina Law.** As a bank holding company with its principal offices in South Carolina, the Company is subject to limitations on sale or merger and to regulation by the South Carolina State Board of Financial Institutions (the State Board). The Company must receive the approval of the State Board prior to acquiring control of a bank or bank holding company or all or substantially all of the assets of a bank or a bank holding company. The Company also must file with the State Board periodic reports with respect to its financial condition, operations and management, and the intercompany relationships between the Company and its subsidiaries.

#### **First Reliance Bank**

The Bank is a state chartered bank insured by the FDIC and not a member of the Federal Reserve. As such, the Bank is subject to supervision and regulation by the FDIC and the State Board. Supervision, regulation and examination of banks by regulatory agencies are intended primarily for the protection of depositors rather than stockholders of the banks.

**South Carolina Law.** Commercial banks chartered in South Carolina have only those powers granted by law or the regulations of the State Board. State law sets specific requirements for bank capital and regulates deposits in and loans and investments by banks, including the amounts, types and, in some cases, rates. In addition, the State Board regulates, among other activities, the payment of dividends, the opening of branches, loans to officers and directors, record keeping and the use of automated teller machines. The State Board periodically examines state banks to determine their compliance with the law and regulations, and state banks must make periodic reports of their condition to the State Board.

**Prompt Corrective Action.** The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Improvement Act of 1991 establishes a system of prompt corrective action to resolve the problems of undercapitalized financial institutions. Under this system, the federal banking regulators have established five capital categories (well capitalized, adequately capitalized, undercapitalized, significantly undercapitalized and critically undercapitalized) in which all institutions are placed. Federal banking regulators are required to take various mandatory supervisory actions and are authorized to take other discretionary actions with respect to institutions in the three undercapitalized categories. The severity of the action depends upon the capital category in which the institution is placed. Generally, subject to a narrow exception, the banking regulator must appoint a receiver or conservator for an institution that is critically undercapitalized. The federal banking agencies have specified by regulation the relevant capital level for each category.

An institution that is categorized as undercapitalized, significantly undercapitalized, or critically undercapitalized is required to submit an acceptable capital restoration plan to its appropriate federal banking agency. A bank holding company must guarantee that a subsidiary depository institution meets its capital restoration plan, subject to various limitations. The controlling holding company's obligation to fund a capital restoration plan is limited to the lesser of 5% of an undercapitalized subsidiary's assets at the time it became undercapitalized or the amount required to meet regulatory capital requirements. An undercapitalized institution is also generally prohibited from increasing its average total assets, making acquisitions, establishing any branches or engaging in any new line of business, except under an accepted capital restoration plan or with FDIC approval. The regulations also establish procedures for downgrading an institution to a lower capital category based on supervisory factors other than capital.

**FDIC Insurance Assessments.** The FDIC has adopted a risk-based assessment system for insured depository institutions that takes into account the risks attributable to different categories and concentrations of assets and liabilities. The system assigns an institution to one of three capital categories: (1) well capitalized; (2) adequately capitalized; and (3) undercapitalized. These three categories are substantially similar to the prompt corrective action categories described above, with the undercapitalized category including institutions that are undercapitalized, significantly undercapitalized, and critically undercapitalized for prompt corrective action purposes. The FDIC also assigns an institution to one of three supervisory subgroups based on a supervisory evaluation that the institution's primary federal regulator provides to the FDIC and information that the FDIC determines to be relevant to the institution's financial condition and the risk posed to the deposit insurance funds. Assessments range from 0 to 27 cents per \$100 of deposits, depending on the institution's capital group and supervisory subgroup. In addition, the FDIC imposes assessments to help pay off the \$780 million in annual interest payments on the \$8 billion Financing Corporation bonds issued in the late 1980s as part of the government rescue of the thrift industry.

## Edgar Filing: FIRST RELIANCE BANCSHARES INC - Form 10KSB

The FDIC may terminate its insurance of deposits if it finds that the institution has engaged in unsafe and unsound practices, is in an unsafe or unsound condition to continue operations, or has violated any applicable law, regulation, rule, order, or condition imposed by the FDIC.

**Community Reinvestment Act.** The Bank is subject to evaluation by the FDIC under the Community Reinvestment Act of 1977 (CRA). The Bank is evaluated under guidelines established for small banks. These guidelines call for an evaluation of an institution's performance in meeting the credit needs of its entire community, including low- and moderate-income areas, consistent with the safe and sound operation of the institution. The relevant factors under these small bank guidelines include the bank's loan-to-deposit ratio within its community, the bank's percentage of loans and other lending activities within its community, the bank's record of lending to and engaging in other lending-related activities for borrowers of different income levels and businesses and farms of different sizes, the geographic distribution of the bank's loans and the bank's record of acting, if warranted, in response to written complaints about its performance in helping to meet credit needs in its community. The FDIC takes a bank's CRA performance into account in considering applications for approval of deposit insurance, establishment or relocation of branches and business combinations. Accordingly, failure to adequately meet these criteria could impose additional requirements and limitations on the Bank. Since our aggregate assets are not more than \$250 million, under the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, we are generally subject to a Community Reinvestment Act examination only once every 60 months if we receive an outstanding rating, once every 48 months if we receive a satisfactory rating and as needed if our rating is less than satisfactory. Additionally, we must publicly disclose the terms of various Community Reinvestment Act-related agreements.

**Other Regulations.** Interest and other charges collected or contracted for by the Bank are subject to state usury laws and federal laws concerning interest rates. For example, under the Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act of 1940, a lender is generally prohibited from charging an annual interest rate in excess of 6% on any obligation of a borrower who is on active duty with the United States military.

The Bank's loan operations are also subject to federal laws applicable to credit transactions, such as the:

Truth-In-Lending Act, governing disclosures of credit terms to consumer borrowers;

Home Mortgage Disclosure Act of 1975, requiring financial institutions to provide information to enable the public and public officials to determine whether a financial institution is fulfilling its obligation to help meet the housing needs of the community it serves;

Equal Credit Opportunity Act, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, creed or other prohibited factors in extending credit;

Fair Credit Reporting Act of 1978, as amended by the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act, governing the use and provision of information to credit reporting agencies, certain identity theft protections, and certain credit and other disclosures;

Fair Debt Collection Act, governing the manner in which consumer debts may be collected by collection agencies;

Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act of 1940, as amended by the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, governing the repayment terms of, and property rights underlying, secured obligations of persons in military service; and

rules and regulations of the various federal agencies charged with the responsibility of implementing these federal laws.

The Bank's deposit operations are also subject to federal laws applicable to deposit transactions, such as the:

Right to Financial Privacy Act, which imposes a duty to maintain confidentiality of consumer financial records and prescribes procedures for complying with administrative subpoenas of financial records;

Electronic Funds Transfer Act, governing automatic deposits to and withdrawals from deposit accounts and customers' rights and liabilities arising from the use of automated teller machines and other electronic banking services; and

rules and regulations of the various federal agencies charged with the responsibility of implementing these federal laws.

### **Capital Adequacy**

The Company and the Bank are required to comply with the capital adequacy standards established by the Federal Reserve, in the case of the Company, and the FDIC, in the case of the Bank. The Federal Reserve has established a risk-based and a leverage measure of capital adequacy for bank holding companies. The Bank is also subject to risk-based and leverage capital requirements adopted by the FDIC, which are substantially similar to those adopted by the Federal Reserve for bank holding companies.

The risk-based capital standards are designed to make regulatory capital requirements more sensitive to differences in risk profiles among banks and bank holding companies, to account for off-balance-sheet exposure, and to minimize disincentives for holding liquid assets. Assets and off-balance-sheet items, such as letters of credit and unfunded loan commitments, are assigned to broad risk categories, each with appropriate risk weights. The resulting capital ratios represent capital as a percentage of total risk-weighted assets and off-balance-sheet items.

The minimum guideline for the ratio of total capital to risk-weighted assets is 8%. Total capital consists of two components, Tier 1 Capital and Tier 2 Capital. Tier 1 Capital generally consists of common stock, minority interests in the equity accounts of consolidated subsidiaries, noncumulative perpetual preferred stock, and a limited amount of qualifying cumulative perpetual preferred stock, less goodwill and other specified intangible assets. Tier 1 Capital must equal at least 4% of risk-weighted assets. Tier 2 Capital generally consists of subordinated debt, other preferred stock, and a limited amount of loan loss reserves. The total amount of Tier 2 Capital is limited to 100% of Tier 1 Capital. At December 31, 2005, our ratio of total capital to risk-weighted assets was 13.05% and our ratio of Tier 1 Capital to risk-weighted assets was 12.02%.

In addition, the Federal Reserve has established minimum leverage ratio guidelines for bank holding companies. These guidelines provide for a minimum ratio of Tier 1 Capital to average assets, less goodwill and other specified intangible assets, of 3% for bank holding companies that meet specified criteria, including having the highest regulatory rating and implementing the Federal Reserve's risk-based capital measure for market risk. All other bank holding companies generally are required to maintain a leverage ratio of at least 4%. At December 31, 2005, our leverage ratio was 10.02%. The guidelines also provide that bank holding companies experiencing internal growth or making acquisitions will be expected to maintain strong capital positions substantially above the minimum supervisory levels without reliance on intangible assets. The Federal Reserve considers the leverage ratio and other indicators of capital strength in evaluating proposals for expansion or new activities.

Failure to meet capital guidelines could subject a bank or bank holding company to a variety of enforcement remedies, including issuance of a capital directive, the termination of deposit insurance by the FDIC, a prohibition on accepting brokered deposits, and certain other restrictions on its business. As described above, significant additional restrictions can be imposed on FDIC-insured depository institutions that fail to meet applicable capital requirements.

### **Payment of Dividends**

The Company is a legal entity separate and distinct from the Bank. The principal sources of the Company's cash flow, including cash flow to pay dividends to its shareholders, are dividends that the Bank pays to its sole shareholder, the Company. Statutory and regulatory limitations apply to the Bank's payment of dividends to the Company as well as to the Company's payment of dividends to its shareholders.

Under South Carolina law, the Bank is authorized to upstream to the Company, by way of a cash dividend, up to 100% of the Bank's net income in any calendar year without obtaining the prior approval of the State Board, provided that the Bank received a composite rating of one or two at the last examination conducted by a state or federal regulatory authority. All other cash dividends require prior approval by the State Board. South Carolina law requires each state nonmember bank to maintain the same reserves against deposits as are required for a state member bank under the Federal Reserve Act. This requirement is not expected to limit the ability of the Bank to pay dividends on its common stock.

The payment of dividends by the Company and the Bank may also be affected by other factors, such as the requirement to maintain adequate capital above regulatory guidelines. If, in the opinion of the FDIC, the Bank were engaged in or about to engage in an unsafe or unsound practice, the FDIC could require, after notice and a hearing, that the Bank stop or refrain engaging in the practice. The federal banking agencies have indicated that paying dividends that deplete a depository institution's capital base to an inadequate level would be an unsafe and unsound banking practice. Under the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Improvement Act of 1991, a depository institution may not pay any dividend if payment would cause it to become undercapitalized or if it already is undercapitalized. Moreover, the federal agencies have issued policy statements that provide that bank holding companies and insured banks should generally only pay dividends out of current operating earnings.

#### **Restrictions on Transactions with Affiliates**

The Company and the Bank are subject to the provisions of Section 23A of the Federal Reserve Act. Section 23A places limits on the amount of:

- a bank's loans or extensions of credit to affiliates;
- a bank's investment in affiliates;
- assets a bank may purchase from affiliates, except for real and personal property exempted by the Federal Reserve;
- loans or extensions of credit to third parties collateralized by the securities or obligations of affiliates; and
- a bank's guarantee, acceptance or letter of credit issued on behalf of an affiliate.

The total amount of the above transactions is limited in amount, as to any one affiliate, to 10% of a bank's capital and surplus and, as to all affiliates combined, to 20% of a bank's capital and surplus. In addition to the limitation on the amount of these transactions, each of the above transactions must also meet specified collateral requirements. The Bank must also comply with other provisions designed to avoid the taking of low-quality assets.

The Company and the Bank are also subject to the provisions of Section 23B of the Federal Reserve Act which, among other things, prohibit an institution from engaging in the above transactions with affiliates unless the transactions are on terms substantially the same, or at least as favorable to the institution or its subsidiaries, as those prevailing at the time for comparable transactions with nonaffiliated companies.

The Bank is also subject to restrictions on extensions of credit to its executive officers, directors, principal shareholders and their related interests. These extensions of credit (1) must be made on substantially the same terms, including interest rates and collateral, as those prevailing at the time for comparable transactions with third parties, and (2) must not involve more than the normal risk of repayment or present other unfavorable features.

#### **Privacy**

Financial institutions are required to disclose their policies for collecting and protecting confidential information. Customers generally may prevent financial institutions from sharing nonpublic personal financial information with nonaffiliated third parties except under narrow circumstances, such as the processing of transactions requested by the consumer or when the financial institution is jointly sponsoring a product or service with a nonaffiliated third party. Additionally, financial institutions generally may not disclose consumer account numbers to any nonaffiliated third party for use in telemarketing, direct mail marketing or other marketing to consumers.

#### **Anti-Terrorism and Money Laundering Legislation**

The Bank is subject to the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001 (the USA PATRIOT Act), the Bank Secrecy Act, and rules and regulations of the Office of Foreign Assets Control. These statutes and related rules and regulations impose requirements and limitations on specified financial transactions and account relationships, intended to guard against money laundering and terrorism financing. The Bank has established a customer identification program pursuant to Section 326 of the USA PATRIOT Act and the Bank Secrecy Act, and otherwise have implemented policies and procedures to comply with the foregoing rules.

### **Federal Deposit Insurance Reform**

On February 8, 2006, President Bush signed the Federal Deposit Insurance Reform Act of 2005 ( FDIRA ). The FDIC must adopt rules implementing the various provisions of FDIRA by November 5, 2006.

Among other things, FDIRA changes the Federal deposit insurance system by:

raising the coverage level for retirement accounts to \$250,000;

indexing deposit insurance coverage levels for inflation beginning in 2012;

prohibiting undercapitalized financial institutions from accepting employee benefit plan deposits;

merging the Bank Insurance Fund and Savings Association Insurance Fund into a new Deposit Insurance Fund (the DIF ); and

providing credits to financial institutions that capitalized the FDIC prior to 1996 to offset future assessment premiums.

FDIRA also authorizes the FDIC to revise the current risk-based assessment system, subject to notice and comment and caps the amount of the DIF at 1.50% of domestic deposits. The FDIC must issue cash dividends, awarded on a historical basis, for the amount of the DIF over the 1.50% ratio. Additionally, if the DIF exceeds 1.35% of domestic deposits at year-end, the FDIC must issue cash dividends, awarded on a historical basis, for half of the amount of the excess.

### **Proposed Legislation and Regulatory Action**

New regulations and statutes are regularly proposed that contain wide-ranging changes to the structures, regulations and competitive relationships of financial institutions operating and doing business in the United States. We cannot predict whether or in what form any proposed regulation or statute will be adopted or the extent to which our business may be affected by any new regulation or statute.

### **Effect of Governmental Monetary Policies**

Our earnings are affected by domestic economic conditions and the monetary and fiscal policies of the United States government and its agencies. The Federal Reserve Bank's monetary policies have had, and are likely to continue to have, an important impact on the operating results of commercial banks through its power to implement national monetary policy in order, among other things, to curb inflation or combat a recession. The monetary policies of the Federal Reserve affect the levels of bank loans, investments and deposits through its control over the issuance of United States government securities, its regulation of the discount rate applicable to member banks and its influence over reserve requirements to which member banks are subject. We cannot predict the nature or impact of future changes in monetary and fiscal policies.

In addition to the federal and state laws noted above, South Carolina adopted, effective January 1, 2004, laws imposing restrictions and procedural requirements on mortgage loans classified as high-cost home loans and on the flipping of consumer home loans. As drafted, these laws generally apply to most mortgage loans made in South Carolina. The Bank has implemented procedures necessary to comply with these new laws.

### **Selected Statistical Information**

The selected statistical information required by Item 1 is included in the Company's 2004 Annual Report to Shareholders, which is Exhibit 13.1 to this Report, under the heading Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations and is incorporated herein by reference.

### **ITEM 2. DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTIES**

The executive and main offices of the Company and the Bank are located at 2170 W. Palmetto Street in downtown Florence, South Carolina. The facility at that location is owned by the Bank. The Bank also owns an adjacent lot that is used as a parking lot. The headquarters building is a two-story building having approximately 12,000 square feet. The building has six inside teller stations, two teller stations servicing four drive-through lanes and a night depository and automated teller machine drive-through lane that is accessible after the Bank's normal business hours.

On April 26, 2000, the Bank opened a branch at 411 Second Loop Road in Florence, South Carolina. The Second Loop branch facility, which is owned by the Bank, is located on approximately one acre of land and contains approximately 3,000 square feet.

On May 15, 2002, the Bank purchased an additional facility located at 2145 Fernleaf Drive in Florence, South Carolina. The Fernleaf Drive site contains approximately 0.5 acres of land and includes a 7,500 square foot building. The facility will serve as additional space for the operational activities of the Bank, including data processing and auditing. No customer services will be conducted in this facility.

On June 17, 2004, the Bank opened a branch at 709 North Lake Drive in Lexington, South Carolina. The Lexington branch facility, which is owned by the Bank, is located on approximately one acre of land and contains approximately 2,000 square feet.

On March 15, 2005, the Bank opened a branch at 51 State Street, Charleston, South Carolina. This property is leased. On August 8, 2005 the bank changed the street address of this location to 25 Cumberland Street, Charleston, South Carolina because of a change in the primary entrance to the branch.

On March 24, 2005, the Bank leased approximately five acres at 2211 West Palmetto Street in Florence, South Carolina for development of a future headquarters location.

On October 3, 2005, the Bank opened a branch at 800 South Shelmore Blvd., Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. The land is owned by the Bank.

Other than the Bank facilities described in the preceding paragraphs and the real estate-related loans funded by the Bank previously described in Item 1. Description of Business First Reliance Bank, the Company does not invest in real estate, interests in real estate, real estate mortgages, or securities of or interests in persons primarily engaged in real estate activities.

### **ITEM 3. LEGAL PROCEEDINGS**

None.

### **ITEM 4. SUBMISSION OF MATTERS TO A VOTE OF SECURITY HOLDERS**

None.

## **PART II**

### **ITEM 5. MARKET FOR REGISTRANT'S COMMON EQUITY AND RELATED STOCKHOLDER MATTERS**

(a) The response to this Item 5(a) is included in the Company's 2005 Annual Report to Shareholders under the heading, Market for First Reliance Bancshares, Inc.'s Common Stock; Payment of Dividends, and is incorporated herein by reference.

(b) Not Applicable

(c) Not Applicable

### **ITEM 6. MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL CONDITION AND RESULTS OF OPERATIONS**

The response to this Item is included in the Company's 2005 Annual Report to Shareholders under the heading Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations and is incorporated herein by reference.

**ITEM 7. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The following financial statements are included in the Company's 2005 Annual Report to Shareholders, and are incorporated herein by reference:

Report of Independent Certified Public Accountants

Financial Statements:

1. Consolidated Balance Sheets dated as of December 31, 2005 and 2004.
2. Consolidated Statements of Income for the Years Ended December 31, 2005 and 2004.
3. Consolidated Statements of Changes in Shareholders' Equity and Comprehensive Income for the Years Ended December 31, 2005 and 2004.
4. Consolidated Statements of Cash Flows for the Years Ended December 31, 2005 and 2004.
5. Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements.

**ITEM 8. CHANGES IN AND DISAGREEMENTS WITH ACCOUNTANTS ON ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE**

Not Applicable

**ITEM 8A. CONTROLS AND PROCEDURES**

As of the end of the period covered by this Annual Report on Form 10-K, our principal executive officer and principal financial officer have evaluated the effectiveness of our disclosure controls and procedures (Disclosure Controls). Disclosure Controls, as defined in Rule 13a-15(e) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act), are procedures that are designed with the objective of ensuring that information required to be disclosed in our reports filed under the Exchange Act, such as this Annual Report, is recorded, processed, summarized and reported within the time periods specified in the Securities and Exchange Commission's rules and forms. Disclosure Controls are also designed with the objective of ensuring that such information is accumulated and communicated to our management, including the CEO and CFO, as appropriate to allow timely decisions regarding required disclosure.

Our management, including the CEO and CFO, does not expect that our Disclosure Controls will prevent all error and all fraud. A control system, no matter how well conceived and operated, can provide only reasonable, not absolute, assurance that the objectives of the control system are met. Further, the design of a control system must reflect the fact that there are resource constraints, and the benefits of controls must be considered relative to their costs. Because of the inherent limitations in all control systems, no evaluation of controls can provide absolute assurance that all control issues and instances of fraud, if any, within the company have been detected. These inherent limitations include the realities that judgments in decision-making can be faulty, and that breakdowns can occur because of simple error or mistake. The design of any system of controls also is based in part upon certain assumptions about the likelihood of future events, and there can be no assurance that any design will succeed in achieving its stated goals under all potential future conditions.

Based upon their controls evaluation, our CEO and CFO have concluded that our Disclosure Controls are effective at a reasonable assurance level.

There have been no changes in our internal controls over financial reporting during our fourth fiscal quarter that have materially affected, or are reasonably likely to materially affect, our internal control over financial reporting.

**ITEM 8B. OTHER INFORMATION**

Not Applicable.

## PART III

**ITEM 9. DIRECTORS, EXECUTIVE OFFICERS, PROMOTERS AND CONTROL PERSONS; COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 16(a) OF THE EXCHANGE ACT**

The Company has adopted a Code of Ethics that applies to its principal executive, financial and accounting officers. The Code of Ethics has been posted to the Company's website at [www.firstreliance.com](http://www.firstreliance.com). A copy may also be obtained, without charge, upon written request addressed to First Reliance Bancshares, Inc., 2170 W. Palmetto Street, P. O. Box 4250, Florence, South Carolina 29501, Attention: Corporate Secretary. The request may be delivered by letter to the address set forth above or by fax to the attention of the Company's Corporate Secretary at 843-656-3045.

The remaining information for this Item is included in the Company's Proxy Statement for the Annual Meeting of Shareholders to be held on June 15, 2006, under the headings "Proposal: Election of Directors", "Security Ownership of Certain Beneficial Owners and Management" and "Section 16(a) Beneficial Ownership Reporting Compliance" and are incorporated herein by reference.

**ITEM 10. EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION**

The responses to this Item are included in the Company's Proxy Statement for the Annual Meeting of Shareholders to be held on June 15, 2006, under the heading "Compensation of Executive Officers and Directors" and are incorporated herein by reference.

**ITEM 11. SECURITY OWNERSHIP OF CERTAIN BENEFICIAL OWNERS AND MANAGEMENT**

The following table provides information regarding compensation plans under which equity securities of the Company are authorized for issuance. All data is presented as of December 31, 2005.

Equity Compensation Plan Table

Plan category	(a) Number of securities to be issued upon exercise of outstanding options, warrants and rights	(b) Weighted-average exercise price of outstanding options, warrants and rights	(c) Number of securities remaining available for future issuance under equity compensation plans (excluding securities reflected in column (a))
Equity compensation plans approved by security holders	389,118	\$ 7.67	0
Equity compensation plans not approved by security holders	11,245	\$ 10.44	N/A
Total	400,363	\$ 7.75	0

The equity compensation plans not approved by our shareholders consist of non-qualified option grants to five employees of the Company to purchase a total of 11,245 shares of the Company's common stock. All of the non-qualified option grants are fully vested as of 12/31/2005. The table below breaks down the exercise prices of the non-qualified options that have been granted by the Company.

Price	Number of Options
\$9.32	2,800
\$10.25	3,145
\$11.00	5,000
\$13.50	300

The additional responses to this Item are included in the Company's Proxy Statement for the Annual Meeting of Shareholders to be held on June 15, 2006, under the heading "Security Ownership of Certain Beneficial Owners and Management" and are incorporated herein by reference.

**ITEM 12. CERTAIN RELATIONSHIPS AND RELATED TRANSACTIONS**

The responses to this Item are included in the Company's Proxy Statement for the Annual Meeting of Shareholders held on June 15, 2006, under the headings "Related Party Transactions" and "Compensation of Executive Officers and Directors" and are incorporated herein by reference.

**ITEM 13. EXHIBITS**

A list of exhibits included as part of this annual report is set forth in the Exhibit Index that immediately precedes the exhibits and is incorporated by reference herein.

**ITEM 14. PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTANT FEES AND SERVICES**

The responses to this Item are included in the Company Proxy Statement for the Annual Meeting of Shareholders to be held on June 15, 2006, under the heading "Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm" and are incorporated herein by reference.

**SIGNATURES**

In accordance with Section 13 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act, the Registrant caused this Report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

FIRST RELIANCE BANCSHARES, INC.

By: \_\_\_\_\_

F. R. Saunders, Jr.  
President and Chief  
Executive Officer

Date: March 31, 2006

**POWER OF ATTORNEY**

**KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS**, that each person whose signature appears on the signature page to this Report constitutes and appoints F. R. Saunders, Jr. and Jeffrey A. Paolucci, his or her true and lawful attorneys-in-fact and agents, with full power of substitution and resubstitution, for him or her and in his or her name, place, and stead, in any and all capacities, to sign any and all amendments to this Report, and to file the same, with all exhibits hereto, and other documents in connection herewith with the Securities and Exchange Commission, granting unto said attorneys-in-fact and agents, full power and authority to do and perform each and every act and thing requisite and necessary to be done in and about the premises, as fully to all intents and purposes as they might or could do in person, hereby ratifying and confirming all that said attorneys-in-fact and agents or their substitute or substitutes, may lawfully do or cause to be done by virtue hereof.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, this Report has been signed below by the following persons on behalf of the Registrant and in the capacities and on the dates indicated.

Signature	Title	Date
_____ F. R. Saunders, Jr.	Director, President and Chief Executive Officer (Principal Executive Officer)	March 31, 2006
_____ Paul C. Saunders	Director	March 31, 2006
_____ A. Dale Porter	Director	March 31, 2006
_____ Leonard A. Hoogenboom	Chairman of the Board	March 31, 2006
_____ John M. Jebaily	Director	March 31, 2006
_____ Andrew G. Kampiziones	Director	March 31, 2006
_____ C. Dale Lusk	Director	March 31, 2006
_____ T. Daniel Turner	Director	March 31, 2006
_____ A. Joe Willis	Director	March 31, 2006
_____ Jeffrey A. Paolucci	Director, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer (Principal Financial and Accounting Officer)	March 31, 2006



**EXHIBIT INDEX**

Exhibit Number	Exhibit
3.1	Articles of Incorporation (incorporated by reference to the Registrant's current report on Form 8-K dated April 1, 2002).
3.2	Bylaws (incorporated by reference to the Registrant's current report on Form 8-K dated April 1, 2002).
4.1	See Articles of Incorporation at Exhibit 3.1 hereto and Bylaws at Exhibit 3.2 hereto.
4.2	Indenture between the Registrant and the Trustee (incorporated by reference to the Registrant's current report on Form 8-K dated July 1, 2005).
4.3	Guarantee Agreement (incorporated by reference to the Registrant's current report on Form 8-K dated July 1, 2005).
4.4	Amended and Restated Declaration (incorporated by reference to the Registrant's current report on Form 8-K dated July 1, 2005).
10.1(a)*	Executive Employment Agreement dated August 21, 2001 - F. R. Saunders, Jr. (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.4 to the Registrant's quarterly report on Form 10-QSB for the quarter ended March 31, 2002).
10.1(b)*	Amendment 1 to Executive Employment Agreement dated June 1, 2002 - F. R. Saunders, Jr. (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.5(b) to the Registrant's quarterly report on Form 10-QSB for the quarter ended June 30, 2002).
10.2(a)*	Executive Employment Agreement dated August 21, 2001 - A. Dale Porter (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.5 to the Registrant's quarterly report on Form 10-QSB for the quarter ended March 31, 2002).
10.2(b)*	Amendment 1 to Executive Employment Agreement dated June 1, 2002 - A. Dale Porter (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.6(b) to the Registrant's quarterly report On Form 10-QSB for the quarter ended June 30, 2002).
10.3(a)*	Executive Employment Agreement dated August 21, 2001 - Paul C. Saunders (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.6 to the Registrant's quarterly report on Form 10-QSB for the quarter ended March 31, 2002).
10.3(b)*	Amendment 1 to Executive Employment Agreement dated June 1, 2002 - Paul C. Saunders (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.7(b) to the Registrant's quarterly report On Form 10-QSB for the quarter ended June 30, 2002).
10.4(a)*	Employment Agreement dated September 27, 2002 - Jeffrey A. Paolucci (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.5 to the Registrant's annual report on Form 10-KSB for the year ended December 31, 2002).
10.4(b)*	Amendment No. 1 to Employment Agreement dated September 30, 2005
10.5*	Employment Agreement dated April 23, 2003, by and between First Reliance Bank and Thomas C. Ewart, Sr. (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.7 to the Registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-KSB for the year ended December 31, 2003).
10.6(a)*	1999 First Reliance Bank Employee Stock Option Plan (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.1 to the Registrant's quarterly report on Form 10-QSB for the quarter ended March 31, 2002).
10.6(b)*	Amendment No. 1 to 1999 First Reliance Bank Employee Stock Option Plan (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.2 to the Registrant's quarterly report on Form 10-QSB for the quarter ended March 31, 2002).
10.6(c)*	Amendment No. 2 to 1999 First Reliance Bank Employee Stock Option Plan (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.3 to the Registrant's quarterly report on Form 10-QSB for the quarter ended June 30, 2002).

## Edgar Filing: FIRST RELIANCE BANCSHARES INC - Form 10KSB

- 10.7\* First Reliance Bancshares, Inc. 2003 Stock Incentive Plan (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.6 to the Registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-KSB for the year ended December 31, 2003)
- 10.8\* First Reliance Bancshares, Inc. 2006 Equity Incentive Plan
- 10.9 Lease Agreement by and between SP Financial, LLC and First Reliance Bank
- 13.1 First Reliance Bancshares, Inc. 2005 Annual Report to Shareholders. Except with respect to those portions specifically incorporated by reference into this Report, the Company's 2005 Annual Report to Shareholders is not deemed to be filed as part of this Report.
- 21.1 Subsidiaries of First Reliance Bancshares, Inc.
- 23.1 Consent of Elliott Davis, LLC
- 24.1 Power of Attorney (appears on the signature pages to this Annual Report on Form 10-KSB).
- 31.1 Certification of Chief Executive Officer
- 31.2 Certification of Chief Financial Officer
- 32.1 Certification pursuant to 18 U.S.C. Section 1350, as adopted pursuant to Section 906 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002.

---

\*Indicates management contract or compensatory plan or arrangement