

CARRIAGE SERVICES INC
Form S-3
April 07, 2014
Table of Contents

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on April 4, 2014

Registration No. 333-

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, DC 20549

FORM S-3

REGISTRATION STATEMENT

UNDER

THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

CARRIAGE SERVICES, INC.

(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in its Charter)

Delaware
(State or Other Jurisdiction
of Incorporation or Organization)

3040 Post Oak Blvd., Suite 300

Houston, Texas 77056

76-0423828
(I.R.S. Employer
Identification No.)

(713) 332-8400

**Address, Including Zip Code, and Telephone Number,
Including Area Code, of Registrant's Principal Executive Offices)**

Copies to:

L. William Heiligbrodt

Executive Vice President and Secretary

3040 Post Oak Blvd., Suite 300

Houston, Texas 77056

(713) 332-8400

**(Name, Address, Including Zip Code, and Telephone
Number,**

Including Area Code, of Agent For Service)

Kevin P. Lewis

Vinson & Elkins L.L.P.

1001 Fannin Street, Suite 2500

Houston, TX 77002

(713) 758-2222

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public: From time to time after the effective date of this Registration Statement.

If the only securities being registered on this Form are to be offered pursuant to dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box.

If any of the securities being registered on this Form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the Securities Act), other than securities offered only in connection with dividend or interest reinvestment plans, check the following box.

If this Form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act, please check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a post-effective amendment filed pursuant to Rule 462(c) under the Securities Act, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a registration statement pursuant to General Instruction I.D. or a post-effective amendment thereto that shall become effective upon filing with the Commission pursuant to Rule 462(e) under the Securities Act, check the

following box. "

If this Form is a post-effective amendment to a registration statement filed pursuant to General Instruction I.D. filed to register additional securities or additional classes of securities pursuant to Rule 413(b) under the Securities Act, check the following box. "

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of large accelerated filer, accelerated filer and smaller reporting company in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act (Check one):

Large accelerated filer "	Accelerated filer	x
Non-accelerated filer " (Do not check if a smaller reporting company)	Smaller reporting company "	

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

Title of Each Class of Securities to be Registered	Proposed Maximum Aggregate Offering Price (1)(2)	Amount of Registration Fee (3)
Senior Debt Securities and Subordinated Debt Securities		
Common Stock, par value \$.01 per share		
Preferred Stock, par value \$.01 per share		
Warrants		
Total	\$350,000,000	\$45,080

- (1) Estimated solely for the purpose of computing the registration fee pursuant to Rule 457(o) under the Securities Act and exclusive of accrued interest, distributions and dividends, if any. In no event will the aggregate initial offering price of all securities issued from time to time pursuant to this Registration Statement exceed \$350,000,000 or the equivalent thereof in foreign currencies, foreign currency units or composite currencies. If any debt securities are issued at an original issue discount, then the offering price shall be in such greater principal amount as shall result in an aggregate initial offering price of up to \$350,000,000, less the dollar amount of any securities previously issued hereunder. Any securities registered hereunder may be sold separately or as units with other securities registered hereunder.
- (2) There is being registered hereunder such indeterminate number or amount of senior and subordinated debt securities, common stock, preferred stock and warrants as may from time to time be issued at indeterminate prices and as may be issuable upon conversion, redemption, exchange, exercise or settlement of any securities registered hereunder, including under any applicable anti-dilution provisions.
- (3) Securities registered under Registration Statement No. 333-171711, initially filed by the registrant on January 14, 2011, remain unsold. Pursuant to Rule 457(p) of the Securities Act, the filing fee of \$26,703 previously paid in connection with such unsold securities is being used to offset the registration fee currently due. As a result, a filing fee of \$18,377 is being paid herewith.

The registrant hereby amends this registration statement on such date or dates as may be necessary to delay its effective date until the registrant shall file a further amendment which specifically states that this registration statement shall thereafter become effective in accordance with Section 8(a) of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or until this registration statement shall become effective on such date as the Securities and Exchange Commission, acting pursuant to said Section 8(a), may determine.

Table of Contents

The information in this prospectus is not complete and may be changed. We may not sell these securities until the registration statement filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission is effective. This prospectus is not an offer to sell these securities and it is not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any state where the offer or sale is not permitted.

Prospectus

SUBJECT TO COMPLETION, DATED APRIL 4, 2014

CARRIAGE SERVICES, INC.

\$350,000,000

Debt Securities

Preferred Stock

Common Stock

Warrants

This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we sell securities, we will provide a supplement to this prospectus that contains specific information about the offering. The supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should carefully read this prospectus, all prospectus supplements and all other documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus before you invest in our securities. Our common stock is quoted on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol CSV.

THIS PROSPECTUS MAY NOT BE USED TO SELL SECURITIES UNLESS ACCOMPANIED BY A PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT.

INVESTING IN OUR SECURITIES INVOLVES A HIGH DEGREE OF RISKS. RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH AN INVESTMENT IN OUR SECURITIES WILL BE DESCRIBED IN THE APPLICABLE PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT AND OUR PERIODIC AND OTHER REPORTS WE FILE WITH THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION, AS DESCRIBED IN RISK FACTORS ON PAGE 4. YOU SHOULD CAREFULLY CONSIDER THOSE RISK FACTORS BEFORE INVESTING.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is , 2014.

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS</u>	1
<u>CARRIAGE SERVICES, INC.</u>	2
<u>RISK FACTORS</u>	4
<u>FORWARD LOOKING STATEMENTS</u>	4
<u>USE OF PROCEEDS</u>	4
<u>RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES</u>	4
<u>DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES</u>	5
<u>DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK</u>	14
<u>DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS</u>	16
<u>PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION</u>	17
<u>LEGAL MATTERS</u>	19
<u>EXPERTS</u>	19
<u>WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION</u>	19
<u>INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE</u>	19

Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a shelf registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the SEC). Under this registration statement, we may sell any combination of the securities described in this prospectus from time to time in one or more offerings with an aggregate offering price of up to \$350,000,000. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. As permitted by the rules of the SEC, this prospectus does not contain all the information set forth in the registration statement. Each time we sell securities, we will provide a supplement to this prospectus that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. That prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. Before purchasing any securities, you should carefully read both this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement, together with the additional information described in this prospectus under the headings **Where You Can Find More Information** and **Incorporation by Reference**.

You should rely only on the information contained in this prospectus and in any applicable prospectus supplement, including any information incorporated by reference. We have not authorized any other person to provide you with different information. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. You should not assume that the information appearing in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement or any document incorporated by reference is accurate at any date other than as of the date of each such document. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since the date indicated on the cover page of such documents.

The distribution of this prospectus may be restricted by law in certain jurisdictions. You should inform yourself about and observe these restrictions. This prospectus does not constitute, and may not be used in connection with, an offer or solicitation by anyone in any jurisdiction in which the offer or solicitation is not authorized, or in which the person making the offer or solicitation is not qualified to do so, or to any person to whom it is unlawful to make the offer or solicitation.

When used in this prospectus or in any supplement to this prospectus, the terms **Carriage**, **the Company**, **we**, **our** and **us** refer to Carriage Services, Inc. and its subsidiaries, unless otherwise indicated or the context otherwise requires.

Table of Contents

CARRIAGE SERVICES, INC.

We were incorporated in the State of Delaware in December of 1993 and are a leading provider of deathcare services and merchandise in the United States. We operate in two business segments: funeral home operations, which currently account for approximately 75% of our total revenue, and cemetery operations, which currently account for approximately 25% of our total revenue. At December 31, 2013, we operated 161 funeral homes in 26 states and 32 cemeteries in 10 states. We mainly serve suburban and rural markets, where we primarily compete with smaller, independent operators and believe we are a market leader (first or second) in most of our markets. We provide funeral and cemetery services and products on both an at-need (time of death) and preneed (planned prior to death) basis.

Our operations are reported in two business segments:

Funeral Home Operations. Funeral homes are principally service businesses that provide funeral services (traditional burial and cremation) and sell related merchandise, such as caskets and urns. Given the high fixed cost structure associated with funeral home operations, we believe the following key factors affect our profitability:

demographic trends in terms of population growth and average age, which impact death rates and number of deaths;

our ability to establish and maintain market share positions supported by strong local heritage and relationships;

our ability to effectively respond to increasing cremation trends by packaging complimentary services and merchandise;

our ability to control salary, merchandise and other controllable costs; and

our ability to exercise pricing leverage related to our at-need business to increase average revenues per contract.

Cemetery Operations. Cemeteries are primarily a sales business providing interment rights (grave sites and mausoleums) and related merchandise, such as markers and memorials. Our cemetery operating results are impacted by the size and success of our sales organization, as approximately 48% of our cemetery revenues during the year ended December 31, 2013 were generated from preneed sales of interment rights and related merchandise and services. We believe that changes in the economy and consumer confidence may impact the amount of preneed cemetery revenues. Cemetery revenues generated from at-need service and merchandise sales generally are subject to many of the same key profitability factors as our funeral home business. Approximately 19% of our cemetery revenues during the year ended December 31, 2013 were attributable to investment earnings on trust funds and finance charges on installment contracts. Changes in the capital markets and interest rates affect this component of our cemetery revenues, along with changes that we make in the investment securities within the trust funds.

Our business strategy is based on strong, local leadership and entrepreneurial principles that we believe drive market share, revenue growth, and profitability in our local markets. The business strategy is executed through our Standards

Operating Model, a decentralized and entrepreneurial operating model for our funeral home and cemetery businesses. To date, our Standards Operating Model has driven significant changes in our organization, leadership and operating practices. We use the Standards Operating Model to measure the sustainable revenue growth and earning power of our portfolio of deathcare businesses. Our Standards Operating Model emphasizes growing market share and improving long-term profitability by employing leadership and entrepreneurial principles that fit the nature of our local, personal service, high value business. Leadership qualities are evaluated using the 4E leadership characteristics Energy, Energize Others, Edge and Execution. This model requires our local and corporate leaders to focus on the drivers of success that create long-term profitability and value for our stockholders. Our Standards Operating Model emphasizes:

decentralized management of our local businesses;

financial and operational standards based upon key drivers of success of our best businesses;

Table of Contents

variable compensation that rewards our managers as if they were owners;

finding, developing and retaining the best people in our industry; and

information technology designed to support local businesses and corporate management decisions, measure performance of our businesses against our financial and operational standards, and ensure adherence to established internal control procedures.

Our business objectives include:

growing market share, creating new heritage, producing consistent, modest revenue growth and sustaining increased earnings and cash flow;

continuing to improve our operating and financial performance by executing our Standards Operating Model;

upgrading the leadership in our businesses, as necessary; and searching for well-qualified personnel that we feel will lead and excel within our Standards Operating Model; and

executing our Strategic Acquisition Model, a disciplined program that will guide our acquisition strategies, to accelerate growth while maintaining financial discipline.

Additional information concerning our business and operations is incorporated by reference herein from our other filings made with the Securities and Exchange Commission and may be included in applicable prospectus supplements and any pricing supplements.

Our corporate offices are located at 3040 Post Oak Blvd., Suite 300, Houston, Texas 77056, and our telephone number is (713) 332-8400.

Table of Contents**RISK FACTORS**

Investment in our securities subjects a shareholder to uncertainties and risks. Investors should carefully consider and evaluate all of the information included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus, including the risk factors described in our most recent annual report on Form 10-K, financial statements and related notes updated by our quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, as well as other SEC filings filed after such annual report. Our business, financial condition, liquidity or results of operations have the potential to be materially adversely affected if any of the risks were to actually occur.

FORWARD LOOKING STATEMENTS

Certain matters discussed in this prospectus, except for historical information contained here but including the information we incorporate by reference, are forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the Securities Act) and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act). When used in this prospectus, words such as anticipates, believes, expects, estimates, intends, plans, projects, and similar expressions, as they relate to our Company or management, identify forward-looking statements. These statements include any projections of earnings, revenues, asset sales, cash flow, debt levels or other financial items; any statements of the plans, strategies and objectives of management for future operation; any statements regarding future economic conditions or performance; any statements of belief; and any statements of assumptions underlying any of the foregoing. These statements are based on certain assumptions made by us based on management's experience and perception of historical trends, industry conditions, market position, future operations, profitability, liquidity, capital resources and other factors believed to be appropriate. Management's expectations and assumptions regarding our operations and other anticipated future developments are subject to risks, uncertainties and other factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from the anticipated results or other expectations expressed in the forward-looking statements. Although we believe that the expectations reflected in such statements are reasonable, there is no assurance that such expectations will be correct. All of our forward-looking statements, whether written or oral, are expressly qualified by these cautionary statements and any other cautionary statements that may accompany such forward-looking statements. In addition, we disclaim any obligation to update any forward-looking statements to reflect events or circumstances after the date of this prospectus.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless we inform you otherwise in the prospectus supplement or any pricing supplement, we expect to use the net proceeds generated from the sale of securities offered by this prospectus for general corporate purposes. General corporate purposes include the repayment or refinancing of debt, acquisitions and other capital requirements.

RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES

The following table presents our historical ratio of earnings to fixed charges for the periods shown:

	Year Ended December 31,				
	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges	2.65	1.87	1.60	1.68	1.60

For purposes of computing the ratios of earnings to fixed charges: (i) earnings consist of income from continuing operations before provision for income taxes plus fixed charges (excluding capitalized interest) and (ii) fixed charges consist of interest expensed and capitalized, amortization of debt discount and expense relating to indebtedness and

the portion of rental expense representative of the interest factor attributable to leases for rental property.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

We will issue debt securities under an indenture between Carriage and a trustee that we will name in the related prospectus supplement. If we offer senior debt securities, we will issue them under a senior indenture. If we issue subordinated debt securities, we will issue them under a subordinated indenture. The term "Trustee" as used in this prospectus refers to the trustee under any of the above indentures. References in this prospectus to an "Indenture" refer to the particular indenture under which Carriage issues a series of debt securities. The debt securities will be governed by the provisions of the related Indenture and those made part of the Indenture by reference to the Trust Indenture Act of 1939.

This description is a summary of the material provisions of the debt securities and the Indentures. We urge you to read the forms of Indentures filed as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part because those Indentures, and not this description, govern your rights as a holder of debt securities.

General

Any series of debt securities:

will be issued only in fully registered form; and

will be our general obligations.

The Indenture will not limit the total amount of debt securities that may be issued. Debt securities under the Indenture may be issued from time to time in separate series, up to the aggregate amount authorized for each such series.

We will prepare a prospectus supplement and either an indenture supplement or a resolution of the board of directors of the issuer and accompanying officers' certificate relating to any series of debt securities that we offer, which will include specific terms relating to some or all of the following:

whether the debt securities are senior or subordinated debt securities;

the form and title of the debt securities;

the total principal amount of the debt securities;

the date or dates on which the debt securities may be issued;

the portion of the principal amount which will be payable if the maturity of the debt securities is accelerated;

any right we may have to defer payments of interest by extending the dates payments are due and whether interest on those deferred amounts will be payable;

the dates on which the principal and premium, if any, of the debt securities will be payable;

the interest rate which the debt securities will bear and the interest payment dates for the debt securities;

any option or conversion provisions;

any optional redemption provisions;

any sinking fund or other provisions that would obligate us to redeem or otherwise repurchase the debt securities;

whether the debt securities may be issued in amounts other than \$1,000 each or multiples thereof;

any changes to or additional Events of Default or covenants; and

any other terms of the debt securities.

Table of Contents

This description of debt securities will be deemed modified, amended or supplemented by any description of any series of debt securities set forth in a prospectus supplement related to that series.

The prospectus supplement will also describe any material United States federal income tax consequences or other special considerations regarding the applicable series of debt securities, including those relating to:

debt securities with respect to which payments of principal, premium or interest are determined with reference to an index or formula, including changes in prices of particular securities, currencies or commodities;

debt securities with respect to which principal, premium or interest is payable in a foreign or composite currency;

debt securities that are issued at a discount below their stated principal amount, bearing no interest or interest at a rate that at the time of issuance is below market rates; and

variable rate debt securities that are exchangeable for fixed rate debt securities.

Interest payments on debt securities in certificated form may be made by check mailed to the registered holders or, if so stated in the applicable prospectus supplement, at the option of a holder, by wire transfer to an account designated by the holder.

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, debt securities may be transferred or exchanged at the office of the Trustee at which its corporate trust business is principally administered in the United States, subject to the limitations provided in the Indenture, without the payment of any service charge, other than any applicable tax or other governmental charge.

Any funds paid to the Trustee or any paying agent for the payment of amounts due on any debt securities that remain unclaimed for two years will be returned to us, and the holders of the debt securities must look only to us for payment after that time.

Events of Default, Remedies and Notice

Events of Default

Unless otherwise specified in a supplement to the Indenture, each of the following events will be an Event of Default under the Indenture with respect to a series of debt securities:

default in any payment of interest on any debt securities of that series when due that continues for 30 days;

default in the payment of principal of or premium, if any, on any debt securities of that series when due at its stated maturity, upon redemption, upon required repurchase or otherwise;

default in the payment of any sinking fund payment on any debt securities of that series when due;

failure by us to comply for 60 days after notice with the other agreements contained in the Indenture, any supplement to the Indenture with respect to that series or any board resolution authorizing the issuance of that series; or

certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization of the issuer.

Exercise of Remedies

If an Event of Default, other than an Event of Default described in the fifth bullet point above, occurs and is continuing, the Trustee or the holders of at least 25% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series may declare the entire principal of, premium, if any, and accrued and unpaid interest, if any, on all the debt securities of that series to be due and payable immediately.

Table of Contents

A default under the fourth bullet point above will not constitute an Event of Default until the Trustee or the holders of 25% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series notifies us of the default and such default is not cured within 60 days after receipt of notice.

If an Event of Default described in the fifth bullet point above occurs, the principal of, premium, if any, and accrued and unpaid interest on all outstanding debt securities of all series will become immediately due and payable without any declaration of acceleration or other act on the part of the Trustee or any holders.

The holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of a series may rescind any declaration of acceleration by the Trustee or the holders with respect to the debt securities of that series, but only if:

rescinding the declaration of acceleration would not conflict with any judgment or decree of a court of competent jurisdiction; and

all existing Events of Default with respect to that series have been cured or waived, other than the nonpayment of principal, premium or interest on the debt securities of that series that has become due solely by the declaration of acceleration.

If an Event of Default occurs and is continuing, the Trustee will be under no obligation, except as otherwise provided in the Indenture, to exercise any of the rights or powers under the Indenture at the request or direction of any of the holders unless such holders have offered to the Trustee reasonable indemnity or security against any costs, liability or expense. No holder may pursue any remedy with respect to the Indenture or the debt securities of any series, except to enforce the right to receive payment of principal, premium or interest on its own debt securities when due, unless:

such holder has previously given the Trustee notice that an Event of Default with respect to that series is continuing;

holders of at least 25% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series have requested that the Trustee pursue the remedy;

such holders have offered the Trustee reasonable indemnity or security against any cost, liability or expense;

the Trustee has not complied with such request within 60 days after the receipt of the request and the offer of indemnity or security; and

the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series have not given the Trustee a direction that is inconsistent with such request within such 60-day period.

The holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of a series have the right, subject to certain restrictions, to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the Trustee or of exercising any right or power conferred on the Trustee with respect to that series of debt securities. The

Trustee, however, may refuse to follow any direction that:

conflicts with law;

is inconsistent with any provision of the Indenture;

the Trustee determines is unduly prejudicial to the rights of any other holder; or

would involve the Trustee in personal liability.

Table of Contents

Notice of Event of Default

Within 30 days after the occurrence of an Event of Default, we are required to give written notice to the Trustee and indicate the status of the default and what action we are taking or proposes to take to cure the default. In addition, we are required to deliver to the Trustee, within 120 days after the end of each fiscal year, a compliance certificate indicating that we have complied with all covenants contained in the Indenture or whether any default or Event of Default has occurred during the previous year.

Within 90 days after the occurrence of any default known to it, the Trustee must mail to each holder a notice of the default. Except in the case of a default in the payment of principal, premium or interest with respect to any debt securities, the Trustee may withhold such notice, but only if and so long as the board of directors, the executive committee or a committee of directors or responsible officers of the Trustee in good faith determines that withholding such notice is in the interests of the holders.

Amendments and Waivers

We may supplement or amend the Indenture without the consent of any holder of debt securities to, among other things:

cure any ambiguity, omission, defect or inconsistency;

provide for the assumption by a successor of our obligations under the Indenture;

secure the debt securities;

add covenants for the benefit of the holders or surrender any right or power conferred upon us;

in the case of any subordinated debt security, to make any change in the subordination provisions that limits or terminates the benefits applicable to any holder of our Senior Indebtedness;

make any change that does not adversely affect the rights of any holder;

add or appoint a successor or separate Trustee;

comply with any requirement of the SEC in connection with the qualification of the Indenture under the Trust Indenture Act; or

establish the form or terms of the debt securities of any new series.

In addition, we may amend the Indenture if the holders of a majority in principal amount of all debt securities of each series that would be affected then outstanding under the Indenture consent to it. We may not, however, without the consent of each holder of outstanding debt securities of each series that would be affected, amend the Indenture to:

reduce the percentage in principal amount of debt securities of any series whose holders must consent to an amendment;

reduce the rate of or extend the time for payment of interest on any debt securities;

reduce the principal of or extend the stated maturity of any debt securities;

reduce the premium payable upon the redemption of any debt securities or change the time at which any debt securities may or shall be redeemed;

make any debt securities payable in a currency other than that stated in the debt security;

in the case of any subordinated debt security, make any change in the subordination provisions that adversely affects the rights of any holder under those provisions;

Table of Contents

impair the right of any holder to receive payment of premium, principal or interest with respect to such holder's debt securities on or after the applicable due date;

impair the right of any holder to institute suit for the enforcement of any payment with respect to such holder's debt securities;

release any security that has been granted in respect of the debt securities;

make any change in the amendment provisions which require each holder's consent; or

make any change in the waiver provisions.

The consent of the holders is not necessary under the Indenture to approve the particular form of any proposed amendment. It is sufficient if such consent approves the substance of the proposed amendment. After an amendment under the Indenture requiring the consent of the holders becomes effective, we are required to mail to all holders a notice briefly describing the amendment. The failure to give, or any defect in, such notice, however, will not impair or affect the validity of the amendment.

The holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of each affected series, on behalf of all such holders, and subject to certain rights of the Trustee, may waive:

compliance with certain restrictive provisions of the Indenture; and

any past default under the Indenture;

except that such majority of holders may not waive a default:

in the payment of principal, premium or interest; or

in respect of a provision that under the Indenture cannot be amended without the consent of all holders of the series of debt securities that is affected.

Satisfaction and Discharge

The Indenture will be discharged and will cease to be of further effect as to all outstanding debt securities of any series issued thereunder, when:

(a) either:

(1) all outstanding debt securities of that series that have been authenticated (except lost, stolen or destroyed debt securities that have been replaced or paid and debt securities for whose payment money has theretofore been deposited in trust and thereafter repaid to the issuer) have been delivered to the Trustee for cancellation; or

(2) all outstanding debt securities of that series that have not been delivered to the Trustee for cancellation have become due and payable or will become due and payable at their stated maturity within one year or are to be called for redemption within one year under arrangements satisfactory to the Trustee and in any case we have irrevocably deposited with the Trustee as trust funds cash, certain U.S. government obligations or a combination thereof, in such amounts as will be sufficient, to pay the entire indebtedness of such debt securities not delivered to the Trustee for cancellation, for principal, premium, if any, and accrued interest to the stated maturity or redemption date;

(b) we have paid or caused to be paid all other sums payable by us under the Indenture with respect to the debt securities of that series; and

(c) we have delivered to the Trustee an accountants certificate as to the sufficiency of the trust funds, without reinvestment, to pay the entire indebtedness of such debt securities at maturity.

Table of Contents

Defeasance

At any time, we may terminate, with respect to debt securities of a particular series, all our obligations under such series of debt securities and the Indenture, which we call a legal defeasance. If we decide to make a legal defeasance, however, we may not terminate our obligations specified in the Indenture, including those:

relating to the defeasance trust;

to register the transfer or exchange of the debt securities;

to replace mutilated, destroyed, lost or stolen debt securities; or

to maintain a registrar and paying agent in respect of the debt securities.

At any time we may also effect a covenant defeasance, which means we have elected to terminate our obligations under covenants applicable to a series of debt securities and described in the prospectus supplement applicable to such series, other than as described in such prospectus supplement, and any Event of Default resulting from a failure to observe such covenants.

The legal defeasance option may be exercised notwithstanding a prior exercise of the covenant defeasance option. If the legal defeasance option is exercised, payment of the affected series of debt securities may not be accelerated because of an Event of Default with respect to that series. If the covenant defeasance option is exercised, payment of the affected series of debt securities may not be accelerated because of an Event of Default specified in the fourth bullet point under Events of Default, Remedies and Notice Events of Default above or an Event of Default that is added specifically for such series and described in a prospectus supplement.

In order to exercise either defeasance option, we must:

irrevocably deposit in trust with the Trustee money or certain U.S. government obligations for the payment of principal, premium, if any, and interest on the series of debt securities to redemption or stated maturity, as the case may be;

comply with certain other conditions, including that no bankruptcy or default with respect to the issuer has occurred and is continuing 91 days after the deposit in trust; and

deliver to the Trustee an opinion of counsel to the effect that holders of the defeased series of debt securities will not recognize income, gain or loss for Federal income tax purposes as a result of such defeasance and will be subject to Federal income tax on the same amounts and in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if such defeasance had not occurred. In the case of legal defeasance only, such opinion of counsel must be based on a ruling of the Internal Revenue Service or a change in applicable

Federal income tax law.

No Personal Liability

Our shareholders, directors, officers, employees and incorporators will not be liable for:

any of our obligations under the debt securities or the Indenture; or

any claim based on, in respect of, or by reason of, such obligations or their creation.

By accepting a debt security, each holder will be deemed to have waived and released all such liability. This waiver and release are part of the consideration for the issuance of the debt securities. This waiver may not be effective, however, to waive liabilities under the Federal securities laws and it is the view of the SEC that such a waiver is against public policy.

Table of Contents

No Protection in the Event of a Change of Control

Unless otherwise set forth in the prospectus supplement, the debt securities will not contain any provisions that protect the holders of the debt securities in the event of our change of control or in the event of a highly leveraged transaction, whether or not such transaction results in our change of control.

Provisions Relating only to the Senior Debt Securities

The senior debt securities will rank equally in right of payment with all of our other unsubordinated debt. The senior debt securities will be effectively subordinated, however, to all of our secured debt to the extent of the value of the collateral for that debt, and they will be structurally subordinated to all debt and other liabilities of our subsidiaries. We will disclose the amounts of our secured debt in the prospectus supplement.

Provisions Relating only to the Subordinated Debt Securities

Subordinated Debt Securities Subordinated to Senior Indebtedness

The subordinated debt securities will rank junior in right of payment to all of our Senior Indebtedness. Senior Indebtedness will be defined in a supplemental indenture or authorizing resolutions respecting any issuance of a series of subordinated debt securities, and the definition will be set forth in the prospectus supplement.

Payment Blockages

The subordinated indenture will provide that no payment of principal, interest and any premium on the subordinated debt securities may be made in the event:

we or our property is involved in any voluntary or involuntary liquidation or bankruptcy;

we fail to pay the principal, interest, any premium or any other amounts on any Senior Indebtedness of the issuer within any applicable grace period or the maturity of such Senior Indebtedness is accelerated following any other default, subject to certain limited exceptions set forth in the subordinated indenture; or

any other default on any of our Senior Indebtedness occurs that permits immediate acceleration of its maturity, in which case a payment blockage on the subordinated debt securities will be imposed for a maximum of 179 days at any one time.

No Limitation on Amount of Senior Debt

The subordinated indenture will not limit the amount of Senior Indebtedness that we may incur, unless otherwise indicated in the prospectus supplement.

Book Entry, Delivery and Form

The debt securities of a particular series may be issued in whole or in part in the form of one or more global certificates that will be deposited with the Trustee as custodian for The Depository Trust Company, New York, New

York (DTC). This means that we will not issue certificates to each holder except in the limited circumstances described below. Instead, one or more global debt securities will be issued to DTC, who will keep a computerized record of its participants (for example, your broker) whose clients have purchased the debt securities. The participant will then keep a record of its clients who purchased the debt securities. Unless it is exchanged in whole or in part for a certificated debt security, a global debt security may not be transferred, except that DTC, its nominees and their successors may transfer a global debt security as a whole to one another.

Beneficial interests in global debt securities will be shown on, and transfers of global debt securities will be made only through, records maintained by DTC and its participants.

DTC has provided us the following information: DTC is a limited-purpose trust company organized under the New York Banking Law, a banking organization within the meaning of the New York Banking Law, a member of the United States Federal Reserve System, a clearing corporation within the meaning of the New York Uniform

Table of Contents

Commercial Code and a clearing agency registered under the provisions of Section 17A of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. DTC holds securities that its participants (Direct Participants) deposit with DTC. DTC also records the settlement among Direct Participants of securities transactions, such as transfers and pledges, in deposited securities through computerized records for Direct Participants accounts. This eliminates the need to exchange certificates. Direct Participants include securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies, clearing corporations and certain other organizations.

DTC's book-entry system is also used by other organizations such as securities brokers and dealers, banks and trust companies that work through a Direct Participant. The rules that apply to DTC and its participants are on file with the SEC.

DTC is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation (DTCC). DTCC is the holding company for DTC, National Securities Clearing Corporation and Fixed Income Clearing Corporation, all of which are registered clearing agencies. DTCC is owned by the users of its regulated subsidiaries.

We will wire all payments on the global debt securities to DTC's nominee. We and the Trustee will treat DTC's nominee as the owner of the global debt securities for all purposes. Accordingly, we, the Trustee and any paying agent will have no direct responsibility or liability to pay amounts due on the global debt securities to owners of beneficial interests in the global debt securities.

It is DTC's current practice, upon receipt of any payment on the global debt securities, to credit Direct Participants accounts on the payment date according to their respective holdings of beneficial interests in the global debt securities as shown on DTC's records. In addition, it is DTC's current practice to assign any consenting or voting rights to Direct Participants whose accounts are credited with debt securities on a record date, by using an omnibus proxy. Payments by participants to owners of beneficial interests in the global debt securities, and voting by participants, will be governed by the customary practices between the participants and owners of beneficial interests, as is the case with debt securities held for the account of customers registered in street name. However, payments will be the responsibility of the participants and not of DTC, the Trustee or us.

Debt securities represented by a global debt security will be exchangeable for certificated debt securities with the same terms in authorized denominations only if:

DTC notifies us that it is unwilling or unable to continue as depository or if DTC ceases to be a clearing agency registered under applicable law and in either event a successor depository is not appointed by us within 90 days; or

an Event of Default occurs and DTC notifies the Trustee of its decision to exchange the global debt security for certificated debt securities.

Governing Law

Each Indenture and all of the debt securities will be governed by the laws of the State of New York.

The Trustee

We will enter into each Indenture with a Trustee that is qualified to act under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, and with any other trustee chosen by us and appointed in a supplemental indenture for a particular series of debt securities. We may maintain a banking relationship in the ordinary course of business with our Trustee and one or more of its affiliates.

Resignation or Removal of Trustee

If the Trustee has or acquires a conflicting interest within the meaning of the Trust Indenture Act after a default has occurred and is continuing, the Trustee must either eliminate its conflicting interest within 90 days, apply to the SEC for permission to continue as trustee or resign, to the extent and in the manner provided by, and subject to the provisions of, the Trust Indenture Act and the applicable indenture. Any resignation will require the appointment of a successor trustee under the applicable indenture in accordance with the terms and conditions of such indenture.

Table of Contents

The Trustee may resign or be removed by us with respect to one or more series of debt securities and a successor Trustee may be appointed to act with respect to any such series. The holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the debt securities of any series may remove the Trustee with respect to the debt securities of such series.

Limitations on Trustee if it is Our Creditor

Each indenture will contain certain limitations on the right of the Trustee, in the event that it becomes a creditor of us, to obtain payment of claims in certain cases, or to realize on certain property received in respect of any such claim as security or otherwise.

Annual Trustee Report to Holders of Debt Securities

The Trustee is required to submit an annual report to the holders of the debt securities regarding, among other things, the Trustee's eligibility to serve as such, the priority of the Trustee's claims regarding certain advances made by it, and any action taken by the Trustee materially affecting the debt securities.

Certificates and Opinions to be Furnished to Trustee

Each indenture will provide that, in addition to other certificates or opinions that may be specifically required by other provisions of the indenture, every application by us for action by the Trustee shall be accompanied by a certificate of certain of our officers and an opinion of counsel (who may be our counsel) stating that, in the opinion of the signers, all conditions precedent to such action have been complied with by us.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

General

We are authorized to issue 80,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$.01, of which 18,486,764 shares were issued and outstanding as of April 2, 2014, and 40,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$.01, of which no shares were issued and outstanding as of April 2, 2014. Our common stock is quoted on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol CSV. The following description of our capital stock is based on our certificate of incorporation and bylaws, as amended and currently in effect.

Common Stock

The holders of our common stock are entitled to one vote for each share held on all matters submitted to a vote of common stockholders. Our common stock does not have cumulative voting rights, which means that the holders of a majority of the voting power of shares of common stock outstanding can elect all the directors, and the holders of the remaining shares will not be able to elect any directors. Each share of common stock is entitled to participate equally in dividends, if, as and when declared by our Board of Directors, and in the distribution of assets in the event of liquidation, subject in all cases to any prior rights of outstanding shares of preferred stock outstanding. Our shares of common stock have no preemptive rights, redemption rights or sinking fund provisions. All outstanding shares of common stock are duly authorized, validly issued, fully paid and nonassessable.

Preferred Stock

Our preferred stock may be issued in series, and shares of each series will have such rights and preferences as may be fixed by our Board of Directors in the resolution authorizing the issuance of that particular series. In designating any series of preferred stock, our Board of Directors has the authority, without further action by the holders of our common stock, to fix the rights, dividend rate, conversion rights, rights and terms of redemption, and the liquidation preferences of that series of preferred stock.

The prospectus supplement relating to any series of preferred stock we are offering will include specific terms relating to the offering. We will file the form of the preferred stock with the SEC before we issue any of it, and you should read it for provisions that may be important to you. The prospectus supplement will include some or all of the following terms:

the title of the preferred stock;

the maximum number of shares of the series;

the dividend rate or the method of calculating the dividend, the date from which dividends will accrue and whether dividends will be cumulative;

any liquidation preference;

any optional redemption provisions;

any terms for the conversion or exchange of the preferred stock for other securities of us or any other entity;

any voting rights; and

any other preferences and relative, participating, optional or other special rights or any qualifications, limitations or restrictions on the rights of the shares.

The issuance of preferred stock by us could adversely affect the voting power of holders of our common stock and the likelihood that such holders will receive dividend payments and payments upon liquidation and could have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change in control of us.

Table of Contents

Delaware Anti-Takeover Law and Charter and Bylaw Provisions

The Company is a Delaware corporation and is subject to Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law. In general, Section 203 prevents an interested stockholder (defined generally as a person owning 15% or more of the Company's outstanding voting stock) from engaging in a business combination (as defined in Section 203) with the Company for three years following the date that person becomes an interested stockholder unless (a) before that person became an interested stockholder, the Company's Board of Directors approved the transaction in which the interested stockholder became an interested stockholder or approved the business combination; (b) upon completion of the transaction that resulted in the interested stockholder's becoming an interested stockholder, the interested stockholder owns at least 85% of the voting stock outstanding at the time the transaction commenced (excluding stock held by directors who are also officers of the Company and by employee stock plans that do not provide employees with the right to determine confidentially whether shares held subject to the plan will be tendered in a tender or exchange offer); or (c) following the transaction in which that person became an interested stockholder, the business combination is approved by the Company's Board of Directors and authorized at a meeting of stockholders by the affirmative vote of the holders of at least two-thirds of the outstanding voting stock not owned by the interested stockholder.

Under Section 203, these restrictions also do not apply to certain business combinations proposed by an interested stockholder following the announcement or notification of one of certain extraordinary transactions involving the Company and a person who was not an interested stockholder during the previous three years or who became an interested stockholder with the approval of a majority of the Company's directors, if that extraordinary transaction is approved or not opposed by a majority of the directors who were directors before any person became an interested stockholder in the previous three years or who were recommended for election or elected to succeed such directors by a majority of such directors then in office.

The Company's Board of Directors is divided into three classes. The directors of each class are elected for three-year terms, with the terms of the three classes staggered so that directors from a single class are elected at each annual meeting of stockholders. Stockholders may remove a director only for cause upon the vote of holders of at least 80% of voting power of the outstanding shares of common stock. In general, the Board of Directors, not the stockholders, has the right to appoint persons to fill vacancies on the Board of Directors.

The Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation dated July 2, 1996, as amended, (the Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation and amendments thereto are herein collectively called the Charter) provides that special meetings of holders of common stock may be called only by the Company's Board of Directors and that only such business proposed by the Board of Directors may be considered at special meetings of holders of common stock.

The Charter provides that the only business (including election of directors) that may be considered at an annual meeting of holders of common stock, in addition to business proposed (or persons nominated to be directors) by the directors of the Company, is business proposed (or persons nominated to be directors) by holders of common stock who comply with the notice and disclosure requirements set forth in the Charter. In general, the Charter requires that a stockholder give the Company notice of proposed business or nominations no later than 60 days before the annual meeting of holders of common stock (meaning the date on which the meeting is first scheduled and not postponements or adjournments thereof) or (if later) ten days after the first public notice of the annual meeting is sent to holders of common stock. In general, the notice must also contain information about the stockholder proposing the business or nomination, the stockholder's interest in the business, and (with respect to nominations for director) information about the nominee of the nature ordinarily required to be disclosed in public proxy solicitation statements. The stockholder also must submit a notarized letter from each of the stockholder's nominees stating the nominee's acceptance of the nomination and indicating the nominee's intention to serve as director if elected.

The Delaware General Corporation Law provides generally that the affirmative vote of a majority of the shares entitled to vote on any matter is required to amend a corporation's certificate of incorporation or bylaws, unless the corporation's certificate of incorporation or bylaws requires a greater percentage. The Charter provides that approval by the holders of at least 66.67% of the voting power of the outstanding voting stock of the Company is required to amend the provisions of the Charter previously discussed and certain other provisions.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

We may issue warrants to purchase any combination of senior or subordinated debt securities, common stock, preferred stock or other securities. Securities warrants may be issued independently or together with debt securities, preferred stock or common stock and may be attached to or separate from any offered securities. We will issue warrants under one or more warrant agreements between us and a warrant agent that we will name in the applicable prospectus supplement or any pricing supplement.

The prospectus supplement (or the pricing supplement) relating to any warrants we are offering will include specific terms relating to the offering. We will file the form of any warrant agreement with the SEC, and you should read the warrant agreement for provisions that may be important to you. The terms of the prospectus supplement (or pricing supplement) may include:

the title of the warrants;

the aggregate number of warrants offered;

the price or prices at which the warrants will be issued;

the currency or currencies in which the price of such warrants may be payable;

the dates or periods during which the warrants are exercisable;

the designation and terms of any securities with which the warrants are issued;

if warrants are issued as a unit with another security, the date, if any, on and after which the warrants and the other security will be separately transferable;

a discussion of the material United States federal income tax considerations applicable to the warrants;

any minimum or maximum amount of warrants that may be exercised at any one time; and

any terms, procedures and limitations relating to the transferability, exchange or exercise of the warrants.

Table of Contents

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the securities in and outside the United States through underwriters or dealers, directly to purchasers or through agents or through a combination of any of these methods. The prospectus supplement (or a pricing supplement) will include the following information:

the terms of the offering;

the names of any underwriters or agents;

the purchase price of the securities from us;

the net proceeds to us from the sale of securities;

any delayed delivery arrangements;

any underwriting discounts, commissions and other items constituting underwriters' compensation;

any initial public offering price;

any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers; and

any commissions paid to agents.

Sale Through Underwriters or Dealers

If we use underwriters in the sale of securities, the underwriters will acquire the securities for their own account. The underwriters may resell the securities from time to time in one or more transactions, including negotiated transactions, at a fixed public offering price or at varying prices determined at or prior to the time of sale, including at prevailing market prices or at prices related to prevailing market prices. Underwriters may offer securities to the public either through underwriting syndicates represented by one or more managing underwriters or directly by one or more firms acting as underwriters. Unless we inform you otherwise in the prospectus supplement, the obligations of the underwriters to purchase the securities will be subject to conditions, and the underwriters will be obligated to purchase all the offered securities if they purchase any of them. The underwriters may change from time to time any initial public offering price and any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers.

During and after an offering through underwriters, the underwriters may purchase and sell the securities in the open market. These transactions may include overallotment and stabilizing transactions and purchases to cover syndicate short positions created in connection with the offering. The underwriters also may impose a penalty bid, which means

that selling concessions allowed to syndicate members or other broker-dealers for the offered securities sold for their account may be reclaimed by the syndicate if the offered securities are repurchased by the syndicate in stabilizing or covering transactions. These activities may stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the market price of the offered securities, which may be higher than the price that might otherwise prevail in the open market. If commenced, the underwriters may discontinue these activities at any time.

If we use dealers in the sale of securities, we will sell the securities to them as principals. They may then resell those securities to the public at varying prices determined by the dealers at the time of resale. The dealers participating in any sale of the securities may be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act with respect to any sale of those securities. We will include in the prospectus supplement the names of the dealers and the terms of the transaction.

Financial Industry Regulatory Authority Rule 5110 requires FINRA members firms (unless an exemption applies) to satisfy the filing requirements of Rule 5110 in connection with the sale of the securities included in this Registration Statement on a principal or agency basis. FINRA Notice to Members 88-101 states that in the event any

securities are to be sold under this prospectus through a member of FINRA participating in a distribution of our securities, such member is responsible for insuring that a timely filing, if required, is first made with the Corporate Finance Department of FINRA and disclosing to FINRA the following:

it intends to take possession of the registered securities or to facilitate the transfer of such certificates;

Table of Contents

the complete details of how the securities are and will be held, including location of the particular accounts;

whether the member firm or any direct or indirect affiliates thereof have entered into, will facilitate or otherwise participate in any type of payment transaction with the Company, including details regarding any such transactions; and

in the event any of the securities offered by us under this prospectus are sold, transferred, assigned or hypothecated by us in a transaction that directly or indirectly involves a member firm of FINRA or any affiliates thereof, that prior to or at the time of said transaction the member firm will timely file all relevant documents with respect to such transaction(s) with the Corporate Finance Department of FINRA for review. Further, no FINRA member firm may receive compensation in excess of that allowable under FINRA rules, including Rule 5110, in connection with the sale of the securities by the Company under this prospectus, which total compensation may not exceed 8%.

Direct Sales and Sales Through Agents

We may sell the securities directly. In that event, no underwriters or agents would be involved. We may also sell the securities through agents we designate from time to time. In the prospectus supplement, we will name any agent involved in the offer or sale of the offered securities, and we will describe any commissions payable by us to the agent. Unless we inform you otherwise in the prospectus supplement, any agent will agree to use its reasonable best efforts to solicit purchases for the period of its appointment.

We may sell the securities directly to institutional investors or others who may be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act with respect to any sale of those securities. We will describe the terms of any such sales in the prospectus supplement.

Delayed Delivery Contracts

If we so indicate in the prospectus supplement, we may authorize agents, underwriters or dealers to solicit offers from certain types of institutions to purchase securities from us at the public offering price under delayed delivery contracts. These contracts would provide for payment and delivery on a specified date in the future. The contracts would be subject only to those conditions described in the prospectus supplement. The prospectus supplement will describe the commission payable for solicitation of those contracts.

Remarketing

We may offer and sell any of the securities in connection with a remarketing upon their purchase, in accordance with a redemption or repayment by their terms or otherwise, by one or more remarketing firms acting as principals for their own accounts or as our agents. We will identify any remarketing firm, the terms of any remarketing agreement and the compensation to be paid to the remarketing firm in the prospectus supplement. Remarketing firms may be deemed underwriters under the Securities Act.

General Information

We may have agreements with the agents, dealers and underwriters to indemnify them against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribute with respect to payments that the agents, dealers or

underwriters may be required to make. Agents, dealers and underwriters may be customers of, engage in transactions with or perform services for us in the ordinary course of their businesses.

Each series of offered securities will be a new issue, and other than the common stock, which is listed on the NYSE, will have no established trading market. We may elect to list any series of offered securities on an exchange, but we are not obligated to do so. It is possible that one or more underwriters may make a market in a series of offered securities. However, they will not be obligated to do so and may discontinue market making at any time without notice. We cannot assure you that a liquid trading market for any of our offered securities will develop.

Table of Contents

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the issuance of the securities offered in this prospectus will be passed upon for us by Vinson & Elkins L.L.P. If certain legal matters in connection with an offering of the securities made by this prospectus and a related prospectus supplement are passed on by counsel for the underwriters of such offering, that counsel will be named in the applicable prospectus supplement related to that offering.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of Carriage Services, Inc. as of December 31, 2013 and 2012, and for each of the years in the three year period ended December 31, 2013, and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2013 have been incorporated by reference in this prospectus in reliance upon the reports of KPMG LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, incorporated by reference herein and upon the authority of said firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We have filed a registration statement with the SEC under the Securities Act that registers the securities we may offer pursuant to this prospectus. The registration statement, including the attached exhibits, contains additional relevant information about Carriage. The rules and regulations of the SEC allow us to omit some information included in the registration statement from the prospectus.

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information electronically with the SEC. You may read and copy these reports, proxy statements and other information at the SEC's public reference room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington D.C. 20549 or at the SEC's other public reference facilities. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for more information about the operation of the public reference room. Our SEC filings are available on the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. We also make available free of charge on our website, at <http://www.carriageservices.com>, all materials that we file electronically with the SEC, including our annual reports on Form 10-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, current reports on Form 8-K, Section 16 reports and amendments to these reports as soon as reasonably practicable after such materials are electronically filed with, or furnished to, the SEC. Information contained on our website or any other website is not incorporated by reference into this prospectus and does not constitute a part of this prospectus.

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference into this prospectus the information we have filed with the SEC. This means that we can disclose important information to you without actually including the specific information in this prospectus by referring you to other documents filed separately with the SEC. These other documents contain important information about us, our financial condition and the results of our operations. The information we incorporate by reference is an important part of this prospectus. You should read the information incorporated by reference for more detail. Information that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and replace the information currently in this prospectus and information previously filed with the SEC.

We incorporate by reference into this prospectus the documents listed below, any filings we make with the SEC pursuant to Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act, including all such documents we may file with the SEC after the date on which the registration statement that includes this prospectus was initially filed with the SEC until the termination of all offerings under such registration statement (excluding any portions thereof that are deemed to be furnished and not filed):

Our annual report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2013 filed with the SEC on March 6, 2014;

Our current reports on Form 8-K and Form 8-K/A, as applicable, filed with the SEC on January 7, 2014, March 5, 2014, March 12, 2014, March 19, 2014 and March 20, 2014, in each case other than information furnished and not filed with the SEC; and

The description of our common stock contained in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A/A filed on December 4, 2002.

Table of Contents

You may obtain any of the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus from the SEC through the SEC's website at the address provided above. You may also request a copy of any document incorporated by reference in this prospectus (including exhibits to those documents specifically incorporated by reference in this document), at no cost, by visiting our website at <http://www.carriageservices.com>, or by writing or calling us at the following address and telephone number:

Carriage Services, Inc.

3040 Post Oak Blvd., Suite 300

Houston, Texas 77056

(713) 332-8400

You should rely only on the information provided in and incorporated by reference into this prospectus or any prospectus supplement. We have not authorized anyone else to provide you with different information. You should not assume that the information in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement is accurate as of any date other than the date indicated on these documents.

Table of Contents**PART II****INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS****14. OTHER EXPENSES OF ISSUANCE AND DISTRIBUTION**

The following table sets forth the estimated expenses (other than underwriting discounts and commissions) payable by Carriage Services, Inc. in connection with the offering described in this Registration Statement. All of the amounts shown below are estimates, with the exception of the SEC registration fee.

Securities and Exchange Commission registration fee	\$ 45,080
Financial Industry Regulatory Authority fee	*
Printing Expenses	*
Accounting fees and expenses	*
Legal fees and expenses	*
Trustee fees and expenses	*
Miscellaneous expenses	*
Total	*

(*) Estimated expenses are not presently known. The foregoing sets forth the general categories of expenses (other than underwriting discounts and commissions) that we anticipate to incur in connection with the offering of securities under this registration statement. An estimate of the aggregate expenses in connection with the issuance and distribution of the securities being offered will be included in the applicable prospectus supplement.

15. INDEMNIFICATION OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**Item 20. Indemnification of Directors and Officers**

The following summaries are qualified in their entirety by reference to the complete text of any statutes referred to below and the organizational documents of Carriage.

Indemnification of Directors and Officers of Carriage Services, Inc., a Delaware corporation

Section 145 of the Delaware General Corporation Law (the "DGCL") provides that a corporation may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative by reason of the fact that the person is or was a director, officer, employee or other agent of the corporation (an "officer or director"), if the person acted in good faith and in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation, and with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe the person's conduct was unlawful. Indemnification may be made against expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, fines and settlements paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by the person in connection with the proceeding; except, in an action by or in the right of the corporation, indemnification is limited to expenses, including attorneys' fees, actually and reasonably incurred in the defense or settlement of the action. Additionally, no indemnification may be made without court order with respect to any claim, issue, or matter as to which the person shall have been adjudged to be

liable to the corporation in the performance of that person's duty to the corporation and its shareholders, or with respect to any settlement or expenses incurred in defending a pending action which settled without court approval. The termination of any action, suit or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement or conviction or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent does not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not meet the standard of conduct required by the DGCL.

Section 145(c) provides that, to the extent that a present or former officer or director of a corporation has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit or proceeding, or in defense of any claim, issue or matter therein, such person shall be indemnified against expenses, including attorneys' fees, actually and reasonably incurred by such person in connection therewith. Section 145(b) adds that a court may also order indemnification if it determines that the person is fairly and reasonably entitled to indemnification in view of all the relevant circumstances.

II-1

Table of Contents

Under Section 145(d) of the DGCL, unless ordered by a court, a corporation may not indemnify an officer or director if the person's conduct did not satisfy the standards set forth above. The determination as to whether indemnification is permissible must be made as follows: (1) by a majority vote of the directors who are not parties to such action, suit or proceeding, even though less than a quorum; (2) by a committee of such directors designated by majority vote of such directors, even though less than a quorum; (3) if there are no such directors, or if such directors so direct, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion; or (4) by the stockholders.

Section 145(g) provides that a corporation may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of a person who is or was an officer or director of the corporation against any liability asserted against such person and incurred by such person in any such capacity, or arising out of such person's status as such, whether or not the corporation would have the power to indemnify such person against such liability under the DGCL. Section 145(f) adds that the indemnification provided by, or granted pursuant to, the DGCL is not exclusive of any other rights to which those seeking indemnification may be entitled under any bylaw, agreement, vote of stockholders or disinterested directors or otherwise, both as to action in such person's official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding such office.

Article X of our Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation (the "Charter") provides that we will indemnify and hold harmless any person who was, is, or is threatened to be made a party to a proceeding by reason of the fact that he or she: (1) is or was a director or officer of the Company; or (2) while a director or officer of the Company, is or was serving at the request of the Company as a director, officer, partner, venturer, proprietor, trustee, employee, agent, or similar functionary of another foreign or domestic corporation, partnership, joint venture, sole proprietorship, trust, employee benefit plan, or other enterprise, to the fullest extent permitted under the DGCL. Article X further provides that we may also indemnify any employee or agent to the fullest extent permitted under the DGCL. The right to indemnification under Article X of the Charter is a contract right which includes, with respect to directors and officers, the right to be paid by the Company the expenses incurred in defending any such proceeding in advance of its disposition to the maximum extent permitted under the DGCL.

Article 8.0 of our Amended and Restated By-Laws, as amended (the "By-Laws"), also provides that we will indemnify our directors and officers, and are authorized to indemnify employees and agents, to the fullest extent permitted by the DGCL, except: (1) for any breach of their duty of loyalty to the Company or the Company's stockholders; (2) for acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of the law; or (3) for any transaction from which such director or officer derived an improper benefit. The By-Laws also permit our Board of Directors to authorize the advancement of expenses to any director or officer of the Company, subject to a written undertaking to repay such advance if it is later determined that the indemnitee does not satisfy the standard of conduct required for indemnification. Additionally, pursuant to the By-Laws, the Chairman of our Board of Directors is authorized to enter into indemnification contracts with each director and officer of the Company.

16. EXHIBITS

The following is a list of exhibits filed as a part of this registration statement.

- 1.1** Form of Underwriting Agreement.
- 4.1* Form of Senior Debt Indenture.
- 4.2* Form of Subordinated Debt Indenture.

Edgar Filing: CARRIAGE SERVICES INC - Form S-3

- 4.3** Form of Senior Debt Securities.
- 4.4** Form of Subordinated Debt Securities.
- 4.5** Form of Warrant Agreement.
- 4.6 Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation, as amended, of the Company. Incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 3.1 to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for its fiscal year ended December 31, 1996.
- 4.7 Certificate of Amendment dated May 7, 1997. Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.2 to the Company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for its fiscal quarter ended September 30, 1997.

II-2

Table of Contents

4.8	Certificate of Amendment dated May 7, 2002. Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.1 to the Company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for its fiscal quarter ended June 30, 2002.
4.9	Amended and Restated Bylaws of the Company. Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.2 to the Company's Registration Statement on Form S-1 (File No. 333-05545).
4.10	Amendments to the Bylaws of the Company effective December 18, 2000. Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.9 to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for its year ended December 31, 2001.
4.11	Amendments to the Bylaws of the Company effective May 20, 2008. Incorporated by reference to Exhibit to the Company's current report on Form 8-K filed May 28, 2008.
5.1*	Opinion of Vinson & Elkins L.L.P.
12.1*	Statement Regarding the Computation of Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges.
23.1*	Consent of Vinson & Elkins L.L.P. (included in Exhibit 5.1).
23.2*	Consent of KPMG LLP.
24.1*	Power of Attorney (included on the signature pages of this Registration Statement).
25.1***	Form T-1 Statement of Eligibility under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939 of the Trustee under the Senior Indenture for Senior Debt Securities.
25.2***	Form T-1 Statement of Eligibility under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939 of the Trustee under the Subordinated Indenture for Subordinated Debt Securities.

* Filed herewith.

** To be filed as an Exhibit to a Current Report on Form 8-K or in a post-effective amendment to this registration statement.

*** To be filed under subsection (a) of Section 310 of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended.

17. UNDERTAKINGS

The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes:

(1) To file, during any period in which offers or sales are being made, a post-effective amendment to this registration statement:

(i) To include any prospectus required by Section 10(a)(3) of the Securities Act;

(ii) To reflect in the prospectus any facts or events arising after the effective date of this registration statement (or the most recent post-effective amendment thereof) which, individually or in the aggregate, represent a fundamental change in the information set forth in the registration statement (or the most recent post-effective amendment thereof) which, individually or in the aggregate, represent a fundamental change in the information set forth in the registration statement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any increase or decrease in volume of securities offered (if the total dollar value of securities offered would not exceed that which was registered) and any deviation from the low or high end of the estimated maximum offering range may be reflected in the form of prospectus filed with the SEC pursuant to Rule 424(b) of the Securities Act if, in the aggregate, the changes in volume and price represent no more than a 20% change in the maximum aggregate offering price set forth in the Calculation of Registration Fee table in the effective registration statement;

(iii) To include any material information with respect to the plan of distribution not previously disclosed in the registration statement or any material change to such information in the registration statement;

provided, however, that paragraphs (1)(i), (1)(ii) and (1)(iii) above do not apply if the registration statement is on Form S-3 and the information required to be included in a post-effective amendment by those paragraphs is contained in reports filed with or furnished to the SEC by the registrant pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Exchange Act that are incorporated by reference in the registration statement, or is contained in a form of prospectus filed pursuant to Rule 424(b) that is part of the registration statement.

II-3

Table of Contents

(2) That, for the purpose of determining any liability under the Securities Act, each such post-effective amendment shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.

(3) To remove from registration by means of a post-effective amendment any of the securities being registered which remain unsold at the termination of the offering.

(4) That, for the purpose of determining liability under the Securities Act to any purchaser:

(A) Each prospectus filed by the registrant pursuant to Rule 424(b)(3) shall be deemed to be part of the registration statement as of the date the filed prospectus was deemed part of and included in the registration statement; and

(B) Each prospectus required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2), (b)(5), or (b)(7) as part of a registration statement in reliance on Rule 430B relating to an offering made pursuant to Rule 415(a)(1)(i), (vii), or (x) for the purpose of providing the information required by Section 10(a) of the Securities Act shall be deemed to be part of and included in the registration statement as of the earlier of the date such form of prospectus is first used after effectiveness or the date of the first contract of sale of securities in the offering described in the prospectus. As provided in Rule 430B, for liability purposes of the issuer and any person that is at that date an underwriter, such date shall be deemed to be a new effective date of the registration statement relating to the securities in the registration statement to which that prospectus relates, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof. Provided, however, that no statement made in a registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement or made in a document incorporated or deemed incorporated by reference into the registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement will, as to a purchaser with a time of contract of sale prior to such effective date, supersede or modify any statement that was made in the registration statement or prospectus that was part of the registration statement or made in any such document immediately prior to such effective date.

(5) That, for the purpose of determining liability of any registrant under the Securities Act to any purchaser in the initial distribution of the securities, the undersigned registrant undertakes that in a primary offering of securities of the undersigned registrant pursuant to this registration statement, regardless of the underwriting method used to sell the securities to the purchaser, if the securities are offered or sold to such purchaser by means of any of the following communications, the undersigned registrant will be a seller to the purchaser and will be considered to offer or sell such securities to such purchaser:

(i) Any preliminary prospectus or prospectus of the undersigned registrant relating to the offering required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424;

(ii) Any free writing prospectus relating to the offering prepared by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant or used or referred to by the undersigned registrant;

(iii) The portion of any other free writing prospectus relating to the offering containing material information about the undersigned registrant or its securities provided by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant; and

(iv) Any other communication that is an offer in the offering made by the undersigned registrant to the purchaser.

The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes that, for purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act, each filing of the undersigned registrant's annual report pursuant to Section 13(a) or Section 15(d) of the Exchange Act (and, where applicable, each filing of an employee benefit plan's annual report pursuant to Section 15(d) of the

Exchange Act) that is incorporated by reference in the registration statement shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.

II-4

Table of Contents

Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act may be permitted to directors, officers and controlling persons of the registrant pursuant to the foregoing provisions, or otherwise, the registrant has been advised that in the opinion of the SEC such indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act and is, therefore, unenforceable. In the event that a claim for indemnification against such liabilities (other than the payment by the registrant of expenses incurred or paid by a director, officer or controlling person of the registrant in the successful defense of any action, suit or proceeding) is asserted by such director, officer or controlling person in connection with the securities being registered, the registrant will, unless in the opinion of its counsel the matter has been settled by controlling precedent, submit to a court of appropriate jurisdiction the question whether such indemnification by it is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act and will be governed by the final adjudication of such issue.

The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes:

(1) For purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act, the information omitted from the form of prospectus or any prospectus supplement filed as part of this registration statement in reliance on Rule 430A and contained in a form of prospectus or prospectus supplement filed by the registrant pursuant to Rule 424(b)(1) or (4) or 497(h) under the Securities Act shall be deemed to be part of this registration statement as of the time it was declared effective.

(2) For the purpose of determining any liability under the Securities Act, each post-effective amendment that contains a form of prospectus shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.

The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes to file an application for the purpose of determining the eligibility of the trustee under each of the indentures to act under subsection (a) of Section 310 of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended (the Act), in accordance with the rules and regulations prescribed by the SEC under Section 305(b)(2) of the Act.

Table of Contents**SIGNATURES AND POWER OF ATTORNEY**

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, the Registrant has duly caused this registration statement to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized in the City of Houston, State of Texas, on April 4, 2014.

CARRIAGE SERVICES, INC.

By: /s/ L. William Heiligbrodt
L. William Heiligbrodt
Executive Vice President and Secretary

KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS, that each person whose signature appears below constitutes and appoints Melvin C. Payne and L. William Heiligbrodt, and each of them acting individually, as his or her true and lawful attorney-in-fact and agent, with full power of each to act alone, with full powers 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 registration statement (including post-effective amendments and any related registration statements filed pursuant to Rule 462 and otherwise), and to file the same with all exhibits thereto, and other documents in connection therewith, with the Securities and Exchange Commission, granting unto said attorneys-in-fact and agents, and full power and authority to do and perform each and every act and thing requisite and necessary to be done in connection therewith, as fully for all intents and purposes as he or she might or could do in person, hereby ratifying and confirming that all said attorneys-in-fact and agents, or any of them or their substitute or resubstitute, may lawfully do or cause to be done by virtue hereof.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, this registration statement has been signed below by the following persons on behalf of the Registrant and in the capacities and on the date indicated.

Signature	Title with Carriage Services, Inc.	Date
/s/ Melvin C. Payne	Chairman of the Board, Chief Executive Officer	April 4, 2014
Melvin C. Payne	and President (Principal Executive Officer)	
/s/ L. William Heiligbrodt	Executive Vice President and Secretary	April 4, 2014
L. William Heiligbrodt	(Principal Financial Officer)	
/s/ Viki K. Blinderman	Chief Accounting Officer	April 4, 2014
Viki K. Blinderman	(Principal Accounting Officer)	
/s/ David J. DeCarlo	Vice Chairman of the Board and President	April 4, 2014
David J. DeCarlo		
/s/ Donald D. Patteson, Jr.	Director	April 4,

Donald D. Patteson, Jr.		2014
/s/ Barry K. Fingerhut	Director	April 4, 2014
Barry K. Fingerhut		
/s/ Richard W. Scott	Director	April 4, 2014
Richard W. Scott		

II-6

Table of Contents

Exhibit Index

The following is a list of exhibits filed as a part of this registration statement.

- 1.1** Form of Underwriting Agreement.
- 4.1* Form of Senior Debt Indenture.
- 4.2* Form of Subordinated Debt Indenture.
- 4.3** Form of Senior Debt Securities.
- 4.4** Form of Subordinated Debt Securities.
- 4.5** Form of Warrant Agreement.
- 4.6 Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation, as amended, of the Company. Incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 3.1 to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for its fiscal year ended December 31, 1996.
- 4.7 Certificate of Amendment dated May 7, 1997. Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.2 to the Company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for its fiscal quarter ended September 30, 1997.
- 4.8 Certificate of Amendment dated May 7, 2002. Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.1 to the Company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for its fiscal quarter ended June 30, 2002.
- 4.9 Amended and Restated Bylaws of the Company. Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.2 to the Company's Registration Statement on Form S-1 (File No. 333-05545).
- 4.10 Amendments to the Bylaws of the Company effective December 18, 2000. Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.9 to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for its year ended December 31, 2001.
- 4.11 Amendments to the Bylaws of the Company effective May 20, 2008. Incorporated by reference to Exhibit to the Company's current report on Form 8-K filed May 28, 2008.
- 5.1* Opinion of Vinson & Elkins L.L.P.
- 12.1* Statement Regarding the Computation of Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges.
- 23.1* Consent of Vinson & Elkins L.L.P. (included in Exhibit 5.1).
- 23.2* Consent of KPMG LLP.
- 24.1* Power of Attorney (included on the signature pages of this Registration Statement).
- 25.1*** Form T-1 Statement of Eligibility under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939 of the Trustee under the Senior Indenture for Senior Debt Securities.
- 25.2*** Form T-1 Statement of Eligibility under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939 of the Trustee under the Subordinated Indenture for Subordinated Debt Securities.

* Filed herewith.

** To be filed as an Exhibit to a Current Report on Form 8-K or in a post-effective amendment to this registration statement.

*** To be filed under subsection (a) of Section 310 of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended.

II-7