

hoying john c
Form 4
April 25, 2006

FORM 4

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

OMB APPROVAL

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Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person *
hoying john c

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol
FIRST FINANCIAL BANCORP /OH/ [FFBC]

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer

(Check all applicable)

(Last) (First) (Middle)
300 HIGH STREET
(Street)

3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year)
04/24/2006

____ Director _____ 10% Owner
 Officer (give title below) _____ Other (specify below)
SVP-Retail Banking

HAMILTON, OH 45011
(City) (State) (Zip)

4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)
 Form filed by One Reporting Person
 Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

| 1. Title of Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) | 5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4) | 6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | 7. Nature of Indirect Ownership (Instr. 4) |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| | | | | (A) or (D) Code V Amount (D) Price | | | |
| Common Stock | | | | | 875 | D | |
| Common Stock | | | | | 3,157.77 | I | 401-K |
| Common Stock | | | | | 500 | I | Raymond James Brokerage Account |
| Common Stock | 04/24/2006 | | A | 2,200 A \$ 0 | 4,275 | I | Restricted |

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Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

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SEC 1474
(9-02)

Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned
(e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

| 1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security | 3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5) | 6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year) | 7. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4) | 8. Amount or Number of Shares |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|--|---|-------------------------------|
| 2003 (ISO) Stock Option | \$ 16.58 | | | | | 01/22/2004 01/22/2013 | Common Stock | 2,000 |
| 2003 (ISO) Stock Option | \$ 17.2 | | | | | 01/17/2003 01/17/2012 | Common Stock | 1,000 |
| 2004 (ISO) Stock Option | \$ 17.09 | | | | | 01/21/2005 01/21/2014 | Common Stock | 1,000 |
| 2005 (ISO) Stock Option | \$ 17.51 | | | | | 04/18/2006 04/18/2015 | Common Stock | 5,711 |
| 2005 (NQ) Stock Option | \$ 17.51 | | | | | 04/18/2006 04/18/2015 | Common Stock | 2,889 |
| 2006 (ISO) Stock Option | \$ 16.02 | 04/24/2006 | | A | 6,242 | 04/24/2007 04/24/2016 | Common Stock | 6,242 |
| 2006 (NQ) | \$ 16.02 | 04/24/2006 | | A | 4,458 | 04/24/2007 04/24/2016 | Common Stock | 4,458 |

Stock
Option

Reporting Owners

| Reporting Owner Name / Address | Relationships | | | |
|--|---------------|-----------|--------------------|-------|
| | Director | 10% Owner | Officer | Other |
| hoying john c 300 HIGH STREET HAMILTON, OH 45011 | | | SVP-Retail Banking | |

Signatures

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| terri j ziepfel | 04/25/2006 |
| **Signature of Reporting Person | Date |

Explanation of Responses:

* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, *see* Instruction 4(b)(v).

** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. *See* 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, *see* Instruction 6 for procedure.
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