

The 2024 Berkshire Hathaway Annual Meeting – Saturday, May 4, 2024

Berkshire Hathaway Inc.'s (BRK.A and BRK.B) annual meeting is coming up on May 4, 2024 in Omaha. I look forward to attending my 6th annual meeting, seeing old friends and meeting new. The [CNBC Pre-Show](#)¹ begins at 9:30 AM ET, with the Q&A portion of the meeting starting at 10:15 AM ET.

On February 24, 2024, Warren Buffett released the [Berkshire Hathaway annual letter](#).² Here are a few quotes and highlights from the letter:

1) “Charlie Munger – The Architect of Berkshire Hathaway”: Charlie Munger passed away in November 2023, and Warren wrote a tribute stating, “Charlie was the ‘architect’ of the present Berkshire, and I acted as the ‘general contractor’ to carry out the day-by-day construction of his vision.”

“Nevertheless, Charlie, in 1965, promptly advised me: ‘Warren, forget about buying another company like Berkshire. But now that you control Berkshire, add to it wonderful businesses purchased at fair prices and give up buying fair businesses at wonderful prices.’”

For more on Charlie Munger, see [Growth Factor 38](#).³

2) Warren Buffett’s sister Bertie: Bertie is described as the model Berkshire shareholder. “She is [sic] . . . very sensible – instinctively knowing that pundits should always be ignored.”

“[I]n 1980, when 46 . . . Bertie decided to make her move. Retaining only the mutual fund and Berkshire, she made no new trades during the next 43 years. During that period, she became very rich, even after making large philanthropic gifts”

“Millions of Americans could have followed her reasoning which involved only the common sense she had somehow absorbed as a child in Omaha.”

3) “[W]e particularly favor the rare enterprise that can deploy additional capital at high returns in the future. Owning only one of these companies – and simply sitting tight – can deliver wealth almost beyond measure.”

“Patience pays, and one wonderful business can offset the many mediocre decisions that are inevitable.”

4) “Wall Street – to use the term in its figurative sense – would like its customers to make money, but what truly causes its denizens’ juices to flow is feverish activity. At such times, whatever foolishness can be marketed will be vigorously marketed – not by everyone but always by someone.”

5) “EBITDA’ is a banned measurement at Berkshire.” We at Needham Funds agree. Depreciation and stock compensation matter.

6) “During 2023, we did not buy or sell a share of either AMEX [AXP] or Coke [KO] – extending our own Rip Van Winkle slumber that has now lasted well over two decades. Both companies again rewarded our inaction by increasing their earnings and dividends. Indeed, our share of AMEX earnings in 2023 considerably exceeded the \$1.3 billion cost of our long ago purchase.”

7) “Our railroad carries its . . . fixed assets at \$70 billion on its balance sheet. But my guess is that it would cost at least \$500 billion to replicate those assets and decades to complete the job.”

“Berkshire is receiving an acceptable return on its purchase price, though less than it might appear, and also a pittance on the replacement value of the property. “

8) “Whatever the case at Berkshire, the final result for the utility industry may be ominous: Certain utilities might no longer attract the savings of American citizens and will be forced to adopt the public-power model.”

“When the dust settles, America’s power needs and the consequent capital expenditure will be staggering. I did not anticipate or even consider the adverse developments in regulatory returns and . . . I made a costly mistake in not doing so.”

These are just a few of my highlights from this year’s letter. I encourage you to read the letter and tune into the broadcast.

[1] <https://www.cnn.com/brklive/>

[2] <https://www.berkshirehathaway.com/letters/2023ltr.pdf>

[3] [Growth Factor 38: Words of Wisdom from Charlie Munger](#)

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