

FIRST BANCSHARES INC /MS/

Form S-4

January 29, 2018

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As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on January 29, 2018

Registration No. 333-

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

Form S-4
REGISTRATION STATEMENT
UNDER
THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

The First Bancshares, Inc.
(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in its Charter)

Mississippi	6021	64-0862173
(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation or organization)	(Primary Standard Industrial Classification Code Number)	(I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)

6480 U.S. Hwy. 98 West
Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39402, Suite A
(601) 268-8998
(Address, including Zip Code, and Telephone Number, including Area Code, of Registrant's Principal Executive Offices)

Donna T. (Dee Dee) Lowery
Chief Financial Officer
6480 U.S. Hwy. 98 West
Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39402
(601) 268-8998
(Name, Address, including Zip Code, and Telephone Number, including Area Code, of Agent for Service)

With copies to:

Mark C. Kanaly, Esq.	Michael S. Sadow, P.C.
David S. Park, Esq.	Dave M. Muchnikoff, P.C.
Lesley H. Solomon, Esq.	Silver, Freedman, Taff & Tiernan LLP
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1201 West Peachtree Street	Washington, District of Columbia 20007
Atlanta, Georgia 30309	(202) 295-4500
(404) 881-7000	

Approximate date of commencement of the proposed sale of the securities to the public: As soon as practicable after this registration statement becomes effective and all other conditions to the proposed merger described herein have been satisfied or waived.

If the securities being registered on this Form are being offered in connection with the formation of a holding company and there is compliance with General Instruction G, check the following box.

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If this Form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, 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(d) 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.

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

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

If an emerging growth company, indicate by check mark if the registrant has elected not to use the extended transition period for complying with any new or revised financial accounting standards provided pursuant to Section 7(a)(2)(B) of the Securities Act.

If applicable, place an X in the box to designate the appropriate rule provision relied upon in conducting this transaction:

Exchange Act Rule 13e-4(i) (Cross-Border Issuer Tender Offer)

Exchange Act Rule 14d-1(d) (Cross-Border Third-Party Tender Offer)

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

Title of each class of securities to be registered	Amount to be registered	Proposed maximum offering price per unit	Proposed maximum aggregate offering price	Amount of registration fee
Common Stock, par value \$0.01 per share	772,551(1)	N/A	\$ 24,297,975.00(2)	\$ 3,025.10

(1)

Represents the maximum number of shares of The First Bancshares, Inc. common stock that could be issued in connection with the merger described herein. Pursuant to Rule 416, this registration statement also covers additional shares that may be issued as a result of stock splits, stock dividends or similar transactions. In the event the number of shares of common stock required to be issued to consummate the merger described herein is increased after the date this registration statement is declared effective, The First Bancshares, Inc. will register such additional shares in accordance with Rule 413 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the “Securities Act”), by filing a registration statement pursuant to Rule 462(b) or Rule 429 under the Securities Act, as applicable, with respect to such additional shares.

(2)

Pursuant to Rule 457(f)(1) under the Securities Act, and solely for the purpose of calculating the registration fee, the proposed maximum aggregate offering price is based on the average of the high and low prices for shares of Sunshine Financial, Inc. common stock as reported on the Over-the-Counter Electronic Bulletin Board on January 24, 2018 (\$29.23 per share) multiplied by the maximum number of such shares (830,700) that may be exchanged for the securities being registered.

(3)

Calculated pursuant to Rule 457(f) of the Securities Act to be \$3,025.10 by multiplying the proposed maximum aggregate offering price by 0.0001245.

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, or until the Registration Statement shall become effective on such date as the Commission, acting pursuant to said Section 8(a), may determine.

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The information in this proxy statement/prospectus is not complete and is subject to change. The First Bancshares, Inc. may not sell the securities offered by this proxy statement/prospectus until the registration statement filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission is effective. This proxy statement/prospectus shall not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of any offer to buy nor shall there be any sale of these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

PRELIMINARY — SUBJECT TO COMPLETION — DATED JANUARY 29, 2018

Proxy Statement/Prospectus

MERGER PROPOSED — YOUR VOTE IS VERY IMPORTANT

To the Stockholders of Sunshine Financial, Inc.:

The boards of directors of The First Bancshares, Inc., or First Bancshares, and Sunshine Financial, Inc., or Sunshine, have each unanimously approved the acquisition of Sunshine by First Bancshares. The acquisition will be accomplished pursuant to the terms of an Agreement and Plan of Merger, dated as of December 6, 2017, which we refer to as the merger agreement, by and between First Bancshares and Sunshine, whereby Sunshine will be merged with and into First Bancshares, which we refer to as the merger. Immediately following the merger of Sunshine with and into First Bancshares, Sunshine Community Bank, or Sunshine Community, a wholly owned bank subsidiary of Sunshine, will merge with and into First Bancshares' wholly owned bank subsidiary, The First, A National Banking Association, or The First, with The First as the surviving bank, which we refer to as the bank merger.

If the merger is completed, each outstanding share of Sunshine common stock issued and outstanding immediately prior to the effective time of the merger will be converted into the right to receive, at the election of each Sunshine stockholder, either (i) \$27.00 in cash, or (ii) 0.93 of a share of First Bancshares' common stock. The election of stock consideration or cash consideration will be subject to proration such that 75% of the issued and outstanding shares of Sunshine common stock will be exchanged for First Bancshares common stock and 25% will be exchanged for cash. As a result, if the aggregate number of shares with respect to which a valid stock or cash election has been made exceeds these limits, stockholders who have elected the form of merger consideration that has been over-subscribed will receive a mixture of both stock consideration and cash consideration in accordance with the proration procedures set forth in the merger agreement. Each outstanding share of Sunshine common stock subject to vesting restrictions shall become vested immediately prior to the effective time of the merger and will be converted into the right to receive the same merger consideration that other Sunshine stockholders are entitled to receive. Each option to purchase shares of Sunshine common stock shall be cancelled as of the effective time of the merger and converted into the right to receive a cash payment equal to the product of (i) the total number of shares of Sunshine common stock subject to such option times (ii) the excess, if any, of \$27.00 over the exercise price per share of Sunshine common stock subject to such option.

Although the number of shares of First Bancshares common stock that Sunshine stockholders may choose to receive is fixed, the market value of the merger consideration will fluctuate with the market price of First Bancshares common stock and will not be known at the time Sunshine stockholders vote on the merger. First Bancshares common stock is currently quoted on the NASDAQ Global Market under the symbol "FBMS." On December 6, 2017, the last full trading day before the public announcement of the merger agreement, based on the last reported sale price of First Bancshares common stock (\$33.35), the 0.93 exchange ratio represented approximately \$31.02 in value for each share of Sunshine common stock to be converted to First Bancshares common stock. The most recent reported closing sale price of First Bancshares common stock on [•], 2018 was \$[•]. The most recent reported closing sale price of Sunshine common stock on [•], 2018 was \$[•]. Based on the exchange ratio and the number of shares of Sunshine common stock outstanding and reserved for issuance under various stock incentive plans and agreements, the maximum number of shares of First Bancshares common stock offered by First Bancshares and issuable in the merger is 772,551. We urge you to obtain current market quotations for the price of First Bancshares common stock (trading symbol "FBMS") and Sunshine common stock (trading symbol "SSNF").

On October 24, 2017, First Bancshares entered into an agreement to acquire Southwest Banc Shares, Inc., or Southwest, the holding company of, First Community Bank, or First Community. Southwest is based in Chatom, Alabama. Certain information relating to this transaction is set forth in the accompanying proxy statement/prospectus. Sunshine will hold a special meeting of its stockholders, referred to as the Sunshine special meeting, where Sunshine stockholders will be asked to consider and vote upon (1) a proposal to approve the merger, (2) a proposal to approve,

on a non-binding advisory basis, certain compensation that may become payable to Sunshine's named executive officers in connection with the merger, and (3) a proposal to adjourn the Sunshine special meeting, if necessary or appropriate, to solicit additional proxies in favor of the proposal to approve the merger.

The Sunshine special meeting will be held at Sunshine's executive offices located at 1400 East Park Avenue, Tallahassee, Florida, on [•], 2018, at [•] [a.m./p.m.], Eastern Time, subject to any adjournment or postponement thereof. Each of First Bancshares and Sunshine expects that the merger will qualify as a "reorganization" within the meaning of Section 368(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, which we refer to as the Code, with the result that the Sunshine common stock exchanged for First Bancshares common stock will generally be tax-free and the Sunshine common stock exchanged for cash will generally be taxable as capital gain.

Your vote is important. Completion of the merger is subject to the approval of the merger by the stockholders of Sunshine. Regardless of whether or not you plan to attend the Sunshine special meeting, please take the time to authorize a proxy to vote your shares in accordance with the instructions contained in this proxy statement/prospectus. Submitting a proxy now will not prevent you from being able to vote in person at the Sunshine special meeting.

The board of directors of Sunshine has determined that the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated thereby, including the merger, are advisable and in the best interests of the stockholders of Sunshine, has unanimously approved the merger agreement and the merger and unanimously recommends that the stockholders of Sunshine vote "FOR" the proposal to approve the merger, "FOR" the compensation proposal and "FOR" the proposal to adjourn the Sunshine special meeting, if necessary or appropriate, to solicit additional proxies in favor of the proposal to approve the merger.

This proxy statement/prospectus describes the Sunshine special meeting, the merger, the documents related to the merger and other related matters. Please carefully read this entire proxy statement/prospectus, including "Risk Factors," beginning on page 37, for a discussion of the risks relating to the proposed merger. You also can obtain information about First Bancshares and Sunshine from documents that each has filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

If you have any questions concerning the merger, please contact Brian P. Baggett, Corporate Secretary, at (850) 219-7200. We look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

/s/ Louis O. Davis, Jr.

Louis O. Davis, Jr.
President and Chief Executive Officer
Sunshine Financial, Inc.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, nor any state securities commission or any other bank regulatory agency has approved or disapproved the securities to be issued in the merger or determined if this proxy statement/prospectus is accurate or adequate. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The securities to be issued in the merger are not savings or deposit accounts or other obligations of any bank or non-bank subsidiary of either First Bancshares or Sunshine, and they are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other governmental agency.

The date of this proxy statement/prospectus is [•], 2018, and it is first being mailed or otherwise delivered to the Sunshine stockholders on or about [•], 2018.

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SUNSHINE FINANCIAL, INC.

1400 East Park Avenue Tallahassee, Florida 32301

(850) 219-7200

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS

To Be Held on [•], 2018

To the Stockholders of Sunshine Financial, Inc.:

A special meeting of the stockholders of Sunshine Financial, Inc., or Sunshine, will be held at Sunshine's executive offices located at 1400 East Park Avenue, Tallahassee, Florida, on [•], 2018, at [•] [a.m./p.m.], Eastern Time, subject to any adjournment or postponement thereof, for the following purposes:

1.

To consider and vote upon a proposal to approve the merger of Sunshine with and into The First Bancshares, Inc., or First Bancshares, with First Bancshares as the surviving company, referred to herein as the merger, all on and subject to the terms and conditions contained in the Agreement and Plan of Merger, which we refer to as the merger agreement, dated as of December 6, 2017, by and between First Bancshares and Sunshine, which we refer to as the merger proposal;

2.

To consider and vote upon a proposal to approve, in a non-binding advisory vote, certain compensation that may become payable to Sunshine's named executive officers in connection with the merger, which we refer to as the compensation proposal; and

3.

To consider and vote upon any proposal to adjourn the special meeting, referred to herein as the Sunshine special meeting, to a later date or dates if the board of directors of Sunshine determines such an adjournment is necessary to permit solicitation of additional proxies if there are not sufficient votes at the time of the Sunshine special meeting to constitute a quorum or to approve the merger, which we refer to as the adjournment proposal.

No other business may be conducted at the Sunshine special meeting. All holders of shares of common stock of Sunshine of record as of 5:00 p.m. on [•], 2018, will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the Sunshine special meeting and any adjournments thereof. The Sunshine special meeting may be adjourned from time to time upon approval of holders of Sunshine common stock without any notice other than by announcement at the meeting of the adjournment thereof, and any and all business for which notice is hereby given may be transacted at such adjourned meeting. Holders of Sunshine common stock have the right to dissent from the merger proposal and obtain payment in cash of the appraised fair value of their shares of Sunshine common stock under applicable provisions of the Maryland General Corporation Law, or MGCL. In order for a holder of Sunshine common stock to perfect his, her or its right to dissent, such holder must carefully follow the procedure set forth in the MGCL. A copy of the applicable statutory provisions of the MGCL is included as Annex C to the accompanying proxy statement/prospectus and a summary of these provisions can be found under the caption "The Merger — Dissenters' Rights," beginning on page 76 of the proxy statement/prospectus. The merger may not be completed if the holders of more than 12.5% of the outstanding shares of Sunshine common stock exercise dissenters' rights.

If you have any questions concerning the merger agreement, the merger, the Sunshine special meeting or the proxy statement/prospectus, would like additional copies of the proxy statement/prospectus, need a proxy card or need help voting your shares of Sunshine common stock, please contact Brian P. Baggett, Corporate Secretary, at (850) 219-7200.

By Order of the Board of Directors,

/s/ Brian P. Baggett

Brian P. Baggett
Corporate Secretary
Tallahassee, Florida
[•], 2018

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The Sunshine board of directors unanimously recommends that holders of Sunshine common stock entitled to vote at the Sunshine special meeting vote “FOR” the merger proposal, “FOR” the compensation proposal and “FOR” the adjournment proposal.

Your Vote is Very Important

A proxy card is enclosed. Whether or not you plan to attend the Sunshine special meeting, if you are a holder of shares of Sunshine common stock, please vote by completing, signing and dating the proxy card and promptly mailing it in the enclosed envelope. You may also vote via the Internet or telephone by following the instructions on the proxy card. You may revoke your proxy in the manner described in the proxy statement/prospectus at any time before it is exercised. If you are a holder of shares of Sunshine common stock and attend the Sunshine special meeting, you may vote in person if you desire, even if you have previously returned your proxy card.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This proxy statement/prospectus incorporates important business and financial information about First Bancshares and Sunshine from documents filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or SEC, that are not included in or delivered with this proxy statement/prospectus. You can obtain any of the documents filed with or furnished to the SEC by First Bancshares and Sunshine at no cost from the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. You may also request copies of these documents, including documents incorporated by reference in this proxy statement/prospectus, at no cost by contacting First Bancshares or Sunshine at the contact information set forth below:

The First Bancshares, Inc.	Sunshine Financial, Inc.
6480 U.S. Hwy, 98 West	1400 East Park Avenue
Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39402	Tallahassee, Florida 32301
Attention: Secretary	Attention: Corporate Secretary
Telephone: (601) 268-8998	Telephone: (850) 219-7200

You will not be charged for any of these documents that you request. To obtain timely delivery of these documents, you must request them no later than five business days before the date of the special meeting, or [•], 2018.

If you are a Sunshine stockholder and have any questions about the merger agreement, the merger, the Sunshine special meeting or the proxy statement/prospectus, would like additional copies of the proxy statement/prospectus, need a proxy card or need help voting your shares of Sunshine common stock, please contact Brian P. Baggett, Corporate Secretary, at (850) 219-7200.

You should rely only on the information contained in or incorporated by reference into this document. No one has been authorized to provide you with information that is different from that contained in, or incorporated by reference into, this document. This document is dated [•], 2018, and you should assume that the information in this document is accurate only as of such date. You should assume that the information incorporated by reference into this proxy statement/prospectus from another document is accurate as of the date of such other document. Neither the mailing of this document to Sunshine stockholders nor the issuance by First Bancshares of shares of First Bancshares common stock in connection with the merger will create any implication to the contrary.

This document does not constitute an offer to sell, or a solicitation of an offer to buy any securities, or the solicitation of a proxy, in any jurisdiction to or from any person to whom it is unlawful to make any such offer or solicitation in such jurisdiction. Except where the context otherwise indicates, information contained in this document regarding Sunshine has been provided by Sunshine and information contained in this document regarding First Bancshares has been provided by First Bancshares. See "Where You Can Find More Information" for more details.

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