The Ouachita Parish School Board met in regular session on Friday, January 19, 2024, at twelve (12:00) o'clock p.m. at its regular meeting place, the Ouachita Parish School Board office.

*Note: There were no comment cards completed for any agenda business item addressed in this meeting. Additionally, there were no remote requests for any agenda business item addressed in this meeting.*

Presence of the following members was verified through roll call: Tommy Comeaux, Shere May, Mike Batey, Jerry R. Hicks, Harold McCoy, Dabo Graves, and Greg Manley.

President Comeaux called the meeting to order as he welcomed visitors and guests, followed by the presentation of colors by West Ouachita High School Navy JROTC, Pledge of Allegiance led by Shere May, and the Invocation offered by West Ouachita High School student Sophia Plunk.

Jerry Hicks made the motion, seconded by Shere May, to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2023 regular meeting as written. Motion carried without opposition.

President Comeaux asked for a motion to approve the agenda, stating there was a change in the date of the meeting as well as additions under Permission to Bid, items #3, #4 and #5. Shere May made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Mike Batey. Motion carried without opposition. President Comeaux then asked for a motion to approve the revision to the agenda. Mike Batey made the motion to accept the revision to the agenda, seconded by Jerry Hicks. Motion carried unanimously. Shere May made a motion to approve the entire Agenda, seconded by Mike Batey, motion passed without opposition.

During the Personnel Report, Superintendent Guice announced Jenea Freeman as the Interim Principal of Drew Elementary beginning February 5, 2024 upon the retirement of Sharyl Boudreau and Rachel Hendrix as Interim Assistant Principal.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2024:

President Comeaux called for nominations from the floor for the election of officers for the year (2024) and Shere May moved, seconded by Jerry Hicks, that the Board retain *Tommy Comeaux as President and Greg Manley as Vice President* for the Ouachita Parish School Board for the year 2024. President Comeaux invited public comment and motion carried by all members.

Aline Smead began her recognition of Completion of Board Training Hours with a Press Release.

**The Ouachita Parish School System is proud to announce that its Board members: President Tommy Comeaux, Shere May, Mike Batey, Jerry R. Hicks, Harold McCoy, Vice President Greg Manley, and David "Dabo" Graves have complied with the Continuing Education Training requirement for 2023 according to the Louisiana Revised Statue (LSA-R.S. 17:53) enacted by our legislators and made effective January 1, 2011, with the majority earning well above the required credit hours for a combined total of 134 Continuing Learning Units.**

She also gave special recognition to Board Members, Shere May, Harold McCoy, David "Dabo" Graves and Mike Batey, who achieved the distinction of a "Certified School Board Member".

This is a program offered by the LSBA whereby a school board member is recognized for having voluntarily earned twenty or more training hours during a calendar year.

Item #3, Special Recognitions, presented by Aline Smead. The New Teacher of the Year program through the Louisiana Department of Education recognizes and celebrates exceptional educators of 1 year or less. Our New Elementary Teacher of the Year is Samantha Valentine from Woodlawn Elementary, New Middle School Teacher of the Year is Sequanna King of Riser Middle and New High School Teacher of the Year is Brittany Powell from Ouachita Parish High. These District winners will advance to the state-level competition, which will take place in Spring, 2024.

Kris Kelley, WMWO Chamber President presented Item # 4, Building Bridges Grant Awards. The recipients were, Joetta Davis, Central Elementary, Alexandra Antwine, Swayze Elementary, Russell White, Good Hope Middle and Allison Lovelady, West Monroe High. Each recipient received $500 for his or her project.

Item #5, Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, tabled until the February meeting due to presenter not being able to attend due to the date change.

Regina Mekus presented #6, Financial Report for November 30, 2023, with a General Fund Balance of $29,493,093 and M&O balance of $27,988,785. Both of these are right on track as budgeted. Please see the last page of report for 3-year comparisons.

Carrie Ferguson and Jennifer Nichols presented Item #7, Policy Consideration and Approval. The policy committee voted at their January 8, 2024 meeting to accept the policies as presented by Forethought and are now being posted and presented to the Board to consider for approval at the February meeting.

Jason Thompson presented Item # 8, Consideration and Approval of New and Updated Job Descriptions, to the Board. A motion was made by Jerry Hicks to accept the new and updated Job Descriptions as written seconded by Mike Batey. Motion carried unanimously.

Todd Guice introduced item # 9, Consideration and Approval for the formation of the Academic Bridge Coalition (ABC). This Coalition will use seven strategies to address the improvement of student achievement across the district with LDOE approval to utilize differentiated pay monies from 2023. ABC will be organized and launched in January 2024 and extend through March 2025. Shere May made a motion to approve the formation of the Coalition, seconded by Mike Batey. After Board discussion, motion carried without opposition.

Shere May made a motion to appoint TBA Studios as the architect for Item # 10, Restroom Remodel at Drew Elementary, seconded by Mike Batey. The motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Hicks made a motion to appoint Tim Brandon as the architect for Item # 11, multipurpose room at West Ridge Middle School. The motion was seconded by Mike Batey and after discussion, passed without opposition.

Tommy Comeaux presented Item # 12, Consideration and Approval to purchase properties at 615 Travis Street, 403 Register Street and 407 Register Street. After Board discussion, Shere May made a motion to approve the purchase, seconded by Jerry Hicks. Motion passed unanimously.

Steven Hemphill presented Item # 13, Construction and Renovation Projects Report. The Board discussed and accepted the report as presented.

Purchasing Agent, Bobby Jones, presented the Evaluation of Bids #1 Chiller Restoration at OPHS. Greg Manley made a motion to accept the bid from Trane seconded by Dabo Graves. Motion carried without opposition.

Bobby Jones asked permission to Bid on five line items, Addition & Restorations at Lenwil Elementary, Chromebooks, Radio/Base Stations, Playground Equipment/Special Education, and Copy paper. Jerry Hicks made the motion to grant permission to open these bids, seconded by Mike Batey. Motion passed without opposition.

In the President's Report, Mr. Comeaux thanked Steven Hemphill, Sam Johnston, Todd Guice and Tabby Truxillo for their extra work during the days we were out due to the freeze. He reminded us the next meeting is February 13, 2024 at noon.

In the Superintendent's Report, Mr. Guice thanked everyone that worked while we were out. He also thanked the Board for staying in touch and passing on information given to them during the bad weather. Mr. Guice informed us that VidioLink had eight schools completed with wiring for cameras. He also said buses are 100% complete with cameras and the target date to be complete with AC is the end of April.

There being no further business, Harold McCoy made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Jerry Hicks. Motion carried and adjourned at 12:47 p.m.

**OUACHITA PARISH SCHOOL BOARD**

Tommy Comeaux, President

**ATTEST:**

Todd Guice, Secretary

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