The Ouachita Parish School Board met in regular session on Tuesday, February 14, 2023, at twelve (12:00) o'clock p.m. at its regular meeting place, the Ouachita Parish School Board office.

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.

The meeting was called to order by President Comeaux as he welcomed visitors and guests, followed with the Invocation given by Waylon McCormick and Pledge of Allegiance led by Dabo Graves.

Shere May motioned, seconded by Dabo Graves, that the Board approve the Minutes of January 17 and 31, 2023 as written. Motion carried unanimously by all members.

Upon motion by Greg Manley, seconded by Harold McCoy, the Board approved the Agenda as presented. Motion unanimously carried by all members.

During the Personnel Report, Dr. Coker requested to open positions that are currently being filled by interim or acting designation. The positions include Construction & Maintenance Director, Safety and Security Director, Maintenance Supervisor, and Custodial Services Supervisor. Jerry Hicks moved to open the positions as stated, seconded by Mike Batey, and the motion passed unanimously.

President Comeaux introduced the first item of business—Discussion and Consideration of the Selection of School Superintendent. He announced the agenda item might be discussed in both Open Session as well as Executive Session in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Louisiana Open Meetings Law. Discussion began with audience members who completed comment request cards being allowed to speak their support to the candidate of their choice. The first speaker, Tiffany Hatten, was given three minutes to address the Board. She offered discussion and suggestion regarding the Superintendent Search, without offering support to any candidate. The next speaker, Roxy Johnston offered comments on the process and support of Mr. Ernest Reed. The next speakers—Dr. Sharilynn Loche, Mr. Shelby Ainsworth, Mrs. Marsha Baker, and Dr.

Bob Webber overwhelmingly offered their support to Mr. Todd Guice through their comments.

Once all comments were presented, President Comeaux instructed Regina Mekus to distribute voting ballots to the Board Members so they may mark their choice for Superintendent. President Comeaux announced that upon the reading of the ballots, the appointee would be named contingent upon the development, acceptance, and Board approval of a contract. The position will become effective July 5. Ms. Mekus gathered the marked ballots and read the results as follows:

Mike Batey, District C – Todd Guice
Jerry Hicks, District D – Todd Guice
Dabo Graves, District F – Todd Guice
Tommy Comeaux, District A – Todd Guice
Shere May, District B – Todd Guice
Harold McCoy, District E – Todd Guice
Greg Manley, District G – Todd Guice

President Comeaux congratulated Mr. Guice in his nomination for Superintendent of Schools. Mr. McCoy offered comments of recognition and congratulations to Mr. Guice.

Communications Coordinator Aline Smead and Superintendent Coker presented special recognition awards recognizing the School Board Members for training hour achievements. Dr. Coker read the School Board Member Training Resolution that recognized each member's achievement of receiving or exceeding the required six hours of training in 2022. Each Board Member received a certificate for the accomplishment. Next, five members were presented with the Distinguished School Board Member Award which recognizes voluntary completion of sixteen hours of approved continuing learning units in the first year of their term (2019) followed by six or more hours in each subsequent calendar year (2020, 2021, 2022). Members receiving the designation were Tommy Comeaux, David "Dabo" Graves, Shere May, Jerry Hicks, and past member Scotty Waggoner.

Mr. Schlueter presented the third and final $20,000,000 Bond Issue for the East Ouachita District. He stated that we have worked with the financial advisor Nnamdi Thompson, who was out of state and could not attend the meeting. Mr. Schlueter reported that the district maintained the AA- rating with national rating agency Standard & Poor's, which contributes greatly to lower interest rates on bond issues and accordingly lowers

costs to taxpayers on the east side. Standard & Poor's credit report for the district emphasized Ouachita Parish School System's strong reserves, fiscal responsibility, and moderate debt burden to taxpayers. The bonds were priced at a true interest cost of 3.67%, an exceptional rate that keeps the district within millage projections represented to the voters. The transaction will close on March 1 and funds will be available on that date.

Board Member Harold McCoy presented questions to Mr. Schlueter, which were clarified in response. There were no audience comment cards presented for the item.

Upon the recommendation of Mr. Grant Schlueter with the law firm Foley & Judell, L.L.P., bond counsel, Jerry Hicks moved, seconded by Harold McCoy, that the Board consider and take action on a resolution recognizing the final form and execution of the Bond Purchase Agreement in connection with the issuance and sale of General Obligation School Bonds, Series 2023, of the East Ouachita Parish School District of the Parish of Ouachita, State of Louisiana, and providing for other matters in connection therewith. The motion carried unanimously.

Assistant Superintendent Todd Guice presented the 2023-2024 School Calendar for approval. Mr. Guice explained the task of the calendar committee, which includes working around state testing, inserting holidays and professional development days, and maximizing instructional time for our students while meeting required instructional hours/days per school year. The calendar summary was reviewed and the recommendation of the committee was presented to the Board for approval. There were no audience comments for the item. Upon motion by Dabo Graves, seconded by Greg Manley, and following a brief discussion of the calendar, the motion carried unanimously.

President Comeaux requested a motion to approve the addition of Item 5 to the agenda. Harold McCoy made the motion, seconded by Dabo Graves, and with unanimous vote, the agenda was approved.

Harold McCoy requested the Board consider hiring an architect to address the condition of and provide a cost analysis for making repairs to the press box at Richwood High School using residual funds leftover from the construction of the multipurpose building. Dr. Coker offered comments regarding the project, which would be covered by

M&O funds as well as East Ouachita Bond monies. Upon motion by Harold McCoy, seconded by Dabo Graves, the unanimous decision was made to hire an architect.

Business Director Regina Mekus presented her monthly 2022-23 Interim Financial Report for the period ended December 31, 2022. For the sixth month of the fiscal year, we are ending the period at 85% of budgeted fund balance in general fund ($21 million). Ms. Mekus pointed out the budgeted fund balance is higher than it has ever been, as are expenditures due to inflation and the economy. M&O balance stands at $27 million, which are monies set aside to maintain and operate all aspects of our district, including purchasing school buses, maintaining updated technology devices, etc. Referring to the third page under debt service funds, Ms. Mekus recounted the East Ouachita bond construction showing $31 million in fund balance. Today's bond sale approval will reflect in that balance once the funds are received bringing the balance to $51 million. The final two pages show the 3-year history of the general fund balance for review. Ms. Mekus concluded her report and Shere May moved, seconded by Greg Manley, that the Board approve the 2022-23 Interim Financial Report for the period ended December 31, 2022 as presented. Motion unanimously carried by all members.

Director of Construction and Maintenance Steven Hemphill provided the Board with the Construction/Renovation Projects Report. Projects that are behind include Sterlington Middle School, Richwood High School Multipurpose Room, and West Monroe High School parking lot, all due to the weather delays. The Board discussed and accepted the report as presented.

Interim Purchasing Agent Waylon McCormick presented Evaluation of Bids beginning with Bid 17-23 for Ouachita Parish High School Additions/Alterations, recommending the Lowest Responsive Bidder of Gentry Construction at $1,546,000. Dabo Graves motioned to accept the bid, seconded by Harold McCoy. The motion passed unanimously. Bid 30-23 Security Access Points (six schools) was considered next, with recommendation of the Lowest Responsive Bidder Ragan Builders at $1,222,000. Jerry Hicks moved to accept the bid, seconded by Mike Batey, and the motion passed unanimously.

Permission to Bid was requested by Mr. McCormick for Items 1) Bid No. 31-23 U.S. Hwy 165 Turn Lanes, 2) RFP 32-23 Desktop Computers & Accessories, 3) RFP 33-23 Wireless Access Points, and 4) Bid No. 34-23 Chromebook Charging Carts. After brief discussion of the projects, President Comeaux called for a motion and Harold McCoy moved, seconded by Dabo Graves, that the Board grant permission to bid all items as presented. Motion carried unanimously by all members.

President Comeaux expressed appreciation to the Board and others who assisted in the process for selecting the new Superintendent. President Comeaux asked Mr. Guice for comments on his being chosen as Superintendent. Mr. Guice reiterated that he appreciates the honor of the appointment and is excited to move the district forward, following in the footsteps of the past Superintendents he has learned through, as well as bringing new relationships and paths to the system. President Comeaux announced the next regularly scheduled Board Meeting would be held on Tuesday, March 14, 2023 at 12:00 p.m. in the boardroom of the Central Office.

Superintendent Coker requested the Board permit opening the position of Personnel Director to replace Mr. Guice in his appointment to Superintendent. Whereas Greg Manley motioned to open the position, seconded by Jerry Hicks, the request was unanimously granted through Board vote.

There being no further business to discuss, Jerry Hicks moved, seconded by Greg Manley that the meeting adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

OUACHITA PARISH SCHOOL BOARD

Tommy Comeaux, President

ATTEST:

Don Coker, Secretary

/as