

At 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 29, 2020, Business Director Regina Mekus opened the public hearing on the proposed recommendations under consideration for the 2020 Property Tax Levy. Ms. Mekus presented two resolutions the Board will be considering for approval at its regular meeting beginning at 12:00 p.m. immediately following the public hearing on the proposed 2020 Property Tax Levy, levying additional or increased millage rates and adopting the adjusted millage rates after reassessment and rolling forward to rates not to exceed the prior year's maximum authorized rates for the purpose of raising revenue. The increase in revenue the school board would receive by recommending the prior year's maximum millages for the 2020 tax roll as allowed under state law during a period of property reassessment was discussed. The public was also reminded that proper procedures were performed to notify citizens of the public hearing according to the Open Meetings Law. A period was offered inviting the comments and questions from the audience. After receiving no comments or questions from the public, the public hearing was closed.

Following the public hearing on the proposed 2020 Property Tax Levy, the Ouachita Parish School Board met in regular session on Tuesday, September 29, 2020 at twelve (12:00) o'clock noon at its regular meeting place, the Ouachita Parish School Board office.

President Hicks called the meeting to order and welcomed visitors and guests to the meeting.

The roll was called and the following members were present: Tommy Comeaux, Shere May, Scotty Waggoner, Jerry R. Hicks, Harold McCoy, Dabo Graves and Greg Manley. There were none absent.

Board member Greg Manley led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Board member Harold McCoy gave the Invocation.

Motion by Harold McCoy, seconded by Greg Manley, to amend the Agenda to add Business Items No. 5 " Consideration and Approval of Resolution authorizing President Hicks to execute a Cash Deed, Donation, and any and all other documents and/or agreements necessary to effectuate such property purchase from CBS Interests, LLC regarding Sterlington Elementary School" and Item No. 6 Consideration and Approval of Resolution authorizing President Jerry Hicks to act for and to bind the School Board in connection with the execution of an Agreement to Purchase and Sell, Act of Irrevocable Waiver of Distance Requirement (as authorized by ordinance number 2020-07 (ABC) of the Town of Sterlington), Cash Deed and any and all other documents and/or agreements necessary to effectuate such property purchase from Stonebridge Estates, LLC regarding Sterlington Middle School. Following an offer by President Hicks for public comment, motion carried unanimously by all members present.

When President Hicks realized Business Item No. 4 was not included in Mr. McCoy's prior motion, he called for a motion to add it and Dabo Graves moved, seconded by Shere May, to add Business Item No. 4. to the Agenda with Business Items No. 5 & 6. Motion carried unanimously by all members present.

Whereby, Shere May moved, seconded by Dabo Graves, that the Board approve the Agenda as amended with the above additions of Business Items No. 4, 5 & 6. President Hicks offered public comment and motion carried unanimously by all members present.

Dr. Coker announced that the Director of Informational Technology Ken Monroe is retiring October 31, 2020 and is appointing Clint Miller to this position as Interim Director of Informational Technology, effective November 2, 2020. Whereby, the Board agreed to grant Dr. Coker permission to open this position in May 2021 for application to permanently fill this position at that time.

Following the recommendation of Mr. Grant Schlueter with the law firm Foley & Judell, L.L.P, bond counsel, Shere May moved, seconded by Scotty Waggoner, that the Board consider and take action with respect to adopting a resolution giving preliminary approval to the issuance of Sales Tax School Refunding Bonds, in one or more series, of the West Ouachita Parish School District of the Parish of Ouachita, State of Louisiana, and providing for other matters in connection therewith. This is another potential refinancing of the Series 2010 Sales Tax Bonds on the West Side. This preliminary approval resolution will permit us to file with the State Bond Commission, position us to attempt the refinancing and complete it in December of this year so it can be issued on a tax-exempt basis. The outstanding bonds are fairly short and go up to 2024 for a four-year issue. The interest rates are up to 4% and the municipal adviser estimates that this could be reduced by more than one-half the interest rate on the outstanding debt. Mr. Schlueter also mentioned that there is a cash-funded reserve fund that has been maintained in respect to this bond issue that will free up that cash which will be placed in the escrow for the refunding, if the effect of which issue will issue less bonds to refund the outstanding bonds. The projected savings over the four-year period is approximately \$356,000 based upon the current estimates. Annual savings and debt service by virtual will make it possible to be able to use that cash reserve fund is about \$344,000 per year each year for the four years. This is dependent on interest rates and where the municipal adviser estimates it is right now. But advised that the Board needs to know where they want to position themselves and suggested to plan to close this transaction in mid-December 2020 assuming the rates hold. Mr. Schlueter believes it looks like a very healthy refinancing at this point. If for some reason the rates start to go up, we will have the Bond Commission approval and will watch this constantly and will jump in when it is feasible to do so.

Business Director Regina Mekus presented two Resolutions to be considered regarding the proposed millages for the 2020 tax roll as recommended by the Finance Committee.

Following Business Director Regina Mekus' recommendation, Tommy Comeaux moved, seconded by Shere May, that the Board adopt the following Resolution No. 1:

Resolution No. 1 - **BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Ouachita Parish School Board of the Parish of Ouachita, Louisiana, in a public meeting held on September 29, 2020, which meeting was conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Law and the additional requirements of Article VII, Section 23(C) of the Louisiana Constitution and R.S. 47:1705(B), that the following **adjusted** millage rates be and they are hereby levied upon the dollar of the assessed valuation of all property subject to ad valorem taxation within said Parish for the year 2020, for the purpose of raising revenue:

MILLAGE

<u>School District Regular (Special-Constitution)</u>	<u>5.14</u>	mills
<u>School District No. 1 (Maintenance/Operations)</u>	<u>23.95</u>	mills

The foregoing resolution was read in full and the following roll-call votes on Mr. Comeaux's motion were recorded: Tommy Comeaux, yes; Shere May, yes; Scotty Waggoner, yes; Harold McCoy, yes; Dabo Graves, yes; Greg Manley, yes and Jerry Hicks, yes. The resolution was adopted by no less than two-thirds of the total membership of the taxing authority voting in favor as required by Article VII, Section 23(C) of the Louisiana Constitution and R.S. 47:17-05(B). Motion carried, with seven (7) "Yea" votes, zero (0) "Nay" votes, zero Absentees and zero (0) Abstentions following an offer by President Hicks for public comments.

Following Business Director Regina Mekus' recommendation, Harold McCoy moved, seconded by Tommy Comeaux, that the Board adopt the following Resolution No. 2:

Resolution No. 2 - **BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Ouachita Parish School Board of the Parish of Ouachita, Louisiana, in a public meeting held on September 29, 2020, which meeting was conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Law and the additional requirements of Article VII, Section 23(C) of the Louisiana Constitution and R.S. 47:1705(B), that the taxing district voted to increase the millage rates, but not in excess of the prior year's maximum rates, on all taxable property shown on the official assessment roll for the year 2020 and then collected, the revenues from said taxes shall be used only for the specific purposes for which said taxes have been levied. Said millage rate(s) are:

	<u>Adjusted Rate</u>	<u>2020 Levy</u>
<u>School District Regular (Special-Constitution)</u>	<u>5.14</u> mills	<u>5.18</u> mills
<u>School District No. 1 (Maintenance/Operations)</u>	<u>23.95</u> mills	<u>24.15</u> mills
<u>School District East Ouachita (Bond)</u>		<u>36.00</u> mills

(Rolling the prior year's rates forward will generate approximately \$22,121,141 in additional unrestricted general fund revenue for the school system and the amount of increase in taxes attributable to the millage increase is \$181,012.)

The foregoing resolution was read in full and the following roll-call votes on Mr. McCoy's motion were recorded: Tommy Comeaux, yes; Shere May, yes; Scotty Waggoner, yes; Harold McCoy, yes; Dabo Graves, yes; Greg Manley, yes and Jerry Hicks, yes. The resolution was adopted by no less than two-thirds of the total membership of the taxing authority voting in favor as required by Article VII, Section 23(C) of the Louisiana Constitution and R.S. 47:17-05(B). Motion carried, with seven (7) "Yea" votes, zero (0) "Nay" votes, zero Absentees and zero (0) Abstentions following an offer by President Hicks for public comments.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Assessor of the Parish of Ouachita shall extend upon the assessment roll for the year 2020 the taxes herein levied and the tax collector of said Parish shall collect and remit the same to said taxing authority in accordance with law.

Prior to its adoption, President Hicks read aloud the notice of emergency calling for a Declaration of Public Emergency adopting a Resolution to provide notice of such emergency as required by R.S. 38:2212P regarding loss of chiller system located at Lenwil Elementary School on September 23, 2020 causing a lack of flowing conditioned air within the school elevating the risk of spreading COVID 19 to students, teachers, faculty, and staff. Whereby, Purchasing Agent Bobby Jones emphasized the need to purchase a chiller as soon as possible and recommended that a chiller be purchased due to the need to have air flowing in the building to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 that may be present and recommended the approval of the emergency resolution to go ahead and buy the chiller. Mr. Jones also provided a copy of a quotation from a vendor that shows a turnkey price of \$89,305.00 and recommended its purchase because it can be delivered within two days. President Hicks called for a motion and Scotty Waggoner moved, seconded by Tommy Comeaux, that the Board approve the Resolution certifying the existence of a public emergency and to provide notice of such emergency as required by R.S. 38:2212P and go forward with the purchase of a Chiller/HVAC system at Lenwil Elementary School [Bid No. 21-21] because the current one is not functioning as designed and cannot be repaired creating no conditioned and circulating air within Lenwil Elementary School. Whereas, Louisiana R.S. 38:2212P (1) provides that advertisement for public bids shall not apply in public

emergencies. Therefore, the chiller quoted for purchase from Allen's Industrial Refrigeration Service (Mark Jowers) was approved as presented in the amount of \$89,305.00 (turnkey), paid with M&O funds and having a budget of \$89,000.00 [Bid No. 21-21].

The Declaration of Public Emergency Resolution was read in full and the following roll-call votes on Mr. Waggoner's motion were recorded: Tommy Comeaux, yes; Shere May, yes; Scotty Waggoner, yes; Harold McCoy, yes; Dabo Graves, yes; Greg Manley, yes and Jerry Hicks, yes. Motion carried, with seven (7) "Yea" votes, zero (0) "Nay" votes, zero Absentees and zero (0) Abstentions following an offer by President Hicks for public comments.

Prior to its approval, President Hicks read aloud, the following Resolution and Greg Manley motioned, seconded by Dabo Graves, that the Board approve the Resolution authorizing President Hicks to act for and to bind the School Board in connection with the execution of a Cash Deed, Donation, and any and all other documents and/or agreements necessary to effectuate such property purchase from CBS Interests, LLC, regarding Sterlington Elementary School. The property is located next to Sterlington Elementary School and contains approximately 5½ acres. The closing of the transaction is scheduled for next week. The land has an appraised value of \$70,000.00 per acre. The School Board is paying \$50,000.00 per acre with a \$20,000.00 per acre Act of Donation to the land owner. Motion carried unanimously following President Hick's offer for public comment.

Prior to its approval, President Hicks read aloud, the following Resolution and Greg Manley motioned, seconded by Dabo Graves, that the Board approve the Resolution authorizing President Hicks to act for and to bind the School Board in connection with the execution to Purchase and Sell, Act of Irrevocable Waiver of Distance Requirement (as authorized by ordinance number 2020-07 (ABC) of the Town of Sterlington), Cash Deed and any and all other documents and/or agreements necessary to effectuate such property purchase from Stonebridge Estates, LLC regarding Sterlington Middle School. Mr. Manley explained for the Board's information that this agreement is pertaining to the sale of the land that will be used as the site to build the new Sterlington Middle School. The Board is currently working with Stonebridge Estates, LLC to try to finalize a buy/sell agreement which also authorizes President Hicks to sign the necessary paperwork in conjunction with the buy/sell agreement concerning the waiver of the alcohol ordinance that has already been approved by the Town Counsel giving Stonebridge Estates, LLC an irrevocable waiver concerning the alcohol order of requirement. Hopefully, the transaction will be finalized before November, 2020 for a total of 40 acres at \$30,000/acre, a total cost of \$1.2 million for the land. Following an offer by President Hicks for public comment, motion unanimously carried by all members present.

On the recommendation of Purchasing Agent Bobby Jones, Scotty Waggoner moved, seconded by Sherri May, that the Board grant permission to bid a chiller for Calhoun

Elementary School, paid with M&O funds and having a budget of \$50,000.00 *[Bid No. 20-21]*.
Motion carried unanimously by all members present.

President Hicks announced that the next meeting will be held October 20 at 12:00 noon.

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Comeaux moved, seconded by Mr. Manley, that the meeting adjourn. Motion carried unanimously by all members present.

OUACHITA PARISH SCHOOL BOARD

Jerry R. Hicks, President

ATTEST:

Don Coker, Secretary

/ps