WEST VIRGINIA CODE CHAPTER 31d

WV Legislature

PART 1. SHORT TITLE, RESERVATION OF POWERS AND

CONSTRUCTION OF CHAPTER.

§31D-1-101. Short title.

This chapter is and may be cited as the "West Virginia Business Corporation Act".

WV Legislature

§31D-1-101a. Legislative acknowledgment.

The Legislature acknowledges the work and contribution to the drafting of this chapter of the late Ann Maxey, professor of law at the West Virginia University college of law.

WV Legislature

§31D-1-102. Reservation of powers.

The Legislature has power to amend or repeal all or part of this act at any time and all domestic and foreign corporations subject to this act are governed by the amendment or repeal.

WV Legislature

§31D-1-103. Construction of chapter.

In the event of any inconsistency between any of the provisions of this chapter and the provisions made for particular classes of corporations by chapters thirty-one, thirty-one-a or thirty-three of this code, the provisions contained in said chapters prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

WV Legislature

§31D-1-120. Filing requirements.

(a) A document must satisfy the requirements of this section and any other provision of this code that adds to or varies these requirements to be entitled to filing by the Secretary of State.

(b) The document to be filed must be typewritten or printed or, if electronically transmitted, it must be in a format that can be retrieved or reproduced in typewritten or printed form.

(c) The document to be filed must be in the English language: Provided, That a corporate name is not required to be in the English language if it is written in English letters or Arabic or Roman numerals: Provided, however, That the certificate of existence required of foreign corporations is not required to be in the English language if it is accompanied by a reasonably authenticated English translation.

(d) The document to be filed must be executed:

(1) By the chairman of the board of directors of a domestic or foreign corporation, by its president or by another of its officers;

(2) If directors have not been selected or the corporation has not been formed, by an incorporator; or

(3) If the corporation is in the hands of a receiver, trustee or other court-appointed fiduciary, by that fiduciary.

(e) The person executing the document to be filed shall sign it and state beneath or opposite his or her signature, his or her name and the capacity in which he or she signs. The document may contain a corporate seal, attestation, acknowledgment or verification.

(f) The document to be filed must be delivered to the office of the Secretary of State for filing. Delivery may be made by electronic transmission as permitted by the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State may require one exact or conformed copy to be delivered with the document to be filed if the document is filed in typewritten or printed form and not transmitted electronically.

(g) When a document is delivered to the office of the Secretary of State for filing, the correct filing fee and any franchise tax, license fee or penalty required by this chapter or any other provision of this code must be paid or provision for payment made in a manner permitted by the Secretary of State.

(h) In the case of service of notice and process as permitted by subsection (c), section five hundred four, article five of this chapter and subsections (d) and (e), section one thousand five hundred ten, article fifteen of this chapter, the notice and process must be filed with the Secretary of State as one original, plus two copies for each person to be served or noticed.

WV Legislature

§31D-1-121. Forms.

(a) The Secretary of State may prescribe and, upon request, furnish forms for documents required or permitted to be filed by this chapter. Use of these forms is not mandatory.

(b) The Secretary of State may adopt procedural rules in accordance with the provisions of this article governing the form for filing with, and delivery of documents to, the office of the Secretary of State under this chapter by electronic means, including facsimile and computer transmission.

WV Legislature

§31D-1-122. Filing, service and copying fees.

The Secretary of State shall collect all fees required to be charged and collected in accordance with the provisions of section one, article twelve-c, chapter eleven of this code and section two, article one, chapter fifty-nine of this code.

WV Legislature

§31D-1-123. Effective time and date of document.

(a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section and subsection (c), section one hundred twenty-four of this article, a document accepted for filing is effective:

(1) At the date and time of filing, as evidenced by means as the Secretary of State may use for the purpose of recording the date and time of filing; or

(2) At the time specified in the document as its effective time on the date it is filed.

(b) A document may specify a delayed effective time and date and if it does so, the document becomes effective at the time and date specified. If a delayed effective date but no time is specified, the document is effective at the close of business on that date. A delayed effective date for a document may not be later than the ninetieth day after the date it is filed.

WV Legislature

§31D-1-124. Correcting filed document.

(a) A domestic or foreign corporation may correct a document filed by the Secretary of State if:

(1) The document contains an inaccuracy;

(2) The document was defectively executed, attested, sealed, verified or acknowledged; or

(3) The electronic transmission was defective.

(b) A document is corrected:

(1) By preparing articles of correction that:

(A) Describe the document, including its filing date, or attach a copy of the document to the articles;

(B) Specify the inaccuracy or defect to be corrected; and (C) Correct the inaccuracy or defect; and

(2) By delivering the articles to the Secretary of State for filing.

(c) Articles of correction are effective on the effective date of the document they correct: Provided, That articles of correction are effective when filed as to persons who have relied on the uncorrected document and have been adversely affected by the correction.

WV Legislature

§31D-1-125. Filing duty of Secretary of State.

(a) If a document delivered to the office of the Secretary of State for filing satisfies the requirements of section one hundred twenty of this article, the Secretary of State shall file it.

(b) The Secretary of State files a document by recording it as filed on the date and time of receipt unless a delayed effective time is specified in the document. After filing a document, except as provided in section five hundred three, article five of this chapter and section one thousand five hundred nine, article fifteen of this chapter, the Secretary of State shall deliver to the domestic or foreign corporation or its representative a receipt for the record and the fees. Upon request and payment of a fee, the Secretary of State shall send to the requester a certified copy of the requested record.

(c) If the Secretary of State refuses to file a document, he or she shall return it to the domestic or foreign corporation or its representative within five days after the document was delivered, together with a brief, written explanation of the reason for his or her refusal.

(d) The Secretary of State's duty to file documents under this section is ministerial. His or her filing or refusing to file a document does not:

(1) Affect the validity or invalidity of the document in whole or in part;

(2) Relate to the correctness or incorrectness of information contained in the document; or

(3) Create a presumption that the document is valid or invalid or that information contained in the document is correct or incorrect.

WV Legislature

§31D-1-126. Appeal from Secretary of State's refusal to file document.

(a) If the Secretary of State refuses to file a document delivered to his or her office for filing, the domestic or foreign corporation may appeal the refusal to the circuit court within thirty days after the return of the document to the corporation. The appeal is commenced by petitioning the court to compel filing the document and by attaching to the petition the document and the Secretary of State's explanation of his or her refusal to file.

(b) The circuit court may summarily order the Secretary of State to file the document or take other action the court considers appropriate.

(c) The circuit court's final decision may be appealed to the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals as in other civil proceedings.

WV Legislature

§31D-1-127. Evidentiary effect of copy of filed document.

All courts, public offices and official bodies shall take and receive copies of documents filed in the office of the Secretary of State and certified by him or her, in accordance with the provisions of this article, as conclusive evidence that the original document is on file with the Secretary of State.

WV Legislature

§31D-1-128. Certificate of existence.

(a) Any person may request a certificate of existence for a domestic corporation or a certificate of authorization for a foreign corporation from the Secretary of State.

(b) A certificate of existence or authorization provides the following information:

(1) The domestic corporation's corporate name or the foreign corporation's corporate name used in this state;

(2) If the corporation is a domestic corporation, that the corporation is duly incorporated under the laws of this state, the date of its incorporation and the period of its duration if it is less than perpetual;

(3) If the corporation is a foreign corporation, that the corporation is authorized to transact business in this state; and

(4) If payment is reflected in the records of the Secretary of State and if nonpayment affects the existence or authorization of the domestic or foreign corporation, whether all fees, taxes and penalties owed to this state have been paid.

(c) Subject to any qualification stated in the certificate, a certificate of existence or authorization issued by the Secretary of State may be relied upon as conclusive evidence that the domestic or foreign corporation is in existence or is authorized to transact business in this state.

WV Legislature

§31D-1-129. Penalty for signing false document.

Any person who signs a document he or she knows is false in any material respect and knows that the document is to be delivered to the Secretary of State for filing is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than $1,000 or confined in the county or regional jail not more than one year, or both.

WV Legislature

PART 3. SECRETARY OF STATE.

§31D-1-130. Powers.

The Secretary of State has the power reasonably necessary to perform the duties required of him or her by this chapter. The Secretary of State has the power and authority to propose legislative rules for promulgation in accordance with the provisions of chapter twenty-nine-a of this code in order to carry out and implement the provisions of this chapter.

WV Legislature

§31D-1-131. One-stop electronic state business portal.

(a) The Secretary of State shall establish a web-based business portal to facilitate interaction among businesses and governmental agencies in West Virginia. The web-based business portal shall provide a single point-of-entry to state government for businesses based in the state and for businesses looking to establish a presence in the state. The web-based business portal shall:

(1) Provide guidance to users who want to start, operate, or expand a business in the state;

(2) Permit e-payments and provide businesses information about transaction statuses in a paperless environment;

(3) Provide business owners with the option to electronically:

(A) Make application, including the payment of fees, for permits and licenses;

(B) Make application, including the payment of fees, for the renewal of permits and licenses;

(C) File annual or biennial reports;

(D) Pay unemployment taxes;

(E) Pay sales and use taxes through a link to the web-based portal maintained by the Tax Division of the Department of Revenue for electronic payment; and

(F) Pay any other fees or remittances that the business owners are subject to under state law;

(4) Provide businesses with downloadable access to all editable forms that are necessary for compliance with all reporting and filing requirements with the following agencies:

(A) West Virginia State Tax Department;

(B) Workforce West Virginia;

(C) West Virginia Division of Labor; and

(D) West Virginia Secretary of State; and

(5) Provide for the electronic filing of documents by city, county, and local governments: *Provided*, That nothing in this section shall be construed to permit the Secretary of State to receive tax returns, or any other documents required to be filed with the State Tax Commissioner, or to require any taxpayer to file tax returns, or any other documents required to be filed with the State Tax Commissioner, with the Secretary of State. Nor shall the Secretary of State be permitted to receive payments for taxes, including interest, penalties, or additions to tax, that are required to be collected by the Tax Commissioner.

WV Legislature

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Secretary of State and the Tax Commissioner may develop policies and procedures allowing the Secretary of State to accept applications and renewals, and to collect the appropriate fee, for Business Registration Certificates. *Provided, however*, That nothing in this section shall be construed as requiring the State Tax Commissioner or the Tax Division of the Department of Revenue to disclose confidential taxpayer information to the Secretary of State.

(b) The Secretary of State shall establish a consolidated call center to be staffed by trained and knowledgeable persons who are able to assist businesses obtain information and services relating to compliance with state law.

(c) The Secretary of State shall:

(1) Develop the requirements of the web-based business portal by August 31, 2015, including, but not limited to:

(A) Establishing, through cooperative efforts, the standards and requirements necessary to design, build, implement, and maintain the business portal; and

(B) Establishing the standards and requirements necessary for a state or local agency to participate in the business portal;

(2) Coordinate and cooperate with the appropriate entities to facilitate the payment by businesses of any payments or remittances made pursuant to this section, via the web-based business portal; and

(3) Propose rules for legislative approval, in accordance with the provisions of §29a-3-1 *et seq*. of this code, to implement the provisions of this article.

WV Legislature

PART 4. VENUE.

§31D-1-140. Venue.

Unless otherwise provided by any provision of this code, any civil action or other proceeding brought pursuant to this chapter may be initiated in the circuit court of any county of this state as provided in section one, article one, chapter fifty-six of this code.

WV Legislature

§31D-1-150. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires a different meaning, the term:

(1) "Articles of incorporation" includes, but is not limited to, amended and restated articles of incorporation and articles of merger.

(2) "Authorized shares" means the shares of all classes a domestic or foreign corporation is authorized to issue.

(3) "Conspicuous" means written so that a reasonable person against whom the writing is to operate should have noticed, including, but not limited to, printing in italics or boldface or contrasting color, or typing in capitals or underlined.

(4) "Corporation" or "domestic corporation" means a corporation for profit, which is not a foreign corporation, incorporated under or subject to the provisions of this chapter.

(5) "Deliver" or "delivery" means any method of delivery used in conventional commercial practice, including, but not limited to, delivery by hand, mail, commercial delivery and electronic transmission.

(6) "Distribution" means a direct or indirect transfer of money or other property or incurrence of indebtedness by a corporation to or for the benefit of its shareholders in respect of any of its shares: Provided, That "distribution" does not include a direct or indirect transfer of a corporation's own shares. A distribution may be in the form of a declaration or payment of a dividend; a purchase, redemption or other acquisition of shares; or a distribution of indebtedness.

(7) "Effective date of notice" means the date as determined pursuant to section one hundred fifty-one of this article.

(8) "Electronic transmission" or "electronically transmitted" means any process of communication not directly involving the physical transfer of paper that is suitable for the retention, retrieval and reproduction of information by the recipient.

(9) "Employee" includes an officer and may include a director: Provided, That the director has accepted duties that make him or her also an employee.

(10) "Entity" includes corporations and foreign corporations; nonprofit corporations; profit and nonprofit unincorporated associations; limited liability companies and foreign limited liability companies; business trusts, estates, partnerships, trusts and two or more persons having a joint or common economic interest; and state, United States and foreign government.

(11) "Foreign corporation" means a corporation for profit incorporated under a law other than the laws of this state.

WV Legislature

(12) "Governmental subdivision" includes, but is not limited to, authorities, counties, districts and municipalities.

(13) "Individual" includes, but is not limited to, the estate of an incompetent or deceased individual.

(14) "Person" includes, but is not limited to, an individual and an entity.

(15) "Principal office" means the office so designated in the return required pursuant to section three, article twelve-c, chapter eleven of this code where the principal executive offices of a domestic or foreign corporation are located.

(16) "Proceeding" includes, but is not limited to, civil suits and criminal, administrative and investigatory actions.

(17) "Record date" means the date established under article six or seven of this chapter on which a corporation determines the identity of its shareholders and their shareholdings. The determinations are to be made as of the close of business on the record date unless another time for doing so is specified when the record date is fixed.

(18) "Registered agent" means the agent identified by the corporation pursuant to section five hundred one, article five of this chapter.

(19) "Registered office" means the address of the registered agent for the corporation, as provided in section five hundred one, article five of this chapter.

(20) "Secretary" means the corporate officer to whom the board of directors has delegated responsibility under subsection (c), section eight hundred forty, article eight of this chapter for custody of the minutes of the meetings of the board of directors and the meetings of the shareholders and for authenticating records of the corporation.

(21) "Shareholder" means the person in whose name shares are registered in the records of a corporation or the beneficial owner of shares to the extent of the rights granted by a nominee certificate on file with a corporation.

(22) "Shares" means the units into which the proprietary interests in a corporation are divided.

(23) "Sign" or "signature" includes, but is not limited to, any manual, facsimile, conformed or electronic signature with means to identify a record by signature, mark or other symbol, with intent to authenticate it.

(24) "State", when referring to a part of the United States, includes a state and commonwealth and a territory and insular possession of the United States and their agencies and governmental subdivisions.

WV Legislature

(25) "Subscriber" means a person who subscribes for shares in a corporation, whether before or after incorporation.

(26) "United States" includes, but is not limited to, districts, authorities, bureaus, commissions, departments and any other agency of the United States.

(27) "Voting group" means all shares of one or more classes or series that, pursuant to the articles of incorporation or this chapter, are entitled to vote and be counted together collectively on a matter at a meeting of shareholders. All shares entitled by the articles of incorporation or this chapter to vote generally on the matter are for that purpose a single voting group.

(28) "Voting power" means the current power to vote in the election of directors.

WV Legislature

§31D-1-151. Notice.

(a) Notice under this chapter must be in writing unless oral notice is reasonable under the circumstances. Notice by electronic transmission is to be considered written notice.

(b) Notice may be communicated in person; by mail or other method of delivery; or by telephone, voice mail or other electronic means. If these forms of personal notice are impracticable, notice may be communicated by a newspaper of general circulation in the area where published, or by radio, television or other form of public broadcast communication.

(c) Written notice by a domestic or foreign corporation to its shareholder, if in a comprehensible form, is effective: (1) Upon deposit in the United States mail, if mailed postpaid and correctly addressed to the shareholder's address shown in the corporation's current record of shareholders; or (2) when electronically transmitted to the shareholder in a manner authorized by the shareholder.

(d) Written notice to a domestic or foreign corporation authorized to transact business in this state may be addressed to its registered agent at its registered office or to the corporation or its secretary at its principal office shown in its most recent return required pursuant to section three, article twelve-c, chapter eleven of this code or, in the case of a foreign corporation that has not yet delivered a return, in its application for a certificate of authority.

(e) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, written notice, if in a comprehensible form, is effective at the earliest of the following:

(1) When received;

(2) Five days after its deposit in the United States mail, if mailed postpaid and correctly addressed; or

(3) On the date shown on the return receipt, if sent by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, and the receipt is signed by or on behalf of the addressee.

(f) Oral notice is effective when communicated, if communicated in a comprehensible manner.

(g) If other provisions of this chapter prescribe notice requirements for particular circumstances, those requirements govern. If articles of incorporation or bylaws prescribe notice requirements, not inconsistent with this section or other provisions of this chapter, those requirements govern.

WV Legislature

§31D-1-152. Number of shareholders.

(a) For purposes of this chapter, the following, identified as a shareholder in a corporation's current record of shareholders, constitutes one shareholder:

(1) Three or fewer coowners;

(2) A corporation, partnership, trust, estate or other entity; or

(3) The trustees, guardians, custodians or other fiduciaries of a single trust, estate or account.

(b) For purposes of this chapter, shareholdings registered in substantially similar names constitute one shareholder if it is reasonable to believe that the names represent the same person.

WV Legislature

§31D-2-201. Incorporators.

One or more persons may act as the incorporator or incorporators of a corporation by delivering articles of incorporation to the Secretary of State for filing.

WV Legislature

§31D-2-202. Articles of incorporation.

(a) The articles of incorporation must set forth:

(1) A corporate name for the corporation that satisfies the requirements of section four hundred one, article four of this chapter;

(2) The number of shares the corporation is authorized to issue, the par value of each of the shares or a statement that all shares are without par value;

(3) The street address of the corporation's initial registered office, if any, and the name of its initial registered agent at that office, if any;

(4) The name and address of each incorporator;

(5) The purpose or purposes for which the corporation is organized;

(6) The mailing address of the corporation's principal office; and

(7) An e-mail address where informational notices and reminders of annual filings may be sent, unless there is a technical inability to comply.

(b) The articles of incorporation may set forth:

(1) The names and addresses of the individuals who are to serve as the initial directors;

(2) Provisions not inconsistent with law regarding:

(A) Managing the business and regulating the affairs of the corporation;

(B) Defining, limiting and regulating the powers of the corporation, its board of directors and shareholders; or

(C) The imposition of personal liability on shareholders for the debts of the corporation to a specified extent and upon specified conditions;

(3) Any provision that, under this chapter, is required or permitted to be set forth in the bylaws;

(4) A provision eliminating or limiting the personal liability of a director to the corporation or its stockholders for monetary damages for breach of fiduciary duty as a director: Provided, That a provision may not eliminate or limit the liability of a director: (A) For any breach of the director's duty of loyalty to the corporation or its stockholders; (B) for acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law; (C) under section eight hundred thirty-three, article eight of this chapter for unlawful distributions; or (D) for any transaction from which the director derived an improper personal benefit. No provision may eliminate or limit the liability of a director for any act or

WV Legislature

omission occurring prior to the date when that provision becomes effective; and

(5) A provision permitting or making obligatory indemnification of a director for liability as that term is defined in section eight hundred fifty, article eight of this chapter to any person for any action taken, or any failure to take any action, as a director except liability for: (A) Receipt of a financial benefit to which he or she is not entitled; (B) an intentional infliction of harm on the corporation or its shareholders; (C) a violation of section eight hundred thirty-three, article eight of this chapter for unlawful distributions; or (D) an intentional violation of criminal law.

(c) The articles of incorporation need not set forth any of the corporate powers enumerated in this chapter.

WV Legislature

§31D-2-203. Incorporation.

(a) Unless a delayed effective date is specified, the corporate existence begins when the articles of incorporation are filed.

(b) The Secretary of State's filing of the articles of incorporation is conclusive proof that the incorporators satisfied all conditions precedent to incorporation except in a proceeding by the state to cancel or revoke the incorporation or involuntarily dissolve the corporation.

WV Legislature

§31D-2-204. Organization of corporation.

(a) After incorporation:

(1) If initial directors are named in the articles of incorporation, the initial directors shall hold an organizational meeting, at the call of a majority of the directors, to complete the organization of the corporation by appointing officers, adopting bylaws and carrying on any other business brought before the meeting; or

(2) If initial directors are not named in the articles, the incorporator or incorporators shall hold an organizational meeting at the call of a majority of the incorporators:

(A) To elect directors and complete the organization of the corporation; or

(B) To elect a board of directors who shall complete the organization of the corporation.

(b) Action required or permitted by this chapter to be taken by incorporators at an organizational meeting may be taken without a meeting if the action taken is evidenced by one or more written consents describing the action taken and signed by each incorporator.

(c) An organizational meeting may be held in or out of this state.

WV Legislature

§31D-2-205. Bylaws.

(a) The incorporators or board of directors of a corporation shall adopt initial bylaws for the corporation.

(b) The bylaws of a corporation may contain any provision for managing the business and regulating the affairs of the corporation that is not inconsistent with law or the articles of incorporation.

WV Legislature

§31D-2-206. Emergency bylaws.

(a) Unless the articles of incorporation provide otherwise, the board of directors of a corporation may adopt bylaws to be effective only in an emergency defined in subsection (d) of this section. The emergency bylaws, which are subject to amendment or repeal by the shareholders, may make all provisions necessary for managing the corporation during the emergency, including:

(1) Procedures for calling a meeting of the board of directors;

(2) Quorum requirements for the meeting; and

(3) Designation of additional or substitute directors.

(b) All provisions of the regular bylaws consistent with the emergency bylaws remain effective during the emergency. The emergency bylaws are not effective after the emergency ends.

(c) Corporate action taken in good faith in accordance with the emergency bylaws:

(1) Binds the corporation; and

(2) May not be used to impose liability on a corporate director, officer, employee or agent.

(d) An emergency exists for purposes of this section if a quorum of the corporation's directors cannot readily be assembled because of some catastrophic event.

WV Legislature

§31D-3-301. Purposes.

(a) Every corporation incorporated under this chapter has the purpose of engaging in any lawful business unless a more limited purpose is set forth in the articles of incorporation.

(b) A corporation engaging in a business that is subject to regulation under another statute of this state may incorporate under this chapter only if permitted by, and subject to all limitations of, the other statute.

WV Legislature

§31D-3-302. General powers.

Unless its articles of incorporation provide otherwise, every corporation has perpetual duration and succession in its corporate name and has the same powers as an individual to do all things necessary or convenient to carry out its business and affairs, including, without limitation, power:

(1) To sue and be sued, complain and defend in its corporate name;

(2) To have a corporate seal, which may be altered at will, and to use it, or a facsimile of it, by impressing or affixing it or in any other manner reproducing it;

(3) To make and amend bylaws, not inconsistent with its articles of incorporation or with the laws of this state, for managing the business and regulating the affairs of the corporation;

(4) To purchase, receive, lease or otherwise acquire and own, hold, improve, use and otherwise deal with real or personal property, or any legal or equitable interest in property, wherever located;

(5) To sell, convey, mortgage, pledge, lease, exchange and otherwise dispose of all or any part of its property;

(6) To purchase, receive, subscribe for or otherwise acquire; own, hold, vote, use, sell, mortgage, lend, pledge or otherwise dispose of; and deal in and with shares or other interests in, or obligations of, any other entity;

(7) To make contracts and guarantees; incur liabilities; borrow money; issue its notes, bonds and other obligations which may be convertible into or include the option to purchase other securities of the corporation; and secure any of its obligations by mortgage, deed of trust or pledge of any of its property, franchises or income;

(8) To lend money, invest and reinvest its funds and receive and hold real and personal property as security for repayment;

(9) To be a promoter, partner, member, associate or manager of any partnership, joint venture, trust or other entity;

(10) To conduct its business, locate offices and exercise the powers granted by this chapter within or without this state;

(11) To elect directors and appoint officers, employees and agents of the corporation; define their duties; fix their compensation; and lend them money and credit;

(12) To pay pensions and establish pension plans, pension trusts, profit-sharing plans, share bonus plans, share option plans and benefit or incentive plans for any or all of its current or former directors, officers, employees and agents;

WV Legislature

(13) To make donations for the public welfare or for charitable, scientific or educational purposes and for other purposes that further the corporate interest;

(14) To transact any lawful business that will aid governmental policy; and

(15) To make payments or donations, or do any other act, not inconsistent with law, that furthers the business and affairs of the corporation.

WV Legislature

§31D-3-303. Emergency powers.

(a) In anticipation of or during an emergency defined in subsection (d) of this section, the board of directors of a corporation may:

(1) Modify lines of succession to accommodate the incapacity of any director, officer, employee or agent; and

(2) Relocate the principal office, designate alternative principal offices or regional offices or authorize the officers to do so.

(b) During an emergency defined in subsection (d) of this section, unless emergency bylaws provide otherwise:

(1) Notice of a meeting of the board of directors need be given only to those directors whom it is practicable to reach and may be given in any practicable manner, including by publication and radio; and

(2) One or more officers of the corporation present at a meeting of the board of directors may be deemed to be directors for the meeting, in order of rank and within the same rank in order of seniority, as necessary to achieve a quorum.

(c) Corporate action taken in good faith during an emergency under this section to further the ordinary business affairs of the corporation:

(1) Binds the corporation; and

(2) May not be used to impose liability on a corporate director, officer, employee or agent.

(d) An emergency exists for purposes of this section if a quorum of the corporation's directors cannot readily be assembled because of some catastrophic event.

WV Legislature

§31D-3-304. Ultra vires.

(a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, the validity of corporate action may not be challenged on the ground that the corporation lacks or lacked power to act.

(b) A corporation's power to act may be challenged:

(1) In a proceeding by a shareholder against the corporation to enjoin the act;

(2) In a proceeding by the corporation, directly, derivatively or through a receiver, trustee or other legal representative, against an incumbent or former director, officer, employee or agent of the corporation; or

(3) In a proceeding by the Attorney General under section one thousand four hundred thirty, article fourteen of this chapter.

(c) In a shareholder's proceeding under subdivision (1), subsection (b) of this section to enjoin an unauthorized corporate act, the circuit court may enjoin or set aside the act, if equitable and if all affected persons are parties to the proceeding, and may award damages for loss, except loss of anticipated profits, suffered by the corporation or another party because of enjoining the unauthorized act.

WV Legislature

§31D-4-401. Corporate name.

(a) A corporate name:

(1) Must contain the word "corporation", "incorporated", "company" or "limited", or the abbreviation "corp.", "inc.", "co." or "ltd.", or words or abbreviations of like import in another language; and

(2) May not contain language stating or implying that the corporation is organized for a purpose other than that permitted by section three hundred one, article three of this chapter and its articles of incorporation.

(b) Except as authorized by subsections (c) and (d) of this section, a corporate name must be distinguishable upon the records of the Secretary of State from:

(1) The corporate name of a corporation incorporated or authorized to transact business in this state;

(2) A corporate name reserved or registered under section four hundred three or four hundred four of this article;

(3) The fictitious name adopted by a foreign corporation authorized to transact business in this state because its real name is unavailable;

(4) The corporate name of a nonprofit corporation incorporated or authorized to transact business in this state; and

(5) The name of any other entity whose name is carried in the records of the Secretary of State.

(c) A corporation may apply to the Secretary of State for authorization to use a name that is not distinguishable upon his or her records from one or more of the names described in subsection (b) of this section. The Secretary of State shall authorize use of the name applied for if:

(1) The other corporation consents to the use in writing and submits an undertaking in form satisfactory to the Secretary of State to change the name so that it is distinguishable upon the records of the Secretary of State from the name applied for; or

(2) The applicant delivers to the Secretary of State a certified copy of the final judgment of a court of competent jurisdiction establishing the applicant's right to use the name applied for in this state.

(d) A corporation may use the name, including the fictitious name, of another domestic or foreign corporation that is used in this state if the other corporation is incorporated or authorized to transact business in this state and the proposed user corporation:

WV Legislature

(1) Has merged with the other corporation;

(2) Has been formed by reorganization of the other corporation; or

(3) Has acquired all or substantially all of the assets, including the corporate name, of the other corporation.

(e) This chapter does not control the use of fictitious names.

WV Legislature

§31D-4-402. Use of the words "corporation", "incorporated" or "limited"; prohibitions; penalties.

(a) No person may use the word "corporation" or "incorporated" or any abbreviation of these words in any trade name, business or other organization name unless the name is used by a domestic or foreign corporation authorized by the Secretary of State to transact business in West Virginia under the provisions of this chapter or chapter thirty-one-e of this code.

(b) No person may use the word "limited" or any abbreviation of the word "limited" in any trade name, business or other organization name unless the name is used by a domestic or foreign corporation authorized by the Secretary of State to transact business in West Virginia under the provisions of this chapter, chapter thirty-one-b, thirty-one-e or forty-seven of this code.

(c) The Tax Commissioner may not issue any business registration certificate under the provisions of article twelve, chapter eleven of this code to any business if the business name includes any of the words or their abbreviations as set forth in subsection (a) or (b) of this section unless the business is a domestic or foreign corporation or domestic or foreign nonprofit corporation.

(d) Any person who unlawfully uses any one or more of the prescribed words or their abbreviations as set forth in subsection (a) or (b) of this section is to be deemed to be acting as a corporation without authority of law and subject to an action in quo warranto as provided in article two, chapter fifty-three of this code.

(e) Any person who violates the provisions of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not less than $500 nor more than $1,000 or confined in the county or regional jail not more than thirty days, or both.

(f) The provisions of this section do not apply to businesses in existence prior to July 1, 1988.

WV Legislature

§31D-4-403. Reserved name.

(a) A person may reserve the exclusive use of a corporate name, including a fictitious name for a foreign corporation whose corporate name is not available, by delivering an application to the Secretary of State for filing. The application must set forth the name and address of the applicant and the name proposed to be reserved. If the Secretary of State finds that the corporate name applied for is available, he or she shall reserve the name for the applicant's exclusive use for a nonrenewable one hundred twenty-day period.

(b) The owner of a reserved corporate name may transfer the reservation to another person by delivering to the Secretary of State a signed notice of the transfer that states the name and address of the transferee.

WV Legislature

§31D-4-404. Registered name.

(a) A foreign corporation may register its corporate name, or its corporate name with any addition required by section one thousand five hundred six, article fifteen of this chapter, if the name is distinguishable upon the records of the Secretary of State from the corporate names that are not available under subsection (b), section four hundred one of this article.

(b) A foreign corporation registers its corporate name, or its corporate name with any addition required by section one thousand five hundred six, article fifteen of this chapter, by delivering to the Secretary of State for filing an application:

(1) Setting forth its corporate name, or its corporate name with any addition required by section one thousand five hundred six, article fifteen of this chapter, the state or country and date of its incorporation and a brief description of the nature of the business in which it is engaged; and

(2) Accompanied by a certificate of existence, or a document of similar import, from the state or country of incorporation.

(c) The name is registered for the applicant's exclusive use upon the effective date of the application.

(d) A foreign corporation whose registration is effective may renew it for successive years by delivering to the Secretary of State for filing a renewal application, which complies with the requirements of subsection (b) of this section, between October 1, and December 31, of the preceding year. The renewal application when filed renews the registration for the following calendar year.

(e) A foreign corporation whose registration is effective may qualify as a foreign corporation under the registered name or consent in writing to the use of that name by a corporation incorporated under this chapter or by another foreign corporation authorized to transact business in this state. The registration terminates when the domestic corporation is incorporated or the foreign corporation qualifies or consents to the qualification of another foreign corporation under the registered name.

WV Legislature

§31D-5-501. Registered office and registered agent.

Each corporation may continuously maintain in this state:

(1) A registered office that may be the same as any of its places of business; and

(2) A registered agent, who may be:

(A) An individual who resides in this state and whose business office is identical with the registered office;

(B) A domestic corporation or domestic nonprofit corporation whose business office is identical with the registered office; or

(C) A foreign corporation or foreign nonprofit corporation authorized to transact business in this state whose business office is identical with the registered office.

WV Legislature

§31D-5-502. Change of registered office or registered agent.

(a) A corporation may change its registered office or registered agent by delivering to the Secretary of State for filing a statement of change that sets forth:

(1) The name of the corporation;

(2) The mailing address or description of physical location of its current registered office;

(3) If the current registered office is to be changed, the street address or description of physical location of the new registered office;

(4) The name of its current registered agent;

(5) If the current registered agent is to be changed, the name of the new registered agent and the new agent's written consent, either on the statement or attached to it, to the appointment; and

(6) That after the change or changes are made, the mailing addresses of its registered office and the business office of its registered agent will be identical.

(b) If a registered agent changes the mailing address of his or her business office, he or she may change the mailing address of the registered office of any corporation for which he or she is the registered agent by notifying the corporation in writing of the change and signing, either manually or in facsimile, and delivering to the Secretary of State for filing a statement that complies with the requirements of subsection (a) of this section and recites that the corporation has been notified of the change.

WV Legislature

§31D-5-503. Resignation of registered agent.

(a) A registered agent may resign his or her agency appointment by signing and delivering to the Secretary of State for filing a statement of resignation. The statement may include a statement that the registered office is also discontinued.

(b) After filing the statement, the Secretary of State shall mail a copy of the filed statement of resignation to the corporation at its principal office.

(c) The agency appointment is terminated, and the registered office is discontinued if provision for its discontinuation is made, on the thirty-first day after the date on which the statement was filed.

WV Legislature

§31D-5-504. Service on corporation.

(a) A corporation's registered agent is the corporation's agent for service of process, notice or demand required or permitted by law to be served on the corporation.

(b) If a corporation has no registered agent, or the agent cannot with reasonable diligence be served, the corporation may be served by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, addressed to the secretary of the corporation at its principal office. Service is perfected under this subsection at the earliest of:

(1) The date the corporation receives the mail;

(2) The date shown on the return receipt, if signed on behalf of the corporation; or

(3) Five days after its deposit in the United States mail, as evidenced by the postmark, if mailed postpaid and correctly addressed.

(c) In addition to the methods of service on a corporation provided in subsections (a) and (b) of this section, the Secretary of State is hereby constituted the attorney-in-fact for and on behalf of each corporation created pursuant to the provisions of this chapter. The Secretary of State has the authority to accept service of notice and process on behalf of each corporation and is an agent of the corporation upon whom service of notice and process may be made in this state for and upon each corporation. No act of a corporation appointing the Secretary of State as attorney-in-fact is necessary. Service of any process, notice or demand on the Secretary of State may be made by delivering to and leaving with the Secretary of State the original process, notice or demand and two copies of the process, notice or demand for each defendant, along with the fee required by section two, article one, chapter fifty-nine of this code: Provided, That with regard to a class action suit in which all defendants are to be served with the same process, notice or demand, service may be made by filing with the Secretary of State the original process, notice or demand and one copy for each named defendant. Immediately after being served with or accepting any process or notice, the Secretary of State shall: (1) File in his or her office a copy of the process or notice, endorsed as of the time of service or acceptance; (2) transmit one copy of the process or notice by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, by a means which may include electronic issuance and acceptance of electronic return receipts, to: (A) The corporation's registered agent; or (B) if there is no registered agent, to the individual whose name and address was last given to the Secretary of State's office as the person to whom notice and process are to be sent and if no person has been named, to the principal office of the corporation as that address was last given to the Secretary of State's office. If no address is available on record with the Secretary of State, then to the address provided on the original process, notice or demand, if available; and (3) transmit the original process, notice or demand to the clerk's office of the court from which the process, notice or demand was issued. Service or acceptance of process or notice is sufficient if return receipt is signed by an agent or employee of the corporation, or the registered or certified mail sent by the Secretary of State is refused by the addressee and the registered or certified mail is

WV Legislature

returned to the Secretary of State, or to his or her office, showing the stamp of the United States Postal Service that delivery has been refused, and the return receipt or registered or certified mail is received by the Secretary of State by a means which may include electronic issuance and acceptance of electronic return receipts. After receiving verification from the United States Postal Service that acceptance of process, notice or demand has been signed, the Secretary of State shall notify the clerk's office of the court from which the process, notice or demand was issued by a means which may include electronic notification. If the process, notice or demand was refused or undeliverable by the United States Postal Service the Secretary of State shall create a preservation duplicate from which a reproduction of the stored record may be retrieved which truly and accurately depicts the image of the original record. The Secretary of State may destroy or otherwise dispose of the original returned or undeliverable mail. Written notice of the action by the Secretary of State must then be provided by certified mail, return receipt requested, facsimile, or by electronic mail, to the clerk's office of the court from which the process, notice or demand was issued. No process or notice may be served on the Secretary of State or accepted by him or her less than ten days before the return day of the process or notice. The court may order continuances as may be reasonable to afford each defendant opportunity to defend the action or proceedings.

(d) This section does not prescribe the only means, or necessarily the required means, of serving a corporation.

WV Legislature

PART 1. SHARES.

§31D-6-601. Authorized shares.

(a) The articles of incorporation must prescribe the classes of shares and the number of shares of each class that the corporation is authorized to issue. If more than one class of shares is authorized, the articles of incorporation must prescribe a distinguishing designation for each class and, prior to the issuance of shares of a class, the preferences, limitations and relative rights of that class must be described in the articles of incorporation. All shares of a class must have preferences, limitations and relative rights identical with those of other shares of the same class except to the extent otherwise permitted by section six hundred two of this article.

(b) The articles of incorporation must authorize: (1) One or more classes of shares that together have unlimited voting rights; and (2) one or more classes of shares which may be the same class or classes as those with voting rights that together are entitled to receive the net assets of the corporation upon dissolution.

(c) The articles of incorporation may authorize one or more classes of shares that:

(1) Have special, conditional or limited voting rights, or no right to vote, except to the extent prohibited by this chapter;

(2) Are redeemable or convertible as specified in the articles of incorporation: (A) At the option of the corporation, the shareholder or another person or upon the occurrence of a designated event; (B) for cash, indebtedness, securities or other property; or (C) in a designated amount or in an amount determined in accordance with a designated formula or by reference to extrinsic data or events;

(3) Entitle the holders to distributions calculated in any manner, including dividends that may be cumulative, noncumulative or partially cumulative; or

(4) Have preference over any other class of shares with respect to distributions, including dividends and distributions upon the dissolution of the corporation.

(d) The description of the designations, preferences, limitations and relative rights of share classes in subsection (c) of this section is not exhaustive.

WV Legislature

§31D-6-602. Terms of class or series determined by board of directors.

(a) If the articles of incorporation provide, the board of directors may determine, in whole or in part, the preferences, limitations and relative rights within the limits set forth in section six hundred one of this article of: (1) Any class of shares before the issuance of any shares of that class; or (2) one or more series within a class before the issuance of any shares of that series.

(b) Each series of a class must be given a distinguishing designation.

(c) All shares of a series must have preferences, limitations and relative rights identical with those of other shares of the same series and, except to the extent otherwise provided in the description of the series, with those of other series of the same class.

(d) Before issuing any shares of a class or series created under this section, the corporation must deliver to the Secretary of State for filing articles of amendment, which are effective without shareholder action, that set forth:

(1) The name of the corporation;

(2) The text of the amendment determining the terms of the class or series of shares;

(3) The date it was adopted; and

(4) A statement that the amendment was duly adopted by the board of directors.

WV Legislature

§31D-6-603. Issued and outstanding shares.

(a) A corporation may issue the number of shares of each class or series authorized by the articles of incorporation. Shares that are issued are outstanding shares until they are reacquired, redeemed, converted or canceled.

(b) The reacquisition, redemption, or conversion of outstanding shares is subject to the limitations of subsection (c) of this section and section six hundred forty of this article.

(c) At all times that shares of the corporation are outstanding, one or more shares that together have unlimited voting rights and one or more shares that together are entitled to receive the net assets of the corporation upon dissolution must be outstanding.

WV Legislature

§31D-6-604. Fractional shares.

(a) A corporation may:

(1) Issue fractions of a share or pay in money the value of fractions of a share;

(2) Arrange for disposition of fractional shares by the shareholders; or

(3) Issue scrip in registered or bearer form entitling the holder to receive a full share upon surrendering enough scrip to equal a full share.

(b) Each certificate representing scrip must be conspicuously labeled "scrip" and must contain the information required by subsection (b), section six hundred twenty-five of this article.

(c) The holder of a fractional share is entitled to exercise the rights of a shareholder, including the right to vote, to receive dividends and to participate in the assets of the corporation upon liquidation. The holder of scrip is not entitled to any of these rights unless the scrip provides for them.

(d) The board of directors may authorize the issuance of scrip subject to any condition considered desirable, including:

(1) That the scrip will become void if not exchanged for full shares before a specified date; and

(2) That the shares for which the scrip is exchangeable may be sold and the proceeds paid to the scripholders.

WV Legislature

PART 2. ISSUANCE OF SHARES.

§31D-6-620. Subscription for shares before incorporation.

(a) A subscription for shares entered into before incorporation is irrevocable for six months unless the subscription agreement provides a longer or shorter period or all the subscribers agree to revocation.

(b) The board of directors may determine the payment terms of subscription for shares that were entered into before incorporation, unless the subscription agreement specifies them. A call for payment by the board of directors must be uniform so far as practicable as to all shares of the same class or series unless the subscription agreement specifies otherwise.

(c) Shares issued pursuant to subscriptions entered into before incorporation are fully paid and nonassessable when the corporation receives the consideration specified in the subscription agreement.

(d) If a subscriber defaults in payment of money or property under a subscription agreement entered into before incorporation, the corporation may collect the amount owed as any other debt. Alternatively, unless the subscription agreement provides otherwise, the corporation may rescind the agreement and may sell the shares if the debt remains unpaid for more than twenty days after the corporation sends written demand for payment to the subscriber.

(e) A subscription agreement entered into after incorporation is a contract between the subscriber and the corporation subject to section six hundred twenty-one of this article.

WV Legislature

§31D-6-621. Issuance of shares.

(a) The powers granted in this section to the board of directors may be reserved to the shareholders by the articles of incorporation.

(b) The board of directors may authorize shares to be issued for consideration consisting of any tangible or intangible property or benefit to the corporation, including cash, promissory notes, services performed, contracts for services to be performed or other securities of the corporation.

(c) Before the corporation issues shares, the board of directors must determine that the consideration received or to be received for shares to be issued is adequate. That determination by the board of directors is conclusive insofar as the adequacy of consideration for the issuance of shares relates to whether the shares are validly issued, fully paid and nonassessable.

(d) When the corporation receives the consideration for which the board of directors authorized the issuance of shares, the shares issued are fully paid and nonassessable.

(e) The corporation may place in escrow shares issued for a contract for future services or benefits or a promissory note, or make other arrangements to restrict the transfer of the shares, and may credit distributions in respect of the shares against their purchase price until the services are performed, the note is paid or the benefits received. If the services are not performed, the note is not paid or the benefits are not received, the shares escrowed or restricted and the distributions credited may be canceled in whole or in part.

(f) An issuance of shares or other securities convertible into or rights exercisable for shares, in a transaction or a series of integrated transactions, requires approval of the shareholders at a meeting at which a quorum exists consisting of at least a majority of the votes entitled to be cast on the matter, if:

(1) The shares, other securities or rights are issued for consideration other than cash or cash equivalents; and

(2) The voting power of shares that are issued and issuable as a result of the transaction or series of integrated transactions will comprise more than twenty percent of the voting power of the shares of the corporation that were outstanding immediately before the transaction.

(g) As used in subsection (f) of this section:

(1) For purposes of determining the voting power of shares issued and issuable as a result of a transaction or series of integrated transactions, the voting power of shares is the greater of: (A) The voting power of the shares to be issued; or (B) the voting power of the shares that would be outstanding after giving effect to the conversion of convertible shares and other securities and the exercise of rights to be issued.

WV Legislature

(2) A series of transactions is integrated if consummation of one transaction is made contingent on consummation of one or more of the other transactions.

WV Legislature

§31D-6-622. Liability of shareholders.

(a) A purchaser from a corporation of its own shares is not liable to the corporation or its creditors with respect to the shares except to pay the consideration for which the shares were authorized to be issued pursuant to section six hundred twenty-one of this article or specified in the subscription agreement entered pursuant to section six hundred twenty of this article.

(b) Unless otherwise provided in the articles of incorporation, a shareholder of a corporation is not personally liable for the acts or debts of the corporation except that he or she may become personally liable by reason of his or her own acts or conduct.

WV Legislature

§31D-6-623. Share dividends.

(a) Unless the articles of incorporation provide otherwise, shares may be issued pro rata and without consideration to the corporation's shareholders or to the shareholders of one or more classes or series. An issuance of shares under this subsection is a share dividend.

(b) Shares of one class or series may not be issued as a share dividend in respect of shares of another class or series unless: (1) The articles of incorporation authorize; (2) a majority of the votes entitled to be cast by the class or series to be issued approve the issue; or (3) there are no outstanding shares of the class or series to be issued.

(c) If the board of directors does not fix the record date for determining shareholders entitled to a share dividend, it is the date the board of directors authorizes the share dividend.

WV Legislature

§31D-6-624. Share options.

A corporation may issue rights, options or warrants for the purchase of shares of the corporation. The board of directors shall determine the terms upon which the rights, options or warrants are issued, their form and content, and the consideration for which the shares are to be issued.

WV Legislature

§31D-6-625. Form and content of certificates.

(a) Shares may, but need not, be represented by certificates. Unless this chapter or another provision of this code expressly provides otherwise, the rights and obligations of shareholders are identical whether or not their shares are represented by certificates.

(b) At a minimum each share certificate must state on its face:

(1) The name of the issuing corporation and that it is organized under the law of this state;

(2) The name of the person to whom issued; and

(3) The number and class of shares and the designation of the series, if any, the certificate represents.

(c) If the issuing corporation is authorized to issue different classes of shares or different series within a class, the designations, relative rights, preferences and limitations applicable to each class and the variations in rights, preferences and limitations determined for each series and the authority of the board of directors to determine variations for future series must be summarized on the front or back of each certificate. Alternatively, each certificate may state conspicuously on its front or back that the corporation will furnish the shareholder this information on request in writing and without charge.

(d) Each share certificate: (1) Must be signed, either manually or in facsimile, by two officers designated in the bylaws or by the board of directors; and (2) may bear the corporate seal or its facsimile.

(e) If the person who signed, either manually or in facsimile, a share certificate no longer holds office when the certificate is issued, the certificate remains valid.

WV Legislature

§31D-6-626. Shares without certificates.

(a) Unless the articles of incorporation or bylaws provide otherwise, the board of directors of a corporation may authorize the issue of some or all of the shares of any or all of its classes or series without certificates. The authorization does not affect shares already represented by certificates until they are surrendered to the corporation.

(b) Within a reasonable time after the issue or transfer of shares without certificates, the corporation shall send the shareholder a written statement of the information required on certificates by subsections (b) and (c), section six hundred twenty-five of this article and, if applicable, section six hundred twenty-seven of this article.

WV Legislature

§31D-6-627. Restriction on transfer of shares and other securities.

(a) The articles of incorporation, bylaws, an agreement among shareholders or an agreement between shareholders and the corporation may impose restrictions on the transfer or registration of transfer of shares of the corporation. A restriction does not affect shares issued before the restriction was adopted unless the holders of the shares are parties to the restriction agreement or voted in favor of the restriction.

(b) A restriction on the transfer or registration of transfer of shares is valid and enforceable against the holder or a transferee of the holder if the restriction is authorized by this section and its existence is noted conspicuously on the front or back of the certificate or is contained in the information statement required by subsection (b), section six hundred twenty-six of this article. Unless a restriction is noted as required by this subsection, a restriction is not enforceable against a person without knowledge of the restriction.

(c) A restriction on the transfer or registration of transfer of shares is authorized:

(1) To maintain the corporation's status when it is dependent on the number or identity of its shareholders;

(2) To preserve exemptions under federal or state securities law; or

(3) For any other reasonable purpose.

(d) A restriction on the transfer or registration of transfer of shares may:

(1) Obligate the shareholder first to offer the corporation or other persons an opportunity to acquire the restricted shares;

(2) Obligate the corporation or other persons to acquire the restricted shares;

(3) Require the corporation, the holders of any class of its shares or another person to approve the transfer of the restricted shares, if the requirement is not manifestly unreasonable; or

(4) Prohibit the transfer of the restricted shares to designated persons or classes of persons, if the prohibition is not manifestly unreasonable.

(e) For purposes of this section, "shares" includes a security convertible into or carrying a right to subscribe for or acquire shares.

WV Legislature

§31D-6-628. Expense of issue.

A corporation may pay the expenses of selling or underwriting its shares, and of organizing or reorganizing the corporation, from the consideration received for shares.

WV Legislature

PART 3. SUBSEQUENT ACQUISITION OF SHARES

BY SHAREHOLDERS AND CORPORATION.

§31D-6-630. Shareholders' preemptive rights.

(a) The shareholders of a corporation do not have a preemptive right to acquire the corporation's unissued shares except to the extent the articles of incorporation provide.

(b) A statement included in the articles of incorporation that "the corporation elects to have preemptive rights", or words of similar import, means that the following principles apply, except to the extent the articles of incorporation expressly provide otherwise:

(1) The shareholders of the corporation have a preemptive right, granted on uniform terms and conditions prescribed by the board of directors to provide a fair and reasonable opportunity to exercise the right, to acquire proportional amounts of the corporation's unissued shares upon the decision of the board of directors to issue them.

(2) A shareholder may waive his or her preemptive right. A waiver evidenced by a writing is irrevocable even though it is not supported by consideration.

(3) There is no preemptive right with respect to:

(A) Shares issued as compensation to directors, officers, agents or employees of the corporation, its subsidiaries or affiliates;

(B) Shares issued to satisfy conversion or option rights created to provide compensation to directors, officers, agents or employees of the corporation, its subsidiaries or affiliates;

(C) Shares authorized in articles of incorporation that are issued within six months from the effective date of incorporation; or

(D) Shares sold otherwise than for money.

(4) Holders of shares of any class without general voting rights but with preferential rights to distributions or assets have no preemptive rights with respect to shares of any class.

(5) Holders of shares of any class with general voting rights but without preferential rights to distributions or assets have no preemptive rights with respect to shares of any class with preferential rights to distributions or assets unless the shares with preferential rights are convertible into or carry a right to subscribe for or acquire shares without preferential rights.

(6) Shares subject to preemptive rights that are not acquired by shareholders may be issued to any person for a period of one year after being offered to shareholders at a consideration set by the board of directors that is not lower than the consideration set for the exercise of

WV Legislature

preemptive rights. An offer at a lower consideration or after the expiration of one year is subject to the shareholders' preemptive rights.

(c) For purposes of this section, "shares" includes a security convertible into or carrying a right to subscribe for or acquire shares.

WV Legislature

§31D-6-631. Corporation's acquisition of its own shares.

(a) Subject to the provisions of chapter thirty-one-a of this code and unless otherwise prohibited by law, a corporation may acquire its own shares and shares so acquired constitute authorized but unissued shares.

(b) If the articles of incorporation prohibit the reissue of the acquired shares, the number of authorized shares is reduced by the number of shares acquired.

WV Legislature

PART 4. DISTRIBUTIONS.

§31D-6-640. Distributions to shareholders.

(a) A board of directors may authorize and the corporation may make distributions to its shareholders subject to restriction by the articles of incorporation and the limitation in subsection (c) of this section.

(b) If the board of directors does not fix the record date for determining shareholders entitled to a distribution, it is the date the board of directors authorizes the distribution: Provided, That this subsection does not apply to a distribution involving a purchase, redemption or other acquisition of the corporation's shares.

(c) No distribution may be made if, after giving it effect:

(1) The corporation would not be able to pay its debts as they become due in the usual course of business; or

(2) The corporation's total assets would be less than the sum of its total liabilities plus the amount that would be needed, if the corporation were to be dissolved at the time of the distribution, to satisfy the preferential rights upon dissolution of shareholders whose preferential rights are superior to those receiving the distribution unless the articles of incorporation permit otherwise.

(d) The board of directors may base a determination that a distribution is not prohibited under subsection (c) of this section either on financial statements prepared on the basis of accounting practices and principles that are reasonable in the circumstances or on a fair valuation or other method that is reasonable in the circumstances.

(e) Except as provided in subsection (g) of this section, the effect of a distribution under subsection (c) of this section is measured:

(1) In the case of distribution by purchase, redemption or other acquisition of the corporation's shares, as of the earlier of: (A) The date money or other property is transferred or debt incurred by the corporation; or (B) the date the shareholder ceases to be a shareholder with respect to the acquired shares;

(2) In the case of any other distribution of indebtedness, as of the date the indebtedness is distributed; and

(3) In all other cases, as of: (A) The date the distribution is authorized if the payment occurs within one hundred twenty days after the date of authorization; or (B) the date the payment is made if it occurs more than one hundred twenty days after the date of authorization.

(f) A corporation's indebtedness to a shareholder incurred by reason of a distribution made in accordance with this section is at parity with the corporation's indebtedness to its

WV Legislature

general, unsecured creditors except to the extent subordinated by agreement.

(g) Indebtedness of a corporation, including indebtedness issued as a distribution, is not considered a liability for purposes of determinations under subsection (c) of this section if its terms provide that payment of principal and interest are made only if and to the extent that payment of a distribution to shareholders could then be made under this section. If the indebtedness is issued as a distribution, each payment of principal or interest is treated as a distribution, the effect of which is measured on the date the payment is actually made.

WV Legislature

PART 1. MEETINGS.

§31D-7-701. Annual meeting.

(a) A corporation must hold a meeting of shareholders annually at a time stated in or fixed in accordance with the bylaws.

(b) Annual shareholders' meetings may be held in or out of this state at the place stated in or fixed in accordance with the bylaws. If no place is stated in or fixed in accordance with the bylaws, annual meetings are to be held at the corporation's principal office.

(c) The failure to hold an annual meeting at the time stated in or fixed in accordance with a corporation's bylaws does not affect the validity of any corporate action.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-702. Special meeting.

(a) A corporation must hold a special meeting of shareholders:

(1) On call of its board of directors or the person or persons authorized by the articles of incorporation or bylaws; or

(2) If the holders of at least ten percent of all the votes entitled to be cast on an issue proposed to be considered at the proposed special meeting sign, date and deliver to the corporation one or more written demands for the meeting describing the purpose or purposes for which it is to be held: Provided, That the articles of incorporation may fix a lower percentage or a higher percentage not exceeding twenty-five percent of all the votes entitled to be cast on any issue proposed to be considered. Unless otherwise provided in the articles of incorporation, a written demand for a special meeting may be revoked by a writing to that effect received by the corporation prior to the receipt by the corporation of demands sufficient in number to require the holding of a special meeting.

(b) If not otherwise fixed under section seven hundred three or seven hundred seven of this article, the record date for determining shareholders entitled to demand a special meeting is the date the first shareholder signs the demand.

(c) Special shareholders' meetings may be held in or out of this state at the place stated in or fixed in accordance with the bylaws. If no place is stated or fixed in accordance with the bylaws, special meetings are to be held at the corporation's principal office.

(d) Only business within the purpose or purposes described in the meeting notice required by subsection (c), section seven hundred five of this article may be conducted at a special shareholders' meeting.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-703. Court-ordered meeting.

(a) The circuit court may summarily order a meeting to be held:

(1) On application of any shareholder of the corporation entitled to participate in an annual meeting if an annual meeting was not held within the earlier of six months after the end of the corporation's fiscal year or fifteen months after its last annual meeting; or

(2) On application of a shareholder who signed a demand for a special meeting valid under section seven hundred two of this article, if:

(A) Notice of the special meeting was not given within thirty days after the date the demand was delivered to the corporation's secretary; or

(B) The special meeting was not held in accordance with the notice.

(b) The court may fix the time and place of the meeting; determine the shares entitled to participate in the meeting; specify a record date for determining shareholders entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting; prescribe the form and content of the meeting notice; fix the quorum required for specific matters to be considered at the meeting or direct that the votes represented at the meeting constitute a quorum for action on those matters; and enter other orders necessary to accomplish the purpose or purposes of the meeting.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-704. Action without meeting.

(a) Action required or permitted by this chapter to be taken at a shareholders' meeting may be taken without a meeting if the action is taken by all the shareholders entitled to vote on the action. The action must be evidenced by one or more written consents bearing the date of signature and describing the action taken, signed by all the shareholders entitled to vote on the action, and delivered to the corporation for inclusion in the minutes or filing with the corporate records.

(b) If not otherwise fixed under section seven hundred three or seven hundred seven of this article, the record date for determining shareholders entitled to take action without a meeting is the date the first shareholder signs the consent under subsection (a) of this section. No written consent may be effective to take the corporate action referred to in the consent unless, within sixty days of the earliest date appearing on a consent delivered to the corporation in the manner required by this section, written consents signed by all shareholders entitled to vote on the action are received by the corporation. A written consent may be revoked by a writing to that effect received by the corporation prior to receipt by the corporation of unrevoked written consents sufficient in number to take corporate action.

(c) A consent signed under this section has the effect of a meeting vote and may be described as a meeting vote in any document.

(d) If this chapter requires that notice of proposed action be given to nonvoting shareholders and the action is to be taken by unanimous consent of the voting shareholders, the corporation must give its nonvoting shareholders written notice of the proposed action at least ten days before the action is taken. The notice must contain or be accompanied by the same material that, under this chapter, would have been required to be sent to nonvoting shareholders in a notice of meeting at which the proposed action would have been submitted to the shareholders for action.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-705. Notice of meeting.

(a) A corporation is to notify shareholders of the date, time and place of each annual and special shareholders' meeting no fewer than ten nor more than sixty days before the meeting date. Unless this chapter or the articles of incorporation require otherwise, the corporation is required to give notice only to shareholders entitled to vote at the meeting.

(b) Unless this chapter, the articles of incorporation or bylaws require otherwise, notice of an annual meeting need not include a description of the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is called.

(c) Notice of a special meeting must include a description of the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is called.

(d) If not otherwise fixed under section seven hundred three or seven hundred seven of this article, the record date for determining shareholders entitled to notice of and to vote at an annual or special shareholders' meeting is the day before the first notice is delivered to shareholders.

(e) Unless the bylaws require otherwise, if an annual or special shareholders' meeting is adjourned to a different date, time or place, notice need not be given of the new date, time or place if the new date, time or place is announced at the meeting before adjournment. If a new record date for the adjourned meeting is or must be fixed under section seven hundred seven of this article, notice of the adjourned meeting must be given under this section to persons who are shareholders as of the new record date.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-706. Waiver of notice.

(a) A shareholder may waive any notice required by this chapter, the articles of incorporation or bylaws before or after the date and time stated in the notice. The waiver must be in writing, be signed by the shareholder entitled to the notice and be delivered to the corporation for inclusion in the minutes or filing with the corporate records.

(b) A shareholder's attendance at a meeting:

(1) Waives objection to lack of notice or defective notice of the meeting, unless the shareholder at the beginning of the meeting objects to holding the meeting or transacting business at the meeting; and

(2) Waives objection to consideration of a particular matter at the meeting that is not within the purpose or purposes described in the meeting notice, unless the shareholder objects to considering the matter when it is presented.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-707. Record date.

(a) The bylaws may fix or provide the manner of fixing the record date for one or more voting groups in order to determine the shareholders entitled to notice of a shareholders' meeting, to demand a special meeting, to vote or to take any other action. If the bylaws do not fix or provide for fixing a record date, the board of directors of the corporation may fix a future date as the record date.

(b) A record date fixed under this section may not be more than seventy days before the meeting or action requiring a determination of shareholders.

(c) A determination of shareholders entitled to notice of or to vote at a shareholders' meeting is effective for any adjournment of the meeting unless the board of directors fixes a new record date, which it must do if the meeting is adjourned to a date more than one hundred twenty days after the date fixed for the original meeting.

(d) If a court orders a meeting adjourned to a date more than one hundred twenty days after the date fixed for the original meeting, it may provide that the original record date continues in effect or it may fix a new record date.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-708. Conduct of the meeting.

(a) At each meeting of shareholders, a chair shall preside. The chair is to be appointed as provided in the bylaws or, in the absence of a provision in the bylaws, by the board of directors.

(b) The chair, unless the articles of incorporation or bylaws provide otherwise, shall determine the order of business and has the authority to establish rules for the conduct of the meeting.

(c) Any rules adopted for, and the conduct of, the meeting are to be fair to shareholders.

(d) The chair of the meeting shall announce at the meeting when the polls close for each matter voted upon. If no announcement is made, the polls are to be deemed to have closed upon the final adjournment of the meeting. After the polls close, no ballots, proxies or votes nor any revocations or changes to a ballot, proxy or vote may be accepted.

(e) Shareholders of any class or series of shares may participate in any meeting of shareholders by means of remote communication to the extent the board of directors authorizes such participation for such class or series. Participation as a shareholder by means of remote communication shall be subject to such guidelines and procedures as the board of directors adopts.

(f) Shareholders participating in a shareholders' meeting by means of remote communication shall be deemed present and may vote at such a meeting if the corporation has implemented reasonable measures to:

(1) Verify that each person participating remotely as a shareholder is a shareholder or a shareholder's proxy; and

(2) Provide such shareholders a reasonable opportunity to participate in the meeting and to vote on matters submitted to the shareholders, including an opportunity to read or hear the proceedings of the meetings, in a manner substantially concurrent with such proceedings.

(g) Unless expressly prohibited by the articles of incorporation or bylaws, the board of directors may determine that any meeting of shareholders shall not be held at any place and shall instead be held solely by means of remote communication in conformity with subsection (f).

(h) Amendments to this § 31D-7-708 passed during the regular session of the 2021 Legislative Session shall be effective upon passage and shall apply to all such shareholder meetings held on or after March 1, 2020.

WV Legislature

PART 2. VOTING.

§31D-7-720. Shareholders' list for meeting.

(a) After fixing a record date for a meeting, a corporation must prepare an alphabetical list of the names of all its shareholders who are entitled to notice of a shareholders' meeting. The list must be arranged by voting group and, within each voting group, by class or series of shares and show the address of and number of shares held by each shareholder.

(b) The shareholders' list must be available for inspection by any shareholder, beginning two business days after notice of the meeting is given for which the list was prepared and continuing through the meeting, at the corporation's principal office or at a place identified in the meeting notice in the city where the meeting will be held. A shareholder, his or her agent or attorney is entitled on written demand to inspect and, subject to the requirements of subsection (c), section one thousand six hundred two, article sixteen of this chapter, to copy the list, during regular business hours and at his or her expense, during the period it is available for inspection.

(c) The corporation must make the shareholders' list available at the meeting and any shareholder, his or her agent or attorney is entitled to inspect the list at any time during the meeting or any adjournment.

(d) If the corporation refuses to allow a shareholder, his or her agent or attorney to inspect the shareholders' list before or at the meeting, or to copy the list as permitted by subsection (b) of this section, the circuit court, on application of the shareholder, may summarily order the inspection or copying at the corporation's expense and may postpone the meeting for which the list was prepared until the inspection or copying is complete.

(e) Refusal or failure to prepare or make available the shareholders' list does not affect the validity of action taken at the meeting.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-721. Voting entitlement of shares.

(a) Except as provided in subsections (b) and (d) of this section or unless the articles of incorporation provide otherwise, each outstanding share, regardless of class, is entitled to one vote on each matter voted on at a shareholders' meeting. Only shares are entitled to vote.

(b) Absent special circumstances, the shares of a corporation are not entitled to vote if they are owned, directly or indirectly, by a second corporation, domestic or foreign, and the first corporation owns, directly or indirectly, a majority of the shares entitled to vote for directors of the second corporation.

(c) Subsection (b) of this section does not limit the power of a corporation to vote any shares, including its own shares, held by it in a fiduciary capacity.

(d) Redeemable shares are not entitled to vote after notice of redemption is mailed to the holders and a sum sufficient to redeem the shares has been deposited with a bank, trust company or other financial institution under an irrevocable obligation to pay the holders the redemption price on surrender of the shares.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-722. Proxies.

(a) Unless the articles of incorporation or bylaws provide otherwise, a shareholder may vote his or her shares in person or by proxy.

(b) A shareholder or his or her agent or attorney-in-fact may appoint a proxy to vote or otherwise act for the shareholder by signing an appointment form or by an electronic transmission of the appointment. An electronic transmission must contain or be accompanied by information from which one can determine that the shareholder, the shareholder's agent or the shareholder's attorney-in-fact authorized the electronic transmission.

(c) An appointment of a proxy is effective when a signed appointment form or an electronic transmission of the appointment is received by the inspector of election or the officer or agent of the corporation authorized to tabulate votes. An appointment is valid for eleven months unless a longer period is expressly provided in the appointment form.

(d) An appointment of a proxy is revocable unless the appointment form or electronic transmission states that it is irrevocable and the appointment is coupled with an interest. Appointments coupled with an interest include the appointment of:

(1) A pledgee;

(2) A person who purchased or agreed to purchase the shares;

(3) A creditor of the corporation who extended it credit under terms requiring the appointment;

(4) An employee of the corporation whose employment contract requires the appointment; or

(5) A party to a voting agreement created under section seven hundred thirty-one of this article.

(e) The death or incapacity of the shareholder appointing a proxy does not affect the right of the corporation to accept the proxy's authority unless notice of the death or incapacity is received by the secretary or other officer or agent authorized to tabulate votes before the proxy exercises his or her authority under the appointment.

(f) An appointment made irrevocable under subsection (d) of this section is revoked when the interest with which it is coupled is extinguished.

(g) A transferee for value of shares subject to an irrevocable appointment may revoke the appointment if he or she did not know of its existence when he or she acquired the shares and the existence of the irrevocable appointment was not noted conspicuously on the certificate representing the shares or on the information statement for shares without certificates.

WV Legislature

(h) Subject to section seven hundred twenty-four of this article and to any express limitation on the proxy's authority stated in the appointment form or electronic transmission, a corporation is entitled to accept the proxy's vote or other action as that of the shareholder making the appointment.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-723. Shares held by nominees.

(a) A corporation may establish a procedure by which the beneficial owner of shares that are registered in the name of a nominee is recognized by the corporation as the shareholder. The extent of this recognition may be determined in the procedure.

(b) The procedure may set forth:

(1) The types of nominees to which it applies;

(2) The rights or privileges that the corporation recognizes in a beneficial owner;

(3) The manner in which the procedure is selected by the nominee;

(4) The information that must be provided when the procedure is selected;

(5) The period for which selection of the procedure is effective; and

(6) Other aspects of the rights and duties created.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-724. Corporation's acceptance of votes.

(a) If the name signed on a vote, consent, waiver or proxy appointment corresponds to the name of a shareholder, the corporation if acting in good faith is entitled to accept the vote, consent, waiver or proxy appointment and give it effect as the act of the shareholder.

(b) If the name signed on a vote, consent, waiver or proxy appointment does not correspond to the name of its shareholder, the corporation if acting in good faith is entitled to accept the vote, consent, waiver or proxy appointment and give it effect as the act of the shareholder if:

(1) The shareholder is an entity and the name signed purports to be that of an officer or agent of the entity;

(2) The name signed purports to be that of an administrator, executor, guardian or conservator representing the shareholder and, if the corporation requests, evidence of this status acceptable to the corporation has been presented with respect to the vote, consent, waiver or proxy appointment;

(3) The name signed purports to be that of a receiver or trustee in bankruptcy of the shareholder and, if the corporation requests, evidence of this status acceptable to the corporation has been presented with respect to the vote, consent, waiver or proxy appointment;

(4) The name signed purports to be that of a pledgee, beneficial owner or attorney-in-fact of the shareholder and, if the corporation requests, evidence acceptable to the corporation of the signatory's authority to sign for the shareholder has been presented with respect to the vote, consent, waiver or proxy appointment; or

(5) Two or more persons are the shareholder as cotenants or fiduciaries and the name signed purports to be the name of at least one of the coowners and the person signing appears to be acting on behalf of all the coowners.

(c) The corporation is entitled to reject a vote, consent, waiver or proxy appointment if the secretary or other officer or agent authorized to tabulate votes, acting in good faith, has reasonable basis for doubt about the validity of the signature on it or about the signatory's authority to sign for the shareholder.

(d) The corporation and its officer or agent who accepts or rejects a vote, consent, waiver or proxy appointment in good faith and in accordance with the standards of this section or subsection (b), section seven hundred twenty-two of this article are not liable in damages to the shareholder for the consequences of the acceptance or rejection.

(e) Corporate action based on the acceptance or rejection of a vote, consent, waiver or proxy appointment under this section is valid unless a court of competent jurisdiction determines otherwise.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-725. Quorum and voting requirements for voting groups.

(a) Shares entitled to vote as a separate voting group may take action on a matter at a meeting only if a quorum of those shares exists with respect to that matter. Unless the articles of incorporation or this chapter provide otherwise, a majority of the votes entitled to be cast on the matter by the voting group constitutes a quorum of that voting group for action on that matter.

(b) Once a share is represented for any purpose at a meeting, it is deemed present for quorum purposes for the remainder of the meeting and for any adjournment of that meeting unless a new record date is or must be set for that adjourned meeting.

(c) If a quorum exists, action on a matter, other than the election of directors, by a voting group is approved if the votes cast within the voting group favoring the action exceed the votes cast opposing the action unless the articles of incorporation or this chapter require a greater number of affirmative votes.

(d) An amendment of articles of incorporation adding, changing or deleting a quorum or voting requirement for a voting group greater than specified in subsection (a) or (c) of this section is governed by section seven hundred twenty-seven of this article.

(e) The election of directors is governed by section seven hundred twenty-eight of this article.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-726. Action by single and multiple voting groups.

(a) If the articles of incorporation or this chapter provide for voting by a single voting group on a matter, action on that matter is taken when voted upon by that voting group as provided in section seven hundred twenty-five of this article.

(b) If the articles of incorporation or this chapter provide for voting by two or more voting groups on a matter, action on that matter is taken only when voted upon by each of those voting groups counted separately as provided in section seven hundred twenty-five of this article. Action may be taken by one voting group on a matter even though no action is taken by another voting group entitled to vote on the matter.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-727. Greater quorum or voting requirements.

(a) The articles of incorporation may provide for a greater quorum or voting requirement for shareholders or voting groups of shareholders than is provided for by this chapter.

(b) An amendment to the articles of incorporation that adds, changes or deletes a greater quorum or voting requirement must meet the same quorum requirement and be adopted by the same vote and voting groups required to take action under the quorum and voting requirements then in effect or proposed to be adopted, whichever is greater.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-728. Voting for directors; cumulative voting.

(a) Unless otherwise provided in the articles of incorporation, directors are elected by a plurality of the votes cast by the shares entitled to vote in the election at a meeting at which a quorum is present.

(b) Each shareholder or designated voting group of shareholders holding shares having the right to vote for directors has a right to cumulate his or her votes for directors.

(c) A statement included in the articles of incorporation that "all or a designated voting group of shareholders are entitled to cumulate their votes for directors", or words of similar import, means that the shareholders designated are entitled to multiply the number of votes they are entitled to cast by the number of directors for whom they are entitled to vote and cast the product for a single candidate or distribute the product among two or more candidates.

(d) Shares otherwise entitled to vote cumulatively may not be voted cumulatively at a particular meeting unless:

(1) The meeting notice or proxy statement accompanying the notice states conspicuously that cumulative voting is authorized; or

(2) A shareholder who has the right to cumulate his or her votes gives notice to the corporation not less than forty-eight hours before the time set for the meeting of his or her intent to cumulate his or her votes during the meeting and if one shareholder gives this notice all other shareholders in the same voting group participating in the election are entitled to cumulate their votes without giving further notice.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-729. Inspectors of election.

(a) A corporation having any shares listed on a national securities exchange or regularly traded in a market maintained by one or more members of a national or affiliated securities association must, and any other corporation may, appoint one or more inspectors to act at a meeting of shareholders and make a written report of the inspectors' determinations. Each inspector shall take and sign an oath faithfully to execute the duties of inspector with strict impartiality and according to the best of the inspector's ability.

(b) The inspectors shall:

(1) Ascertain the number of shares outstanding and the voting power of each;

(2) Determine the shares represented at a meeting;

(3) Determine the validity of proxies and ballots;

(4) Count all votes; and

(5) Determine the result.

(c) An inspector may be an officer or employee of the corporation.

WV Legislature

PART 3. VOTING TRUSTS AND AGREEMENTS.

§31D-7-730. Voting trusts.

(a) One or more shareholders may create a voting trust, conferring on a trustee the right to vote or otherwise act for them, by signing an agreement setting out the provisions of the trust, including, but not limited to, anything consistent with its purpose, and transferring their shares to the trustee. When a voting trust agreement is signed, the trustee shall prepare a list of the names and addresses of all owners of beneficial interests in the trust, together with the number and class of shares each transferred to the trust, and deliver copies of the list and agreement to the corporation's principal office.

(b) A voting trust becomes effective on the date the first shares subject to the trust are registered in the trustee's name. A voting trust is valid for not more than ten years after its effective date unless extended under subsection (c) of this section.

(c) All or some of the parties to a voting trust may extend it for additional terms of not more than ten years each by signing written consent to the extension. An extension is valid for ten years from the date the first shareholder signs the extension agreement. The voting trustee must deliver copies of the extension agreement and list of beneficial owners to the corporation's principal office. An extension agreement binds only those parties signing it.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-731. Voting agreements.

(a) Two or more shareholders may provide for the manner in which they will vote their shares by signing an agreement for that purpose. A voting agreement created under this section is not subject to the provisions of section seven hundred thirty of this article.

(b) A voting agreement created under this section is specifically enforceable.

WV Legislature

§31D-7-732. Shareholder agreements.

(a) An agreement among the shareholders of a corporation that complies with this section is effective among the shareholders and the corporation even though it is inconsistent with one or more other provisions of this chapter in that it:

(1) Eliminates the board of directors or restricts the discretion or powers of the board of directors;

(2) Governs the authorization or making of distributions whether or not in proportion to ownership of shares, subject to the limitations in section six hundred forty, article six of this chapter;

(3) Establishes who are to be directors or officers of the corporation, or their terms of office or manner of selection or removal;

(4) Governs, in general or in regard to specific matters, the exercise or division of voting power by or between the shareholders and directors or by or among any of them, including use of weighted voting rights or director proxies;

(5) Establishes the terms and conditions of any agreement for the transfer or use of property or the provision of services between the corporation and any shareholder, director, officer or employee of the corporation or among any of them;

(6) Transfers to one or more shareholders or other persons all or part of the authority to exercise the corporate powers or to manage the business and affairs of the corporation, including the resolution of any issue about which there exists a deadlock among directors or shareholders;

(7) Requires dissolution of the corporation at the request of one or more of the shareholders or upon the occurrence of a specified event or contingency; or

(8) Otherwise governs the exercise of the corporate powers or the management of the business and affairs of the corporation or the relationship among the shareholders, the directors and the corporation, or among any of them, and is not contrary to public policy.

(b) An agreement authorized by this section must be:

(1) Set forth:

(A) In the articles of incorporation or bylaws and approved by all persons who are shareholders at the time of the agreement; or

(B) In a written agreement that is signed by all persons who are shareholders at the time of the agreement and is made known to the corporation;

WV Legislature

(2) Subject to amendment only by all persons who are shareholders at the time of the amendment, unless the agreement provides otherwise; and

(3) Valid for ten years, unless the agreement provides otherwise.

(c) The existence of an agreement authorized by this section must be noted conspicuously on the front or back of each certificate for outstanding shares or on the information statement required by subsection (b), section six hundred twenty-six, article six of this chapter. If at the time of the agreement the corporation has shares outstanding represented by certificates, the corporation must recall the outstanding certificates and issue substitute certificates that comply with this subsection. The failure to note the existence of the agreement on the certificate or information statement does not affect the validity of the agreement or any action taken pursuant to it. Any purchaser of shares who, at the time of purchase, did not have knowledge of the existence of the agreement is entitled to rescission of the purchase. A purchaser is to be deemed to have knowledge of the existence of the agreement if its existence is noted on the certificate or information statement for the shares in compliance with this subsection and, if the shares are not represented by a certificate, the information statement is delivered to the purchaser at or prior to the time of purchase of the shares. An action to enforce the right of rescission authorized by this subsection must be commenced within the earlier of ninety days after discovery of the existence of the agreement or two years after the time of purchase of the shares.

(d) An agreement authorized by this section ceases to be effective when shares of the corporation are listed on a national securities exchange or regularly traded in a market maintained by one or more members of a national or affiliated securities association. If the agreement ceases to be effective for any reason, the board of directors may, if the agreement is contained or referred to in the corporation's articles of incorporation or bylaws, adopt an amendment to the articles of incorporation or bylaws, without shareholder action, to delete the agreement and any references to it.

(e) An agreement authorized by this section that limits the discretion or powers of the board of directors relieves the directors of, and imposes upon the person or persons in whom the discretion or powers are vested, liability for acts or omissions imposed by law on directors to the extent that the discretion or powers of the directors are limited by the agreement.

(f) The existence or performance of an agreement authorized by this section is not a ground for imposing personal liability on any shareholder for the acts or debts of the corporation even if the agreement or its performance treats the corporation as if it were a partnership or results in failure to observe the corporate formalities otherwise applicable to the matters governed by the agreement.

(g) Incorporators or subscribers for shares may act as shareholders with respect to an agreement authorized by this section if no shares have been issued when the agreement is made.

WV Legislature

PART 1. BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

§31D-8-801. Requirement for and duties of board of directors.

(a) Except as provided in section seven hundred thirty-two, article seven of this chapter, each corporation must have a board of directors.

(b) All corporate powers are to be exercised by or under the authority of, and the business and affairs of the corporation managed under the direction of, its board of directors subject to any limitation set forth in the articles of incorporation or in an agreement authorized under section seven hundred thirty-two, article seven of this chapter.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-802. Qualifications of directors.

The articles of incorporation or bylaws may prescribe qualifications for directors. A director need not be a resident of this state or a shareholder of the corporation unless the articles of incorporation or bylaws require he or she to be a shareholder.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-803. Number and election of directors.

(a) A board of directors must consist of one or more individuals, with the number specified in or fixed in accordance with the articles of incorporation or bylaws.

(b) If a board of directors has power to fix or change the number of directors, the board may increase or decrease by thirty percent or less the number of directors last approved by the shareholders, but only the shareholders may increase or decrease by more than thirty percent the number of directors last approved by the shareholders.

(c) The articles of incorporation or bylaws may establish a variable range for the size of the board of directors by fixing a minimum and maximum number of directors. If a variable range is established, the number of directors may be fixed or changed, from time to time, within the minimum and maximum, by the shareholders or the board of directors. After shares are issued, only the shareholders may change the range for the size of the board or change from a fixed- to a variable-range size board or change from a variable- to a fixed-range size board.

(d) Directors are elected at the first annual shareholders' meeting and at each annual meeting thereafter unless their terms are staggered under section eight hundred six of this article.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-804. Election of directors by certain classes of shareholders.

If the articles of incorporation authorize dividing the shares into classes, the articles may also authorize the election of all or a specified number of directors by the holders of one or more authorized classes of shares. A class or classes of shares entitled to elect one or more directors is a separate voting group for purposes of the election of directors.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-805. Terms of directors generally.

(a) The terms of the initial directors of a corporation expire at the first shareholders' meeting at which directors are elected.

(b) The terms of all other directors expire at the next annual shareholders' meeting following their election unless their terms are staggered under section eight hundred six of this article.

(c) A decrease in the number of directors does not shorten an incumbent director's term.

(d) The term of a director elected to fill a vacancy expires at the next shareholders' meeting at which directors are elected.

(e) Despite the expiration of a director's term, he or she continues to serve until his or her successor is elected and qualifies or until there is a decrease in the number of directors.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-806. Staggered terms for directors.

If there are nine or more directors, the articles of incorporation may provide for staggering their terms by dividing the total number of directors into two or three groups, with each group containing as close to one half or one third of the total number of directors as possible. In that event, the terms of directors in the first group expire at the first annual shareholders' meeting after their election, the terms of the second group expire at the second annual shareholders' meeting after their election and the terms of the third group, if any, expire at the third annual shareholders' meeting after their election. At each annual shareholders' meeting held thereafter, directors are to be chosen for a term of two years or three years to succeed those whose terms expire.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-807. Resignation of directors.

(a) A director may resign at any time by delivering written notice to the board of directors, the chair of the board of directors or to the corporation.

(b) A resignation is effective when the notice is delivered unless the board of directors agree to a later effective date.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-808. Removal of directors by shareholders.

(a) The shareholders may remove one or more directors with or without cause.

(b) If a director is elected by a voting group of shareholders, only the shareholders of that voting group may participate in the vote to remove him or her.

(c) A director may be removed only if the number of votes cast to remove him or her exceeds the number of votes cast not to remove him or her provided that a director may not be removed if the number of votes sufficient to elect him or her under cumulative voting is voted against his or her removal.

(d) A director may be removed by the shareholders only at a meeting called for the purpose of removing him or her and the meeting notice must state that the purpose, or one of the purposes, of the meeting is removal of the director.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-809. Removal of directors by judicial proceeding.

(a) The circuit court may remove a director of the corporation from office in a proceeding commenced either by the corporation or by its shareholders holding at least ten percent of the outstanding shares of any class if the court finds that: (1) The director engaged in fraudulent or dishonest conduct or gross abuse of authority or discretion with respect to the corporation; and (2) removal is in the best interest of the corporation.

(b) The court that removes a director may bar the director from reelection for a period prescribed by the court.

(c) If shareholders commence a proceeding under subsection (a) of this section, they must make the corporation a party defendant.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-810. Vacancy on board.

(a) Unless the articles of incorporation provide otherwise, if a vacancy occurs on a board of directors, including a vacancy resulting from an increase in the number of directors:

(1) The shareholders may fill the vacancy;

(2) The board of directors may fill the vacancy; or

(3) If the directors remaining in office constitute fewer than a quorum of the board, they may fill the vacancy by the affirmative vote of a majority of all the directors remaining in office.

(b) If the vacant office was held by a director elected by a voting group of shareholders and if the vacancy is to be filled by the shareholders as provided in subdivision (1), subsection (a) of this section, only the holders of shares of that voting group are entitled to vote to fill the vacancy.

(c) A vacancy that will occur at a specific later date by reason of a resignation effective at a later date under subsection (b), section eight hundred seven of this article or otherwise may be filled before the vacancy occurs but the new director may not take office until the vacancy occurs.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-811. Compensation of directors.

Unless the articles of incorporation or bylaws provide otherwise, the board of directors may fix the compensation of directors, including reasonable allowance for expenses actually incurred in connection with their duties.

WV Legislature

PART 2. MEETINGS AND ACTION OF THE BOARD.

§31D-8-820. Meetings.

(a) The board of directors may hold regular or special meetings in or out of this state.

(b) Unless the articles of incorporation or bylaws provide otherwise, the board of directors may permit any or all directors to participate in a regular or special meeting by, or conduct the meeting through the use of, any means of communication by which all directors participating may simultaneously hear each other during the meeting. A director participating in a meeting by this means is deemed to be present in person at the meeting.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-821. Action without meeting.

(a) Unless the articles of incorporation or bylaws provide otherwise, action required or permitted by this chapter to be taken at a board of directors' meeting may be taken without a meeting if the action is taken by all members of the board. The action must be evidenced by one or more written consents describing the action taken, signed by each director and included in the minutes or filed with the corporate records reflecting the action taken.

(b) Action taken under this section is effective when the last director signs the consent, unless the consent specifies a different effective date.

(c) A consent signed under this section has the effect of a meeting vote and may be described as having the effect of a meeting vote in any document.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-822. Notice of meeting.

(a) Unless the articles of incorporation or bylaws provide otherwise, regular meetings of the board of directors may be held without notice of the date, time, place or purpose of the meeting.

(b) Unless the articles of incorporation or bylaws provide for a longer or shorter period, special meetings of the board of directors must be preceded by at least two days' notice of the date, time and place of the meeting. The notice need not describe the purpose of the special meeting unless required by the articles of incorporation or bylaws.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-823. Waiver of notice.

(a) A director may waive any notice required by this chapter, the articles of incorporation or bylaws before or after the date and time stated in the notice. Except as provided by subsection (b) of this section, the waiver must be in writing, signed by the director entitled to the notice, and filed with the minutes or corporate records.

(b) A director's attendance at or participation in a meeting waives any required notice to him or her of the meeting unless the director at the beginning of the meeting or promptly upon his or her arrival objects to holding the meeting or transacting business at the meeting and does not thereafter vote for or assent to action taken at the meeting.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-824. Quorum and voting.

(a) Unless the articles of incorporation or bylaws require a greater number or unless otherwise specifically provided in this chapter, a quorum of a board of directors consists of:

(1) A majority of the fixed number of directors if the corporation has a fixed-board size; or

(2) A majority of the number of directors prescribed, or if no number is prescribed, the number in office immediately before the meeting begins if the corporation has a variable-range size board.

(b) The articles of incorporation or bylaws may authorize a quorum of a board of directors to consist of no fewer than one third of the fixed or prescribed number of directors determined under subsection (a) of this section.

(c) If a quorum is present when a vote is taken, the affirmative vote of a majority of directors present is the act of the board of directors unless the articles of incorporation or bylaws require the vote of a greater number of directors.

(d) A director who is present at a meeting of the board of directors or a committee of the board of directors when corporate action is taken is deemed to have assented to the action taken unless: (1) He or she objects at the beginning of the meeting or promptly upon his or her arrival to holding it or transacting business at the meeting; (2) his or her dissent or abstention from the action taken is entered in the minutes of the meeting; or (3) he or she delivers written notice of his or her dissent or abstention to the presiding officer of the meeting before its adjournment. The right of dissent or abstention is not available to a director who votes in favor of the action taken.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-825. Committees.

(a) Unless the articles of incorporation or bylaws provide otherwise, a board of directors may create one or more committees and appoint members of the board of directors to serve on them. Each committee must have two or more members who serve at the pleasure of the board of directors.

(b) The creation of a committee and appointment of members to it must be approved by the greater of: (1) A majority of all the directors in office when the action is taken; or (2) the number of directors required by the articles of incorporation or bylaws to take action under section eight hundred twenty-four of this article.

(c) Sections eight hundred twenty, eight hundred twenty-one, eight hundred twenty-two, eight hundred twenty-three and eight hundred twenty-four of this article, which govern meetings, action without meetings, notice and waiver of notice, and quorum and voting requirements of the board of directors, apply to committees and their members as well.

(d) To the extent specified by the board of directors or in the articles of incorporation or bylaws, each committee may exercise the authority of the board of directors under section eight hundred one of this article.

(e) A committee may not, however:

(1) Authorize distributions;

(2) Approve or propose to shareholders action that this chapter requires be approved by shareholders;

(3) Fill vacancies on the board of directors or on any of its committees;

(4) Amend articles of incorporation pursuant to section one thousand two, article ten of this chapter;

(5) Adopt, amend or repeal bylaws;

(6) Approve a plan of merger not requiring shareholder approval;

(7) Authorize or approve reacquisition of shares, except according to a formula or method prescribed by the board of directors; or

(8) Authorize or approve the issuance or sale or contract for sale of shares, or determine the designation and relative rights, preferences and limitations of a class or series of shares, except that the board of directors may authorize a committee or a senior executive officer of the corporation to authorize or approve the issuance or sale or contract for sale of shares, or determine the designation and relative rights, preferences and limitations of a class or series of shares within limits specifically prescribed by the board of directors.

WV Legislature

(f) The creation of, delegation of authority to or action by a committee does not alone constitute compliance by a director with the standards of conduct described in section eight hundred thirty of this article.

WV Legislature

PART 3. DIRECTORS.

§31D-8-830. Standard of conduct for directors.

(a) Each member of the board of directors, when discharging the duties of a director, shall act: (1) In good faith; and (2) in a manner the director reasonably believes to be in the best interests of the corporation.

(b) The members of the board of directors or a committee of the board, when becoming informed in connection with their decision-making function or devoting attention to their oversight function, shall discharge their duties with the care that a person in a like position would reasonably believe appropriate under similar circumstances.

(c) In discharging board or committee duties a director, who does not have knowledge that makes reliance unwarranted, is entitled to rely on the performance by any of the persons specified in subdivision (1) or (3), subsection (e) of this section to whom the board may have delegated, formally or informally by course of conduct, the authority or duty to perform one or more of the board's functions that are delegable under applicable law.

(d) In discharging board or committee duties a director, who does not have knowledge that makes reliance unwarranted, is entitled to rely on information, opinions, reports or statements, including financial statements and other financial data, prepared or presented by any of the persons specified in subsection (e) of this section.

(e) A director is entitled to rely, in accordance with subsection (c) or (d) of this section, on:

(1) One or more officers or employees of the corporation whom the director reasonably believes to be reliable and competent in the functions performed or the information, opinions, reports or statements provided;

(2) Legal counsel, public accountants or other persons retained by the corporation as to matters involving skills or expertise the director reasonably believes are matters: (A) Within the particular person's professional or expert competence; or (B) as to which the particular person merits confidence; or

(3) A committee of the board of directors of which the director is not a member if the director reasonably believes the committee merits confidence.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-831. Standards of liability for directors.

(a) A director is not liable to the corporation or its shareholders for any decision to take or not to take action, or any failure to take any action, as a director, unless the party asserting liability in a proceeding establishes that:

(1) Any provision in the articles of incorporation authorized by subdivision (4), subsection (b), section two hundred two, article two of this chapter or the protections afforded by section eight hundred sixty of this article or article seven-c, chapter fifty-five of this code interposed as a bar to the proceeding by the director, does not preclude liability; and

(2) The challenged conduct consisted or was the result of:

(A) Action not in good faith; or

(B) A decision: (i) Which the director did not reasonably believe to be in the best interests of the corporation; or (ii) as to which the director was not informed to an extent the director reasonably believed appropriate in the circumstances; or

(C) A lack of objectivity due to the director's familial, financial or business relationship with, or a lack of independence due to the director's domination or control by, another person having a material interest in the challenged conduct: (i) Which relationship or which domination or control could reasonably be expected to have affected the director's judgment respecting the challenged conduct in a manner adverse to the corporation; and (ii) after a reasonable expectation has been established, the director does not establish that the challenged conduct was reasonably believed by the director to be in the best interests of the corporation; or

(D) A sustained failure of the director to devote attention to ongoing oversight of the business and affairs of the corporation, or a failure to devote timely attention, by making or causing to be made appropriate inquiry when particular facts and circumstances of significant concern materialize that would alert a reasonably attentive director to the need for inquiry;

(E) Receipt of a financial benefit to which the director was not entitled or any other breach of the director's duties to deal fairly with the corporation and its shareholders that is actionable under applicable law.

(b) The party seeking to hold the director liable:

(1) For money damages, has the burden of establishing that:

(A) Harm to the corporation or its shareholders has been suffered; and

(B) The harm suffered was proximately caused by the director's challenged conduct; or

WV Legislature

(2) For other money payment under a legal remedy, including compensation for the unauthorized use of corporate assets, has whatever persuasion burden may be called for to establish that the payment sought is appropriate in the circumstances; or

(3) For other money payment under an equitable remedy, including profit recovery by or disgorgement to the corporation, has whatever persuasion burden may be called for to establish that the equitable remedy sought is appropriate in the circumstances.

(c) Nothing contained in this section may: (1) In any instance where fairness is at issue, including consideration of the fairness of a transaction to the corporation under section eight hundred sixty of this article, alter the burden of proving the fact or lack of fairness otherwise applicable; (2) alter the fact or lack of liability of a director under another section of this chapter, including the provisions governing the consequences of an unlawful distribution under section eight hundred thirty-three of this article or a transactional interest under section eight hundred sixty of this article; or (3) affect any rights to which the corporation or a shareholder may be entitled under another provision of this code or the United States code.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-832. [RESERVED]

WV Legislature

§31D-8-833. Directors' liability for unlawful distributions.

(a) A director who votes for or assents to a distribution in excess of what may be authorized and made pursuant to subsection (a), section six hundred forty, article six of this chapter is personally liable to the corporation for the amount of the distribution that exceeds what could have been distributed without violating subsection (a), section six hundred forty, article six of this chapter if the party asserting liability establishes that when taking the action the director did not comply with section eight hundred thirty of this article.

(b) A director held liable under subsection (a) of this section for an unlawful distribution is entitled to:

(1) Contribution from every other director who could be held liable under subsection (a) of this section for the unlawful distribution; and

(2) Recoupment from each shareholder of the pro rata portion of the amount of the unlawful distribution the shareholder accepted, knowing the distribution was made in violation of subsection (a), section six hundred forty, article six of this chapter.

(c) A proceeding to enforce:

(1) The liability of a director under subsection (a) of this section is barred unless it is commenced within two years after the date on which the effect of the distribution was measured under subsection (e) or (g), section six hundred forty, article six of this chapter or as of which the violation of subsection (a), section six hundred forty, article six of this chapter occurred as the consequence of disregard of a restriction in the articles of incorporation; or

(2) Contribution or recoupment under subsection (b) of this section is barred unless it is commenced within one year after the liability of the claimant has been finally adjudicated under subsection (a) of this section.

WV Legislature

PART 4. OFFICERS.

§31D-8-840. Required officers.

(a) A corporation has the officers described in its bylaws or appointed by the board of directors in accordance with the bylaws.

(b) A duly appointed officer may appoint one or more officers or assistant officers if authorized by the bylaws or the board of directors.

(c) The bylaws or the board of directors must delegate to one of the officers responsibility for preparing minutes of the directors' and shareholders' meetings and for authenticating records of the corporation.

(d) The same individual may simultaneously hold more than one office in a corporation.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-841. Duties of officers.

Each officer has the authority and shall perform the duties set forth in the bylaws or, to the extent consistent with the bylaws, the duties prescribed by the board of directors or by direction of an officer authorized by the board of directors to prescribe the duties of other officers.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-842. Standards of conduct for officers.

(a) An officer, when performing in his or her official capacity, shall act:

(1) In good faith;

(2) With the care that a person in a like position would reasonably exercise under similar circumstances; and

(3) In a manner the officer reasonably believes to be in the best interests of the corporation.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-842a. Standards of liability for officers.

(a) An officer is not liable to the corporation or its shareholders for any decision to take or not to take action, or any failure to take any action, as an officer, unless the party asserting liability in a proceeding establishes that:

(1) Any provision in the articles of incorporation authorized by subdivision (4), subsection (b), section two hundred two, article two of this chapter or the protections afforded by section eight hundred sixty of this article or article seven-c, chapter fifty-five of this code interposed as a bar to the proceeding by the officer, does not preclude liability; and

(2) The challenged conduct consisted or was the result of:

(A) Action not in good faith; or

(B) A decision: (i) Which the officer did not reasonably believe to be in the best interests of the corporation; or (ii) as to which the officer was not informed to an extent the officer reasonably believed appropriate in the circumstances; or

(C) A lack of objectivity due to the officer's familial, financial or business relationship with, or a lack of independence due to the officer's domination or control by, another person having a material interest in the challenged conduct: (i) Which relationship or which domination or control could reasonably be expected to have affected the officer's judgment respecting the challenged conduct in a manner adverse to the corporation; and (ii) after a reasonable expectation has been established, the officer does not establish that the challenged conduct was reasonably believed by the officer to be in the best interests of the corporation; or

(D) A sustained failure of the officer to devote attention to ongoing oversight of the business and affairs of the corporation, or a failure to devote timely attention, by making or causing to be made appropriate inquiry when particular facts and circumstances of significant concern materialize that would alert a reasonably attentive officer to the need for inquiry;

(E) Receipt of a financial benefit to which the officer was not entitled or any other breach of the officer's duties to deal fairly with the corporation and its shareholders that is actionable under applicable law.

(b) The party seeking to hold the officer liable:

(1) For money damages, has the burden of establishing that:

(A) Harm to the corporation or its shareholders has been suffered; and

(B) The harm suffered was proximately caused by the officer's challenged conduct; or

WV Legislature

(2) For other money payment under a legal remedy, including compensation for the unauthorized use of corporate assets, has whatever persuasion burden may be called for to establish that the payment sought is appropriate in the circumstances; or

(3) For other money payment under an equitable remedy, including profit recovery by or disgorgement to the corporation, has whatever persuasion burden may be called for to establish that the equitable remedy sought is appropriate in the circumstances.

(c) Nothing contained in this section may: (1) In any instance where fairness is at issue, including consideration of the fairness of a transaction to the corporation under section eight hundred sixty of this article, alter the burden of proving the fact or lack of fairness otherwise applicable; (2) alter the fact or lack of liability of an officer under another section of this chapter, including the provisions governing the consequences of an unlawful distribution under section eight hundred thirty-three of this article or a transactional interest under section eight hundred sixty of this article; or (3) affect any rights to which the corporation or a shareholder may be entitled under another provision of this code or the United States Code.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-843. Resignation and removal of officers.

(a) An officer may resign at any time by delivering notice to the corporation. A resignation is effective when the notice is delivered unless the board of directors agree to a later effective date. If a resignation is made effective at a later date and the corporation accepts the future effective date, its board of directors may fill the pending vacancy before the effective date if the board of directors provides that the successor does not take office until the effective date.

(b) A board of directors may remove any officer at any time with or without cause.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-844. Contract rights of officers.

(a) The appointment of an officer does not itself create contract rights.

(b) An officer's removal does not affect the officer's contract rights, if any, with the corporation. An officer's resignation does not affect the corporation's contract rights, if any, with the officer.

WV Legislature

PART 5. INDEMNIFICATION AND ADVANCE FOR EXPENSES.

§31D-8-850. Part definitions.

In this part:

(1) "Corporation" includes any domestic or foreign predecessor entity of a corporation in a merger.

(2) "Director" or "officer" means an individual who is or was a director or officer, respectively, of a corporation or who, while a director or officer of the corporation, is or was serving at the corporation's request as a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee or agent of another domestic or foreign corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or other entity. A director or officer is considered to be serving an employee benefit plan at the corporation's request if his or her duties to the corporation also impose duties on, or otherwise involve services by, him or her to the plan or to participants in or beneficiaries of the plan. "Director" or "officer" includes, unless the context requires otherwise, the estate or personal representative of a director or officer.

(3) "Disinterested director" means a director who, at the time of a vote referred to in subsection (c), section eight hundred fifty-three of this article or a vote or selection referred to in subsection (b) or (c), section eight hundred fifty-five of this article, is not: (A) A party to the proceeding; or (B) an individual having a familial, financial, professional or employment relationship with the director whose indemnification or advance for expenses is the subject of the decision being made, which relationship would, in the circumstances, reasonably be expected to exert an influence on the director's judgment when voting on the decision being made.

(4) "Expenses" includes counsel fees.

(5) "Liability" means the obligation to pay a judgment; settlement; penalty; fine, including an excise tax assessed with respect to an employee benefit plan; or reasonable expenses incurred with respect to a proceeding.

(6) "Official capacity" means:

(A) When used with respect to a director, the office of director in a corporation; and

(B) When used with respect to an officer, as contemplated in section eight hundred fifty-six of this article, the office in a corporation held by the officer. "Official capacity" does not include service for any other domestic or foreign corporation or any partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or other entity.

(7) "Party" means an individual who was, is or is threatened to be made, a defendant or respondent in a proceeding.

WV Legislature

(8) "Proceeding" means any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, arbitrative or investigative and whether formal or informal.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-851. Permissible indemnification.

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this section, a corporation may indemnify an individual who is a party to a proceeding because he or she is a director against liability incurred in the proceeding if:

(1) (A) He or she conducted himself or herself in good faith; and

(B) He or she reasonably believed: (i) In the case of conduct in his or her official capacity, that his or her conduct was in the best interests of the corporation; and (ii) in all other cases, that his or her conduct was at least not opposed to the best interests of the corporation; and

(C) In the case of any criminal proceeding, he or she had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful; or

(2) He or she engaged in conduct for which broader indemnification has been made permissible or obligatory under a provision of the articles of incorporation as authorized by subdivision (5), subsection (b), section two hundred two, article two of this chapter.

(b) A director's conduct with respect to an employee benefit plan for a purpose he or she reasonably believed to be in the interests of the participants in, and the beneficiaries of, the plan is conduct that satisfies the requirement of subparagraph (ii), paragraph (B), subdivision (1), subsection (a) of this section.

(c) The termination of a proceeding by judgment, order, settlement or conviction, or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, is not determinative that the director did not meet the relevant standard of conduct described in this section.

(d) Unless ordered by a court under subdivision (3), subsection (a), section eight hundred fifty-four of this article, a corporation may not indemnify a director:

(1) In connection with a proceeding by or in the right of the corporation, except for reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the proceeding if it is determined that the director has met the relevant standard of conduct under subsection (a) of this section; or

(2) In connection with any proceeding with respect to conduct for which he or she was adjudged liable on the basis that he or she received a financial benefit to which he or she was not entitled, whether or not involving action in his or her official capacity.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-852. Mandatory indemnification.

A corporation must indemnify a director who was wholly successful, on the merits or otherwise, in the defense of any proceeding to which he or she was a party because he or she was a director of the corporation against reasonable expenses incurred by him or her in connection with the proceeding.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-853. Advance for expenses.

(a) A corporation may, before final disposition of a proceeding, advance funds to pay for or reimburse the reasonable expenses incurred by a director who is a party to a proceeding because he or she is a director if he or she delivers to the corporation:

(1) A written affirmation of his or her good faith belief that he or she has met the relevant standard of conduct described in section eight hundred fifty-one of this article or that the proceeding involves conduct for which liability has been eliminated under a provision of the articles of incorporation as authorized by subdivision (4), subsection (b), section two hundred two, article two of this chapter; and

(2) His or her written undertaking to repay any funds advanced if he or she is not entitled to mandatory indemnification under section eight hundred fifty-two of this article and it is ultimately determined under section eight hundred fifty-four or eight hundred fifty-five of this article that he or she has not met the relevant standard of conduct described in section eight hundred fifty-one of this article.

(b) The undertaking required by subdivision (2), subsection (a) of this section must be an unlimited general obligation of the director but need not be secured and may be accepted without reference to the financial ability of the director to make repayment.

(c) Authorizations under this section are to be made:

(1) By the board of directors:

(A) If there are two or more disinterested directors, by a majority vote of all the disinterested directors, a majority of whom constitute a quorum for this purpose, or by a majority of the members of a committee of two or more disinterested directors appointed by a vote; or

(B) If there are fewer than two disinterested directors, by the vote necessary for action by the board in accordance with subsection (c), section eight hundred twenty-four of this article in which authorization directors who do not qualify as disinterested directors may participate; or

(2) By the shareholders, but shares owned by or voted under the control of a director who at the time does not qualify as a disinterested director may not be voted on the authorization; or

(3) By special legal counsel selected in a manner in accordance with subdivision (2), subsection (b), section eight hundred fifty-five of this article.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-854. Circuit court-ordered indemnification and advance for expenses.

(a) A director who is a party to a proceeding because he or she is a director may apply for indemnification or an advance for expenses to the circuit court conducting the proceeding or to another circuit court of competent jurisdiction. After receipt of an application and after giving any notice it considers necessary, the circuit court shall:

(1) Order indemnification if the circuit court determines that the director is entitled to mandatory indemnification under section eight hundred fifty-two of this article;

(2) Order indemnification or advance for expenses if the circuit court determines that the director is entitled to indemnification or advance for expenses pursuant to a provision authorized by subsection (a), section eight hundred fifty-eight of this article; or

(3) Order indemnification or advance for expenses if the circuit court determines, in view of all the relevant circumstances, that it is fair and reasonable:

(A) To indemnify the director; or

(B) To advance expenses to the director, even if he or she has not met the relevant standard of conduct set forth in subsection (a), section eight hundred fifty-one of this article, failed to comply with section eight hundred fifty-three of this article or was adjudged liable in a proceeding referred to in subdivision (1) or (2), subsection (d), section eight hundred fifty-one of this article, but if he or she was adjudged so liable his or her indemnification is to be limited to reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the proceeding.

(b) If the circuit court determines that the director is entitled to indemnification under subdivision (1), subsection (a) of this section or to indemnification or advance for expenses under subdivision (2) of said subsection, it shall also order the corporation to pay the director's reasonable expenses incurred in connection with obtaining circuit court-ordered indemnification or advance for expenses. If the circuit court determines that the director is entitled to indemnification or advance for expenses under subdivision (3) of said subsection, it may also order the corporation to pay the director's reasonable expenses to obtain circuit court-ordered indemnification or advance for expenses.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-855. Determination and authorization of indemnification.

(a) A corporation may not indemnify a director under section eight hundred fifty-one of this article unless authorized for a specific proceeding after a determination has been made that indemnification of the director is permissible because he or she has met the relevant standard of conduct set forth in section eight hundred fifty-one of this article.

(b) The determination is to be made:

(1) If there are two or more disinterested directors, by the board of directors by a majority vote of all the disinterested directors, a majority of whom constitute a quorum for this purpose, or by a majority of the members of a committee of two or more disinterested directors appointed by a vote;

(2) By special legal counsel:

(A) Selected in the manner prescribed in subdivision (1) of this subsection; or

(B) If there are fewer than two disinterested directors, selected by the board of directors in which selection directors who do not qualify as disinterested directors may participate; or

(3) By the shareholders, but shares owned by or voted under the control of a director who at the time does not qualify as a disinterested director may not be voted on the determination.

(c) Authorization of indemnification is to be made in the same manner as the determination that indemnification is permissible, except that if there are fewer than two disinterested directors or if the determination is made by special legal counsel, authorization of indemnification is to be made by those entitled under paragraph (B), subdivision (2), subsection (b) of this section to select special legal counsel.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-856. Indemnification of officers.

(a) A corporation may indemnify and advance expenses under this part to an officer of the corporation who is a party to a proceeding because he or she is an officer of the corporation:

(1) To the same extent as a director; and

(2) If he or she is an officer but not a director, to a further extent as may be provided by the articles of incorporation, the bylaws, a resolution of the board of directors or contract except for:

(A) Liability in connection with a proceeding by or in the right of the corporation other than for reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the proceeding; or

(B) Liability arising out of conduct that constitutes:

(i) Receipt by him or her of a financial benefit to which he or she is not entitled;

(ii) An intentional infliction of harm on the corporation or the shareholders; or

(iii) An intentional violation of criminal law.

(b) The provisions of subdivision (2), subsection (a) of this section apply to an officer who is also a director if the basis on which he or she is made a party to the proceeding is an act or omission solely as an officer.

(c) An officer of a corporation who is not a director is entitled to mandatory indemnification under section eight hundred fifty-two of this article and may apply to a court under section eight hundred fifty-four of this article for indemnification or an advance for expenses in each case to the same extent to which a director may be entitled to indemnification or advance for expenses under those provisions.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-857. Insurance.

A corporation may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of an individual who is a director or officer of the corporation, or who, while a director or officer of the corporation, serves at the corporation's request as a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee or agent of another domestic or foreign corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or other entity, against liability asserted against or incurred by him or her in that capacity or arising from his or her status as a director or officer, whether or not the corporation would have power to indemnify or advance expenses to him or her against the same liability under this part.

WV Legislature

§31D-8-858. Variation by corporate action; application of part.

(a) A corporation may, by a provision in its articles of incorporation or bylaws or in a resolution adopted or a contract approved by its board of directors or shareholders, obligate itself in advance of the act or omission giving rise to a proceeding to provide indemnification in accordance with section eight hundred fifty-one of this article or advance funds to pay for or reimburse expenses in accordance with section eight hundred fifty-three of this article. Any obligatory provision is deemed to satisfy the requirements for authorization referred to in subsection (c), section eight hundred fifty-three of this article and in subsection (c), section eight hundred fifty-five of this article. Any provision that obligates the corporation to provide indemnification to the fullest extent permitted by law is deemed to obligate the corporation to advance funds to pay for or reimburse expenses in accordance with section eight hundred fifty-three of this article to the fullest extent permitted by law, unless the provision specifically provides otherwise.

(b) Any provision pursuant to subsection (a) of this section does not obligate the corporation to indemnify or advance expenses to a director of a predecessor of the corporation, pertaining to conduct with respect to the predecessor, unless otherwise specifically provided. Any provision for indemnification or advance for expenses in the articles of incorporation, bylaws or a resolution of the board of directors or shareholders of a predecessor of the corporation in a merger or in a contract to which the predecessor is a party, existing at the time the merger takes effect, is to be governed by subdivision (3), subsection (a), section one thousand one hundred six, article eleven of this chapter.

(c) A corporation may, by a provision in its articles of incorporation, limit any of the rights to indemnification or advance for expenses created by or pursuant to this part.

(d) This part does not limit a corporation's power to pay or reimburse expenses incurred by a director or an officer in connection with his or her appearance as a witness in a proceeding at a time when he or she is not a party.

(e) This part does not limit a corporation's power to indemnify, advance expenses to or provide or maintain insurance on behalf of an employee or agent.

www.Legislature.

§31D-8-859. Exclusivity of part.

A corporation may provide indemnification or advance expenses to a director or an officer only as permitted by this part.

WV Legislature

PART 6. DIRECTORS' CONFLICTING INTEREST TRANSACTIONS.

§31D-8-860. Directors' conflicting interest transactions.

(a) No contract or transaction between a corporation and one or more of its directors or officers, or between a corporation and any other corporation, partnership, association or other organization in which one or more of its directors or officers are directors or officers, or have a financial interest, is void or voidable solely for this reason or solely because the director or officer is present at or participates in the meeting of the board or committee thereof which authorizes the contract or transaction or solely because any director's or officer's votes are counted for the purpose, if:

(1) The material facts as to the director's or officer's relationship or interest and as to the contract or transaction are disclosed or are known to the board of directors or the committee and the board or committee in good faith authorizes the contract or transaction by the affirmative votes of a majority of the disinterested directors, even though the disinterested directors be less than a quorum; or

(2) The material facts as to the director's or officer's relationship or interest and as to the contract or transaction are disclosed or are known to the members entitled to vote on the contract or transaction and the contract or transaction is specifically approved in good faith by vote of the members entitled to vote; or

(3) The contract or transaction is fair as to the corporation as of the time it is authorized, approved or ratified by the board of directors, a committee of the board of directors or the members.

(b) Common or interested directors may be counted in determining the presence of a quorum at a meeting of the board of directors or of a committee which authorizes the contract or transaction.

WV Legislature

PART 1. AMENDMENT OF ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION.

§31D-10-1001. Authority to amend.

(a) A corporation may amend its articles of incorporation at any time to add or change a provision that is required or permitted in the articles of incorporation or to delete a provision not required in the articles of incorporation. Whether a provision is required or permitted in the articles of incorporation is determined as of the effective date of the amendment.

(b) A shareholder of the corporation does not have a vested property right resulting from any provision in the articles of incorporation, including provisions relating to management, control, capital structure, dividend entitlement or purpose or duration of the corporation.

WV Legislature

§31D-10-1002. Amendment before issuance of shares.

If a corporation has not yet issued shares, its board of directors, or its incorporators if it has no board of directors, may adopt one or more amendments to the corporation's articles of incorporation.

WV Legislature

§31D-10-1003. Amendment by board of directors and shareholders.

If a corporation has issued shares, an amendment to the articles of incorporation must be adopted in the following manner:

(1) The proposed amendment must be adopted by the board of directors.

(2) Except as provided in sections one thousand five, one thousand seven and one thousand eight of this article, after adopting the proposed amendment the board of directors must submit the amendment to the shareholders for their approval. The board of directors must also transmit to the shareholders a recommendation that the shareholders approve the amendment, unless the board of directors makes a determination that because of conflicts of interest or other special circumstances it should not make the recommendation, in which case the board of directors must transmit to the shareholders the basis for that determination.

(3) The board of directors may condition its submission of the amendment to the shareholders on any basis.

(4) If the amendment is required to be approved by the shareholders and the approval is to be given at a meeting, the corporation must notify each shareholder, whether or not entitled to vote, of the meeting of shareholders at which the amendment is to be submitted for approval. The notice must state that the purpose, or one of the purposes, of the meeting is to consider the amendment and must contain or be accompanied by a copy of the amendment.

(5) Unless the articles of incorporation, or the board of directors acting pursuant to subdivision (3) of this section, requires a greater vote or a greater number of shares to be present, approval of the amendment requires the approval of the shareholders at a meeting at which a quorum consisting of at least a majority of the votes entitled to be cast on the amendment exists and, if any class or series of shares is entitled to vote as a separate group on the amendment, except as provided in subsection (c), section one thousand four of this article, the approval of each separate voting group at a meeting at which a quorum of the voting group consisting of at least a majority of the votes entitled to be cast on the amendment by that voting group exists.

WV Legislature

§31D-10-1004. Voting on amendments by voting groups.

(a) If a corporation has more than one class of shares outstanding, the holders of the outstanding shares of a class are entitled to vote as a separate voting group, if shareholder voting is otherwise required by this chapter, on a proposed amendment to the articles of incorporation if the amendment would:

(1) Effect an exchange or reclassification of all or part of the shares of the class into shares of another class;

(2) Effect an exchange or reclassification, or create the right of exchange, of all or part of the shares of another class into shares of the class;

(3) Change the rights, preferences or limitations of all or part of the shares of the class;

(4) Change the shares of all or part of the class into a different number of shares of the same class;

(5) Create a new class of shares having rights or preferences with respect to distributions or to dissolution that are prior or superior to the shares of the class;

(6) Increase the rights, preferences or number of authorized shares of any class that, after giving effect to the amendment, have rights or preferences with respect to distributions or to dissolution that are prior or superior to the shares of the class;

(7) Limit or deny an existing preemptive right of all or part of the shares of the class; or

(8) Cancel or otherwise affect rights to distributions that have accumulated but not yet been authorized on all or part of the shares of the class.

(b) If a proposed amendment would affect a series of a class of shares in one or more of the ways described in subsection (a) of this section, the holders of shares of that series are entitled to vote as a separate voting group on the proposed amendment.

(c) If a proposed amendment that entitles the holders of two or more classes or series of shares to vote as separate voting groups under this section would affect those two or more classes or series in the same or a substantially similar way, the holders of shares of all the classes or series affected by the proposed amendment must vote together as a single voting group on the proposed amendment, unless otherwise provided in the articles of incorporation or required by the board of directors.

(d) A class or series of shares is entitled to the voting rights granted by this section although the articles of incorporation provide that the shares are nonvoting shares.

WV Legislature

§31D-10-1005. Amendment by board of directors.

Unless the articles of incorporation provide otherwise, a corporation's board of directors may adopt amendments to the corporation's articles of incorporation without shareholder approval:

(1) To extend the duration of the corporation if it was incorporated at a time when limited duration was required by law;

(2) To delete the names and addresses of the initial directors;

(3) To delete the name and address of the initial registered agent or registered office, if any, if a statement of change is on file with the Secretary of State;

(4) If the corporation has only one class of shares outstanding:

(A) To change each issued and unissued authorized share of the class into a greater number of whole shares of that class; or

(B) To increase the number of authorized shares of the class to the extent necessary to permit the issuance of shares as a share dividend;

(5) To change the corporate name by substituting the word "corporation", "incorporated", "company", "limited" or the abbreviation "corp.", "inc.", "co." or "ltd." for a similar word or abbreviation in the name, or by adding, deleting or changing a geographical attribution for the name;

(6) To reflect a reduction in authorized shares, as a result of the operation of subsection (b), section six hundred thirty-one, article six of this chapter, when the corporation has acquired its own shares and the articles of incorporation prohibit the reissue of the acquired shares;

(7) To delete a class of shares from the articles of incorporation, as a result of the operation of subsection (b), section six hundred thirty-one, article six of this chapter, when there are no remaining shares of the class because the corporation has acquired all shares of the class and the articles of incorporation prohibit the reissue of the acquired shares; or

(8) To make any change expressly permitted by subsection (d), section six hundred two, article six of this chapter to be made without shareholder approval.

WV Legislature

§31D-10-1006. Articles of amendment.

After an amendment to the articles of incorporation has been adopted and approved in the manner required by this chapter and by the articles of incorporation, the corporation shall deliver to the Secretary of State, for filing, articles of amendment, setting forth:

(1) The name of the corporation;

(2) The text of each amendment adopted;

(3) If an amendment provides for an exchange, reclassification or cancellation of issued shares, provisions for implementing the amendment if not contained in the amendment itself;

(4) The date of each amendment's adoption; and

(5) If an amendment:

(A) Was adopted by the incorporators or board of directors without shareholder approval, a statement that the amendment was duly approved by the incorporators or by the board of directors, as required, and that shareholder approval was not required;

(B) Required approval by the shareholders, a statement that the amendment was duly approved by the shareholders in the manner required by this chapter and by the articles of incorporation.

WV Legislature

§31D-10-1007. Restated articles of incorporation.

(a) A corporation's board of directors may restate its articles of incorporation at any time, with or without shareholder approval, to consolidate all amendments into a single document.

(b) If the restated articles include one or more new amendments that require shareholder approval, the amendments must be adopted and approved as provided in section one thousand three of this article.

(c) A corporation that restates its articles of incorporation shall deliver to the Secretary of State for filing articles of restatement setting forth the name of the corporation and the text of the restated articles of incorporation together with a certificate which states that the restated articles consolidate all amendments into a single document and, if a new amendment is included in the restated articles, which also includes the statements required under section one thousand six of this article.

(d) Duly adopted restated articles of incorporation supersede the original articles of incorporation and all amendments to it.

(e) The Secretary of State may certify restated articles of incorporation as the articles of incorporation currently in effect, without including the certificate information required by subsection (c) of this section.

WV Legislature

§31D-10-1008. Amendment pursuant to reorganization.

(a) A corporation's articles of incorporation may be amended without action by the board of directors or shareholders to carry out a plan of reorganization ordered or decreed by a court of competent jurisdiction under the authority of federal law.

(b) The individual or individuals designated by the court shall deliver to the Secretary of State for filing articles of amendment setting forth:

(1) The name of the corporation;

(2) The text of each amendment approved by the court;

(3) The date of the court's order or decree approving the articles of amendment;

(4) The title of the reorganization proceeding in which the order or decree was entered; and

(5) A statement that the court had jurisdiction of the proceeding under federal law.

(c) This section does not apply after entry of a final decree in the reorganization proceeding even though the court retains jurisdiction of the proceeding for limited purposes unrelated to consummation of the reorganization plan.

WV Legislature

§31D-10-1009. Effect of amendment.

An amendment to the articles of incorporation does not affect a cause of action existing against or in favor of the corporation, a proceeding to which the corporation is a party or the existing rights of persons other than shareholders of the corporation. An amendment changing a corporation's name does not abate a proceeding brought by or against the corporation in its former name.

WV Legislature

PART 2. AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS.

§31D-10-1020. Amendment by board of directors or shareholders.

(a) A corporation's shareholders may amend or repeal the corporation's bylaws.

(b) A corporation's board of directors may amend or repeal the corporation's bylaws, unless:

(1) The articles of incorporation or section one thousand twenty-one of this article reserve that power exclusively to the shareholders, in whole or in part; or

(2) The shareholders in amending, repealing or adopting a bylaw expressly provide that the board of directors may not amend, repeal or reinstate that bylaw.

WV Legislature

§31D-10-1021. Bylaw increasing quorum or voting requirement for directors.

(a) A bylaw that increases a quorum or voting requirement for the board of directors may be amended or repealed:

(1) If adopted by the shareholders, only by the shareholders, unless the bylaw otherwise provides; or

(2) If adopted by the board of directors, either by the shareholders or by the board of directors.

(b) A bylaw adopted or amended by the shareholders that increases a quorum or voting requirement for the board of directors may provide that it can be amended or repealed only by a specified vote of either the shareholders or the board of directors.

(c) Action by the board of directors under subsection (a) of this section to amend or repeal a bylaw that changes the quorum or voting requirement for the board of directors must meet the same quorum requirement and be adopted by the same vote required to take action under the quorum and voting requirement then in effect or proposed to be adopted, whichever is greater.

WV Legislature

§31D-11-1101. Definitions.

As used in this article:

(a) "Interests" means the proprietary interests in an other entity.

(b) "Merger" means a business combination pursuant to section one thousand one hundred two of this article.

(c) "Organizational documents" means the basic document or documents that create, or determine the internal governance of, an other entity.

(d) "Other entity" means any association or legal entity, other than a domestic or foreign corporation, organized to conduct business, including, but not limited to, limited partnerships, general partnerships, limited liability partnerships, limited liability companies, joint ventures, joint stock companies and business trusts.

(e) "Party to a merger" or "party to a share exchange" means any domestic or foreign corporation or other entity that will either:

(1) Merge under a plan of merger;

(2) Acquire shares or interests of another corporation or an other entity in a share exchange; or

(3) Have all of its shares or interests or all of one or more classes or series of its shares or interests acquired in a share exchange.

(f) "Share exchange" means a business combination pursuant to section one thousand one hundred three of this article.

(g) "Survivor" in a merger means the corporation or other entity into which one or more other corporations or other entities are merged. A survivor of a merger may preexist the merger or be created by the merger.

WV Legislature

§31D-11-1102. Merger.

(a) One or more domestic corporations may merge with a domestic or foreign corporation or other entity pursuant to a plan of merger.

(b) A foreign corporation, or a domestic or foreign other entity, may be a party to the merger or may be created by the terms of the plan of merger, only if:

(1) The merger is permitted by the laws under which the corporation or other entity is organized or by which it is governed; and

(2) In effecting the merger, the corporation or other entity complies with the laws under which the corporation or other entity is organized or by which it is governed and with its articles of incorporation or organizational documents.

(c) The plan of merger must include:

(1) The name of each corporation or other entity that will merge and the name of the corporation or other entity that will be the survivor of the merger;

(2) The terms and conditions of the merger;

(3) The manner and basis of converting the shares of each merging corporation and interests of each merging other entity into shares or other securities, interests, obligations, rights to acquire shares or other securities, cash, other property or any combination of the foregoing;

(4) The articles of incorporation of any corporation, or the organizational documents of any other entity, to be created by the merger, or if a new corporation or other entity is not to be created by the merger, any amendments to the survivor's articles of incorporation or organizational documents; and

(5) Any other provisions required by the laws under which any party to the merger is organized or by which it is governed, or by the articles of incorporation or organizational documents of any party to the merger.

(d) The terms described in subdivisions (2) and (3), subsection (c) of this section may be made dependent on facts ascertainable outside the plan of merger, provided that those facts are objectively ascertainable. The term "facts" includes, but is not limited to, the occurrence of any event, including a determination or action by any person or body, including the corporation.

(e) The plan of merger may also include a provision that the plan may be amended prior to filing the articles of merger with the Secretary of State: Provided, That if the shareholders of a domestic corporation that is a party to the merger are required or permitted to vote on the plan, the plan must provide that subsequent to approval of the plan by the shareholders the plan may not be amended to:

WV Legislature

(1) Change the amount or kind of shares or other securities, interests, obligations, rights to acquire shares or other securities, cash or other property to be received by the shareholders of or owners of interests in any party to the merger upon conversion of their shares or interests under the plan;

(2) Change the articles of incorporation of any corporation, or the organizational documents of any other entity, that will survive or be created as a result of the merger, except for changes permitted by section one thousand five, article ten of this chapter or by comparable provisions of the laws under which the foreign corporation or other entity is organized or governed; or

(3) Change any of the other terms or conditions of the plan if the change would adversely affect the shareholders in any material respect.

WV Legislature

§31D-11-1103. Share exchange.

(a) Through a share exchange:

(1) A domestic corporation may acquire all of the shares of one or more classes or series of shares of another domestic or foreign corporation, or all of the interests of one or more classes or series of interests of a domestic or foreign other entity, in exchange for shares or other securities, interests, obligations, rights to acquire shares or other securities, cash, other property or any combination of the foregoing, pursuant to a plan of share exchange; or

(2) All of the shares of one or more classes or series of shares of a domestic corporation may be acquired by another domestic or foreign corporation or other entity, in exchange for shares or other securities, interests, obligations, rights to acquire shares or other securities, cash, other property or any combination of the foregoing, pursuant to a plan of share exchange.

(b) A foreign corporation, or a domestic or foreign other entity, may be a party to the share exchange only if:

(1) The share exchange is permitted by the laws under which the corporation or other entity is organized or by which it is governed; and

(2) In effecting the share exchange, the corporation or other entity complies with the laws under which the corporation or other entity is organized or by which it is governed and with its articles of incorporation or organizational documents.

(c) The plan of share exchange must include:

(1) The name of each corporation or other entity whose shares or interests will be acquired and the name of the corporation or other entity that will acquire those shares or interests;

(2) The terms and conditions of the share exchange;

(3) The manner and basis of exchanging shares of a corporation or interests in an other entity whose shares or interests will be acquired under the share exchange into shares or other securities, interests, obligations, rights to acquire shares or other securities, cash, other property or any combination of the foregoing; and

(4) Any other provisions required by the laws under which any party to the share exchange is organized or by the articles of incorporation or organizational documents of any party to the share exchange.

(d) The terms described in subdivisions (2) and (3), subsection (c) of this section may be made dependent on facts ascertainable outside the plan of share exchange, provided that those facts are objectively ascertainable. The term "facts" includes, but is not limited to, the occurrence of any event, including a determination or action by any person or body,

WV Legislature

including the corporation.

(e) The plan of share exchange may also include a provision that the plan may be amended prior to filing of the articles of share exchange with the Secretary of State: Provided, That if the shareholders of a domestic corporation that is a party to the share exchange are required or permitted to vote on the plan, the plan must provide that subsequent to approval of the plan by shareholders the plan may not be amended to:

(1) Change the amount or kind of shares or other securities, interests, obligations, rights to acquire shares or other securities, cash or other property to be issued by the corporation or to be received by the shareholders of or owners of interests in any party to the share exchange in exchange for their shares or interests under the plan; or

(2) Change any of the terms or conditions of the plan if the change would adversely affect the shareholders in any material respect.

(f) This section does not limit the power of a domestic corporation to acquire shares of another corporation or interests in another entity in a transaction other than a share exchange.

WV Legislature

§31D-11-1104. Action on a plan of merger or share exchange.

In the case of a domestic corporation that is a party to a merger or share exchange:

(1) The plan of merger or share exchange must be adopted by the board of directors.

(2) Except as provided in subdivision (7) of this section and in section one thousand one hundred five of this article, after adopting the plan of merger or share exchange the board of directors must submit the plan to the shareholders for their approval. The board of directors must also transmit to the shareholders a recommendation that the shareholders approve the plan, unless the board of directors determines that because of conflicts of interest or other special circumstances it should not make a recommendation, in which case the board of directors must transmit to the shareholders the basis for that determination.

(3) The board of directors may condition its submission of the plan of merger or share exchange to the shareholders on any basis.

(4) If the plan of merger or share exchange is required to be approved by the shareholders and if the approval is to be given at a meeting, the corporation must notify each shareholder, whether or not entitled to vote, of the meeting of shareholders at which the plan is to be submitted for approval. The notice must state that the purpose, or one of the purposes, of the meeting is to consider the plan and must contain or be accompanied by a copy or summary of the plan. If the corporation is to be merged into an existing corporation or other entity, the notice is also to include or be accompanied by a copy or summary of the articles of incorporation or organizational documents of that corporation or other entity. If the corporation is to be merged into a corporation or other entity that is to be created pursuant to the merger, the notice is to include or be accompanied by a copy or a summary of the articles of incorporation or organizational documents of the new corporation or other entity.

(5) Unless the articles of incorporation, or the board of directors acting pursuant to subdivision (3) of this section, requires a greater vote or a greater number of votes to be present, approval of the plan of merger or share exchange requires the approval of the shareholders at a meeting at which a quorum consisting of at least a majority of the votes entitled to be cast on the plan exists and, if any class or series of shares is entitled to vote as a separate group on the plan of merger or share exchange, the approval of each separate voting group at a meeting at which a quorum of the voting group consisting of at least a majority of the votes entitled to be cast on the merger or share exchange by that voting group is present.

(6) Separate voting by voting groups is required:

(A) On a plan of merger, by each class or series of shares that: (i) Are to be converted, pursuant to the provisions of the plan of merger, into shares or other securities, interests, obligations, rights to acquire shares or other securities, cash, other property or any combination of the foregoing; or (ii) would have a right to vote as a separate group on a

WV Legislature

provision in the plan that, if contained in a proposed amendment to articles of incorporation, would require action by separate voting groups under section one thousand four, article ten of this chapter;

(B) On a plan of share exchange, by each class or series of shares included in the exchange, with each class or series constituting a separate voting group; and

(C) On a plan of merger or share exchange, if the voting group is entitled under the articles of incorporation to vote as a voting group to approve a plan of merger or share exchange.

(7) Unless the articles of incorporation otherwise provide, approval by the corporation's shareholders of a plan of merger or share exchange is not required if:

(A) The corporation will survive the merger or is the acquiring corporation in a share exchange;

(B) Except for amendments permitted by section one thousand five, article ten of this chapter, its articles of incorporation will not be changed;

(C) Each shareholder of the corporation whose shares were outstanding immediately before the effective date of the merger or share exchange will hold the same number of shares, with identical preferences, limitations and relative rights, immediately after the effective date of change; and

(D) The issuance in the merger or share exchange of shares or other securities convertible into or rights exercisable for shares does not require a vote under subsection (f), section six hundred twenty-one, article six of this chapter.

(8) If as a result of a merger or share exchange one or more shareholders of a domestic corporation would become subject to personal liability for the obligations or liabilities of any other person or entity, approval of the plan of merger requires the execution, by each shareholder subject to liability, of a separate written consent to become subject to personal liability.

www.Legislature

§31D-11-1105. Merger between parent and subsidiary or between subsidiaries.

(a) A domestic parent corporation that owns shares of a domestic or foreign subsidiary corporation that carry at least ninety percent of the voting power of each class and series of the outstanding shares of the subsidiary that have voting power may merge the subsidiary into itself or into another subsidiary, or merge itself into the subsidiary, without the approval of the board of directors or shareholders of the subsidiary, unless the articles of incorporation of any of the corporations otherwise provide, and unless, in the case of a foreign subsidiary, approval by the subsidiary's board of directors or shareholders is required by the laws under which the subsidiary is organized.

(b) If under subsection (a) of this section approval of a merger by the subsidiary's shareholders is not required, the parent corporation shall, within ten days after the effective date of the merger, notify each of the subsidiary's shareholders that the merger has become effective.

(c) Except as provided in subsections (a) and (b) of this section, a merger between a parent and a subsidiary is to be governed by the provisions of this article applicable to mergers generally.

WV Legislature

§31D-11-1106. Articles of merger or share exchange.

(a) After a plan of merger or share exchange has been adopted and approved as required by this chapter, articles of merger or share exchange are to be executed on behalf of each party to the merger or share exchange by any officer or other duly authorized representative. The articles are to set forth:

(1) The names of the parties to the merger or share exchange and the date on which the merger or share exchange occurred or is to be effective;

(2) If the articles of incorporation of the survivor of a merger are amended, or if a new corporation is created as a result of a merger, the amendments to the survivor's articles of incorporation or the articles of incorporation of the new corporation;

(3) If the plan of merger or share exchange required approval by the shareholders of a domestic corporation that was a party to the merger or share exchange, a statement that the plan was duly approved by the shareholders and, if voting by any separate voting group was required, by each separate voting group in the manner required by this chapter and the articles of incorporation;

(4) If the plan of merger or share exchange did not require approval by the shareholders of a domestic corporation that was a party to the merger or share exchange, a statement to that effect; and

(5) As to each foreign corporation and each other entity that was a party to the merger or share exchange, a statement that the plan and the performance of its terms were duly authorized by all action required by the laws under which the corporation or other entity is organized, or by which it is governed, and by its articles of incorporation or organizational documents.

(b) Articles of merger or share exchange are to be delivered to the Secretary of State for filing by the survivor of the merger or the acquiring corporation in a share exchange and take effect upon issuance by the Secretary of State of a certificate of merger to the survivor corporation.

(c) The Secretary of State shall withhold the issuance of any certificate of merger in the case where the new or surviving corporation will be a foreign corporation which has not qualified to conduct affairs or do or transact business or hold property in this state until the receipt by the Secretary of State of a notice from the Tax Commissioner and Bureau of Employment Programs to the effect that all taxes due from said corporation under the provisions of chapter eleven of this code, including, but not limited to, taxes withheld under the provisions of section seventy-one, article twenty-one, chapter eleven of this code, all business and occupation taxes, motor carrier and transportation privilege taxes, gasoline taxes, consumers sales taxes and any and all license franchise or other excise taxes and corporate net income taxes and employment security payments levied or assessed against the

WV Legislature

corporation seeking to dissolve have been paid or that the payment has been provided for, or until the Secretary of State received a notice from the Tax Commissioner or Bureau of Employment Programs stating that the corporation in question is not subject to payment of any taxes or to the making of any employment security payments or assessments.

WV Legislature

§31D-11-1107. Effect of merger or share exchange.

(a) When a merger takes effect:

(1) The corporation or other entity that is designated in the plan of merger as the survivor continues or comes into existence, as the case may be;

(2) The separate existence of every corporation or other entity that is merged into the survivor ceases;

(3) All property owned by, and every contract right possessed by, each corporation or other entity that merges into the survivor is vested in the survivor without reversion or impairment;

(4) All real property located in the state owned by each corporation or other entity that merges into the survivor passes by operation of law and the transfer is evidenced by recording a confirmation deed in each county in which the real property is located. No transfer or excise taxes may be assessed for the recording of the confirmation deeds;

(5) All liabilities of each corporation or other entity that is merged into the survivor are vested in the survivor;

(6) The name of the survivor may, but need not be, substituted in any pending proceeding for the name of any party to the merger whose separate existence ceased in the merger;

(7) The articles of incorporation or organizational documents of the survivor are amended to the extent provided in the plan of merger;

(8) The articles of incorporation or organizational documents of a survivor that is created by the merger become effective; and

(9) The shares of each corporation that is a party to the merger, and the interests in an other entity that is a party to a merger, that are to be converted under the plan of merger into shares, interests, obligations, rights to acquire securities, other securities, cash, other property or any combination of the foregoing are converted and the former holders of the shares or interests are entitled only to the rights provided to them in the plan of merger or to any rights they may have under article thirteen of this chapter.

(b) When a share exchange becomes effective, the shares of each domestic corporation that are to be exchanged for shares or other securities, interests, obligations, rights to acquire shares or other securities, cash, other property or any combination of the foregoing are entitled only to the rights provided to them in the plan of share exchange or to any rights they may have under article thirteen of this chapter.

(c) Any shareholder of a domestic corporation that is a party to a merger or share exchange who, prior to the merger or share exchange, was liable for the liabilities or obligations of the

WV Legislature

corporation, may not be released from the liabilities or obligations by reason of the merger or share exchange.

(d) Upon a merger becoming effective, a foreign corporation, or a foreign other entity, that is the survivor of the merger is deemed to:

(1) Appoint the Secretary of State as its agent for service of process in a proceeding to enforce the rights of shareholders of each domestic corporation that is a party to the merger who exercise appraisal rights; and

(2) Agree that it will promptly pay the amount, if any, to which the shareholders are entitled under article thirteen of this chapter.

WV Legislature

§31D-11-1108. Abandonment of a merger or share exchange.

(a) Unless otherwise provided in a plan of merger or share exchange or in the laws under which a foreign corporation or a domestic or foreign other entity that is a party to a merger or a share exchange is organized or by which it is governed, after the plan has been adopted and approved as required by this article, and at any time before the merger or share exchange has become effective, it may be abandoned by any party thereto without action by the party's shareholders or owners of interests, in accordance with any procedures set forth in the plan of merger or share exchange or, if no procedures are set forth in the plan, in the manner determined by the board of directors of a corporation, or the managers of an other entity, subject to any contractual rights of other parties to the merger or share exchange.

(b) If a merger or share exchange is abandoned under subsection (a) of this section after articles of merger or share exchange have been filed with the Secretary of State but before the merger or share exchange has become effective, a statement that the merger or share exchange has been abandoned in accordance with this section, executed on behalf of a party to the merger or share exchange by an officer or other duly authorized representative, is to be delivered to the Secretary of State for filing prior to the effective date of the merger or share exchange. Upon filing, the statement is to take effect and the merger or share exchange is to be deemed abandoned and may not become effective.

WV Legislature

§31D-11-1109. Conversion of a domestic corporation to a domestic limited liability company.

(a) A corporation of this state may convert to a limited liability company, in accordance with this section.

(b) The Board of Directors of the corporation which desires to convert under this section shall adopt a plan of conversion approving the conversion and recommending the approval of the conversion by the shareholders of the corporation. Such resolution shall be submitted to the shareholders of the corporation at an annual or special meeting. The corporation must notify each shareholder, whether or not entitled to vote of the meeting of shareholders at which the plan of conversion is to be submitted for approval. At the meeting, the plan of conversion shall be considered and a vote taken for its adoption or rejection. Approval of the plan of conversion requires the approval of all of the shareholders, whether or not entitled to vote.

(c) After a plan of conversion is approved pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, the corporation shall file with the office of the Secretary of State articles of conversion which satisfy the requirements for articles of organization under section two hundred three, article two, chapter thirty-one-b of this code and which set forth:

(1) The name of the corporation, and if it has been changed, the name under which it was originally incorporated;

(2) The date of filing of its original articles of incorporation with the office of the Secretary of State;

(3) The name of the limited liability company into which the corporation shall be converted; and

(4) That the conversion has been approved in accordance with the provisions of this section.

(d) Upon the filing of articles of conversion in accordance with subsection (c) of this section and payment to the Secretary of State of all fees prescribed, the Secretary of State shall issue a certificate of conversion. Such certificate of the Secretary of State shall be prima facie evidence of the conversion of the corporation.

(e) A conversion takes effect when the articles of conversion are filed in the office of the Secretary of State or at any later date specified in the articles of conversion.

(f) The conversion of a corporation pursuant to articles of conversion under this section shall not be deemed to affect any obligations or liabilities of the corporation incurred prior to the conversion or the personal liability of any person incurred prior to the conversion.

(g) After the time the certificate of conversion becomes effective the corporation shall continue to exist as a limited liability company and the laws of this state shall apply to the

WV Legislature

entity to the same extent as prior to that time.

(h) Unless otherwise provided in the plan of conversion adopted in accordance with this section, the converting corporation shall not be required to wind up its affairs or pay its liabilities and distribute its assets, and the conversion shall not constitute a dissolution of the corporation and shall constitute a continuation of the existence of the converting corporation in the form of a limited liability company of this state.

(i) When a corporation has been converted to a limited liability corporation pursuant to this section, the limited liability company shall, for all purposes of the laws of this state, be deemed to be the same entity as the converting corporation, and all of the rights, privileges and powers of the corporation that has been converted, and all property, real, personal and mixed, and all debts due to the corporation, as well as all other things and causes of action belonging to the corporation, shall remain vested in the limited liability company to which the corporation has been converted and shall be the property of the limited liability company, and the title to any real property vested by deed or otherwise in the corporation shall not revert or in any way be impaired by reason of this chapter; but all rights of creditors and all liens upon the property of the corporation shall be preserved unimpaired, and all debts, liabilities and duties of the corporation that has been converted shall remain attached to the limited liability company to which the corporation has been converted, and may be enforced against it to the same extent as if said debts, liabilities and duties had originally been incurred or contracted by it in its capacity as a limited liability company. The rights, privileges, powers and interests in property of the corporation, as well as the debts, liabilities and duties of the corporation, shall not be deemed, as a consequence of the conversion, to have been transferred to the limited liability company to which the corporation has been converted for any purpose of the laws of this state.

WV Legislature

§31D-12-1201. Disposition of assets not requiring shareholder approval.

No approval of the shareholders of a corporation is required, unless the articles of incorporation otherwise provide:

(1) To sell, lease, exchange or otherwise dispose of any or all of the corporation's assets in the usual and regular course of business;

(2) To mortgage, pledge, dedicate to the repayment of indebtedness with or without recourse, or otherwise encumber any or all of the corporation's assets, whether or not in the usual and regular course of business;

(3) To transfer any or all of the corporation's assets to one or more corporations or other entities all of the shares or interests of which are owned by the corporation; or

(4) To distribute assets pro rata to the holders of one or more classes or series of the corporation's shares.

WV Legislature

§31D-12-1202. Shareholder approval of certain dispositions.

(a) A sale, lease, exchange or other disposition of assets, other than a disposition described in section one thousand two hundred one of this article, requires approval of the corporation's shareholders if the disposition would leave the corporation without a significant continuing business activity. If a corporation retains a business activity that represented at least twenty-five percent of total assets at the end of the most recently completed fiscal year and twenty-five percent of either income from continuing operations before taxes or revenues from continuing operations for that fiscal year, in each case of the corporation and its subsidiaries on a consolidated basis, the corporation will conclusively be deemed to have retained a significant continuing business activity.

(b) A disposition that requires approval of the shareholders under subsection (a) of this section must be initiated by a resolution by the board of directors authorizing the disposition. After adoption of the resolution, the board of directors shall submit the proposed disposition to the shareholders for their approval. The board of directors shall also transmit to the shareholders a recommendation that the shareholders approve the proposed disposition, unless the board of directors makes a determination that because of conflicts of interest or other special circumstances it should not make a recommendation that the shareholders approve the disposition, in which case the board of directors shall transmit to the shareholders the basis for that determination.

(c) The board of directors may condition its submission of a disposition to the shareholders under subsection (b) of this section on any basis.

(d) If a disposition is required to be approved by the shareholders under subsection (a) of this section and if the approval is to be given at a meeting, the corporation shall notify each shareholder, whether or not entitled to vote, of the meeting of shareholders at which the disposition is to be submitted for approval. The notice must state that the purpose, or one of the purposes, of the meeting is to consider the disposition and must contain a description of the disposition, including the terms and conditions of the disposition and the consideration to be received by the corporation.

(e) Unless the articles of incorporation or the board of directors acting pursuant to subsection (c) of this section requires a greater vote, or a greater number of votes to be present, the approval of a disposition by the shareholders requires the approval of the shareholders at a meeting at which a quorum consisting of at least a majority of the votes entitled to be cast on the disposition exists.

(f) After a disposition has been approved by the shareholders under subsection (b) of this section, and at any time before the disposition has been consummated, it may be abandoned by the corporation without action by the shareholders, subject to any contractual rights of other parties to the disposition.

(g) A disposition of assets in the course of dissolution under article fourteen of this chapter is

WV Legislature

not governed by this section.

(h) The assets of a direct or indirect consolidated subsidiary are to be deemed the assets of the parent corporation for the purposes of this section.

WV Legislature

PART 1. RIGHT TO APPRAISAL AND PAYMENT FOR SHARES.

§31D-13-1301. Definitions.

In this article:

(1) "Affiliate" means a person that directly or indirectly through one or more intermediaries controls, is controlled by or is under common control with another person or is a senior executive. For purposes of subdivision (4), subsection (b), section one thousand three hundred two of this article, a person is deemed to be an affiliate of its senior executives.

(2) "Beneficial shareholder" means a person who is the beneficial owner of shares held in a voting trust or by a nominee on the beneficial owner's behalf.

(3) "Corporation" means the issuer of the shares held by a shareholder demanding appraisal and, for matters covered in sections one thousand three hundred twenty-two, one thousand three hundred twenty-three, one thousand three hundred twenty-four, one thousand three hundred twenty-five, one thousand three hundred twenty-six, one thousand three hundred thirty and one thousand three hundred thirty-one of this article, includes the surviving entity in a merger.

(4) "Fair value" means the value of the corporation's shares determined:

(A) Immediately before the effectuation of the corporate action to which the shareholder objects;

(B) Using customary and current valuation concepts and techniques generally employed for similar businesses in the context of the transaction requiring appraisal; and

(C) Without discounting for lack of marketability or minority status except, if appropriate, for amendments to the articles pursuant to subdivision (5), subsection (a), section one thousand three hundred two of this article.

(5) "Interest" means interest from the effective date of the corporate action until the date of payment, at the rate of interest on judgments in this state on the effective date of the corporate action.

(6) "Preferred shares" means a class or series of shares whose holders have preference over any other class or series with respect to distributions.

(7) "Record shareholder" means the person in whose name shares are registered in the records of the corporation or the beneficial owner of shares to the extent of the rights granted by a nominee certificate on file with the corporation.

(8) "Senior executive" means the chief executive officer, chief operating officer, chief financial officer and anyone in charge of a principal business unit or function.

WV Legislature

(9) "Shareholder" means both a record shareholder and a beneficial shareholder.

WV Legislature

§31D-13-1302. Right to appraisal.

(a) A shareholder is entitled to appraisal rights, and to obtain payment of the fair value of that shareholder's shares, in the event of any of the following corporate actions:

(1) Consummation of a merger to which the corporation is a party: (A) If shareholder approval is required for the merger by section one thousand one hundred four, article eleven of this chapter and the shareholder is entitled to vote on the merger, except that appraisal rights may not be available to any shareholder of the corporation with respect to shares of any class or series that remain outstanding after consummation of the merger; or (B) if the corporation is a subsidiary and the merger is governed by section one thousand one hundred five, article eleven of this chapter;

(2) Consummation of a share exchange to which the corporation is a party as the corporation whose shares will be acquired if the shareholder is entitled to vote on the exchange, except that appraisal rights may not be available to any shareholder of the corporation with respect to any class or series of shares of the corporation that is not exchanged;

(3) Consummation of a disposition of assets pursuant to section one thousand two hundred two, article twelve of this chapter if the shareholder is entitled to vote on the disposition;

(4) An amendment of the articles of incorporation with respect to a class or series of shares that reduces the number of shares of a class or series owned by the shareholder to a fraction of a share if the corporation has the obligation or right to repurchase the fractional share so created; or

(5) Any other amendment to the articles of incorporation, merger, share exchange or disposition of assets to the extent provided by the articles of incorporation, bylaws or a resolution of the board of directors.

(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, the availability of appraisal rights under subdivisions (1), (2), (3) and (4), subsection (a) of this section are limited in accordance with the following provisions:

(1) Appraisal rights may not be available for the holders of shares of any class or series of shares which is:

(A) Listed on the New York stock exchange or the American stock exchange or designated as a national market system security on an interdealer quotation system by the national association of securities dealers, inc.; or

(B) Not so listed or designated, but has at least two thousand shareholders and the outstanding shares of a class or series has a market value of at least $20 million, exclusive of the value of the shares held by its subsidiaries, senior executives, directors and beneficial shareholders owning more than ten percent of the shares.

WV Legislature

(2) The applicability of subdivision (1), subsection (b) of this section is to be determined as of:

(A) The record date fixed to determine the shareholders entitled to receive notice of, and to vote at, the meeting of shareholders to act upon the corporate action requiring appraisal rights; or

(B) The day before the effective date of the corporate action if there is no meeting of shareholders.

(3) Subdivision (1), subsection (b) of this section is not applicable and appraisal rights are to be available pursuant to subsection (a) of this section for the holders of any class or series of shares who are required by the terms of the corporate action requiring appraisal rights to accept for the shares anything other than cash or shares of any class or any series of shares of any corporation, or any other proprietary interest of any other entity, that satisfies the standards set forth in subdivision (1), section (b) of this section at the time the corporate action becomes effective.

(4) Subdivision (1), subsection (b) of this section is not applicable and appraisal rights are to be available pursuant to subsection (a) of this section for the holders of any class or series of shares where any of the shares or assets of the corporation are being acquired or converted, whether by merger, share exchange or otherwise, pursuant to the corporate action by a person, or by an affiliate of a person, who: (A) Is, or at any time in the one-year period immediately preceding approval by the board of directors of the corporate action requiring appraisal rights was, the beneficial owner of twenty percent or more of the voting power of the corporation, excluding any shares acquired pursuant to an offer for all shares having voting power if the offer was made within one year prior to the corporate action requiring appraisal rights for consideration of the same kind and of a value equal to or less than that paid in connection with the corporate action; or (B) for purpose of voting their shares of the corporation, each member of the group formed is deemed to have acquired beneficial ownership, as of the date of the agreement, of all voting shares of the corporation beneficially owned by any member of the group.

(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of section one thousand three hundred two of this article, the articles of incorporation as originally filed or any amendment to the articles of incorporation may limit or eliminate appraisal rights for any class or series of preferred shares, but any limitation or elimination contained in an amendment to the articles of incorporation that limits or eliminates appraisal rights for any of the shares that are outstanding immediately prior to the effective date of the amendment or that the corporation is or may be required to issue or sell pursuant to any conversion, exchange or other right existing immediately before the effective date of the amendment does not apply to any corporate action that becomes effective within one year of that date if the action would otherwise afford appraisal rights.

(d) A shareholder entitled to appraisal rights under this article may not challenge a

WV Legislature

completed corporate action for which appraisal rights are available unless the corporate action:

(1) Was not effectuated in accordance with the applicable provisions of article ten, eleven or twelve of this chapter or the corporation's articles of incorporation, bylaws or board of directors' resolution authorizing the corporate action; or

(2) Was procured as a result of fraud or material misrepresentation.

WV Legislature

§31D-13-1303. Assertion of rights by nominees and beneficial owners.

(a) A record shareholder may assert appraisal rights as to fewer than all the shares registered in the record shareholder's name but owned by a beneficial shareholder only if the record shareholder objects with respect to all shares of the class or series owned by the beneficial shareholder and notifies the corporation in writing of the name and address of each beneficial shareholder on whose behalf appraisal rights are being asserted. The rights of a record shareholder who asserts appraisal rights for only part of the shares held of record in the record shareholder's name under this subsection are to be determined as if the shares as to which the record shareholder objects and the record shareholder's other shares were registered in the names of different record shareholders.

(b) A beneficial shareholder may assert appraisal rights as to shares of any class or series held on behalf of the shareholder only if the shareholder:

(1) Submits to the corporation the record shareholder's written consent to the assertion of the rights no later than the date referred to in paragraph (D), subdivision (2), subsection (b), section one thousand three hundred twenty-two of this article; and

(2) Does so with respect to all shares of the class or series that are beneficially owned by the beneficial shareholder.

WV Legislature

PART 2. PROCEDURE FOR EXERCISE OF APPRAISAL RIGHTS.

§31D-13-1320. Notice of appraisal rights.

(a) If proposed corporate action described in subsection (a), section one thousand three hundred two of this article is to be submitted to a vote at a shareholders' meeting, the meeting notice must state that the corporation has concluded that shareholders are, are not or may be entitled to assert appraisal rights under this article. If the corporation concludes that appraisal rights are or may be available, a copy of this article must accompany the meeting notice sent to those record shareholders entitled to exercise appraisal rights.

(b) In a merger pursuant to section one thousand one hundred five, article eleven of this chapter, the parent corporation must notify in writing all record shareholders of the subsidiary who are entitled to assert appraisal rights that the corporate action became effective. The notice must be sent within ten days after the corporate action became effective and include the materials described in section one thousand three hundred twenty-two of this article.

WV Legislature

§31D-13-1321. Notice of intent to demand payment.

(a) If proposed corporate action requiring appraisal rights under section one thousand three hundred two of this article is submitted to a vote at a shareholders' meeting, a shareholder who wishes to assert appraisal rights with respect to any class or series of shares:

(1) Must deliver to the corporation before the vote is taken written notice of the shareholder's intent to demand payment if the proposed action is effectuated; and

(2) Must not vote, or cause or permit to be voted, any shares of the class or series in favor of the proposed action.

(b) A shareholder who does not satisfy the requirements of subsection (a) of this section is not entitled to payment under this article.

WV Legislature

§31D-13-1322. Appraisal notice and form.

(a) If proposed corporate action requiring appraisal rights under subsection (a), section one thousand three hundred two of this article becomes effective, the corporation must deliver a written appraisal notice and form required by subdivision (1), subsection (b) of this section to all shareholders who satisfied the requirements of section one thousand three hundred twenty-one of this article. In the case of a merger under section one thousand one hundred five, article eleven of this chapter, the parent must deliver a written appraisal notice and form to all record shareholders who may be entitled to assert appraisal rights.

(b) The appraisal notice must be sent no earlier than the date the corporate action became effective and no later than ten days after that date and must:

(1) Supply a form that specifies the date of the first announcement to shareholders of the principal terms of the proposed corporate action and requires the shareholder asserting appraisal rights to certify: (A) Whether or not beneficial ownership of those shares for which appraisal rights are asserted was acquired before that date; and (B) that the shareholder did not vote for the transaction;

(2) State:

(A) Where the form must be sent and where certificates for certificated shares must be deposited and the date by which those certificates must be deposited, which date may not be earlier than the date for receiving the required form under this subdivision;

(B) A date by which the corporation must receive the form which date may not be fewer than forty nor more than sixty days after the date the appraisal notice and form required by subsection (a) of this section are sent and state that the shareholder is deemed to have waived the right to demand appraisal with respect to the shares unless the form is received by the corporation by the specified date;

(C) The corporation's estimate of the fair value of the shares;

(D) That, if requested in writing, the corporation will provide, to the shareholder so requesting, within ten days after the date specified in paragraph (B) of this subdivision the number of shareholders who return the forms by the specified date and the total number of shares owned by them; and

(E) The date by which the notice to withdraw under section one thousand three hundred twenty-three of this article must be received, which date must be within twenty days after the date specified in paragraph (B) of this subdivision; and

(3) Be accompanied by a copy of this article.

WV Legislature

§31D-13-1323. Perfection of rights; right to withdraw.

(a) A shareholder who receives notice pursuant to section one thousand three hundred twenty-two of this article and who wishes to exercise appraisal rights must certify on the form sent by the corporation whether the beneficial owner of the shares acquired beneficial ownership of the shares before the date required to be set forth in the notice pursuant to subdivision (1), subsection (b), section one thousand three hundred twenty-two of this article. If a shareholder fails to make this certification, the corporation may elect to treat the shareholder's shares as after-acquired shares under section one thousand three hundred twenty-five of this article. In addition, a shareholder who wishes to exercise appraisal rights must execute and return the form and, in the case of certificated shares, deposit the shareholder's certificates in accordance with the terms of the notice by the date referred to in the notice pursuant to paragraph (B), subdivision (2), subsection (b), section one thousand three hundred twenty-two of this article. Once a shareholder deposits the shareholder's certificates or, in the case of uncertificated shares, returns the executed forms, that shareholder loses all rights as a shareholder unless the shareholder withdraws pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

(b) A shareholder who has complied with subsection (a) of this section may decline to exercise appraisal rights and withdraw from the appraisal process by so notifying the corporation in writing by the date set forth in the appraisal notice pursuant to paragraph (E), subdivision (2), subsection (b), section one thousand three hundred twenty-two of this article. A shareholder who fails to withdraw from the appraisal process by that date may not withdraw without the corporation's written consent.

(c) A shareholder who does not execute and return the form and, in the case of certificated shares, deposit the shareholder's share certificates where required, each by the date set forth in the notice described in subsection (b), section one thousand three hundred twenty-two of this article, is not entitled to payment under this article.

WV Legislature

§31D-13-1324. Payment.

(a) Except as provided in section one thousand three hundred twenty-five of this article, within thirty days after the form required by paragraph (B), subdivision (2), subsection (b), section one thousand three hundred twenty-two of this article is due, the corporation shall pay in cash to those shareholders who complied with subsection (a), section one thousand three hundred twenty-three of this article the amount the corporation estimates to be the fair value of their shares, plus interest.

(b) The payment to each shareholder pursuant to subsection (a) of this article must be accompanied by:

(1) Financial statements of the corporation that issued the shares to be appraised, consisting of a balance sheet as of the end of a fiscal year ending not more than sixteen months before the date of payment, an income statement for that year, a statement of changes in shareholders' equity for that year and the latest available interim financial statements, if any;

(2) A statement of the corporation's estimate of the fair value of the shares, which estimate must equal or exceed the corporation's estimate given pursuant to paragraph (C), subdivision (2), subsection (b), section one thousand three hundred twenty-two of this article; and

(3) A statement that shareholders described in subsection (a) of this section have the right to demand further payment under section one thousand three hundred twenty-six of this article and that if any shareholder does not make a demand for further payment within the time period specified, shareholder is deemed to have accepted the payment in full satisfaction of the corporation's obligations under this article.

WV Legislature

§31D-13-1325. After-acquired shares.

(a) A corporation may elect to withhold payment required by section one thousand three hundred twenty-four of this article from any shareholder who did not certify that beneficial ownership of all of the shareholder's shares for which appraisal rights are asserted was acquired before the date set forth in the appraisal notice sent pursuant to subdivision (1), subsection (b), section one thousand three hundred twenty-two of this article.

(b) If the corporation elected to withhold payment under subsection (a) of this section, it must, within thirty days after the form required by paragraph (B), subdivision (2), subsection (b), section one thousand three hundred twenty-two of this article is due, notify all shareholders who are described in subsection (a) of this section:

(1) Of the information required by subdivision (1), subsection (b), section one thousand three hundred twenty-four of this article;

(2) Of the corporation's estimate of fair value pursuant to subdivision (2), subsection (b), section one thousand three hundred twenty-four of this article;

(3) That they may accept the corporation's estimate of fair value, plus interest, in full satisfaction of their demands or demand appraisal under section one thousand three hundred twenty-six of this article;

(4) That those shareholders who wish to accept the offer must notify the corporation of their acceptance of the corporation's offer within thirty days after receiving the offer; and

(5) That those shareholders who do not satisfy the requirements for demanding appraisal under section one thousand three hundred twenty-six of this article are deemed to have accepted the corporation's offer.

(c) Within ten days after receiving the shareholder's acceptance pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, the corporation must pay in cash the amount it offered under subdivision (2), subsection (b) of this section to each shareholder who agreed to accept the corporation's offer in full satisfaction of the shareholder's demand.

(d) Within forty days after sending the notice described in subsection (b) of this section, the corporation must pay in cash the amount it offered to pay under subdivision (2), subsection (b) of this section to each shareholder described in subdivision (5), subsection (b) of this section.

WV Legislature

§31D-13-1326. Procedure if shareholder dissatisfied with payment or offer.

(a) A shareholder paid pursuant to section one thousand three hundred twenty-four of this article who is dissatisfied with the amount of the payment must notify the corporation in writing of that shareholder's estimate of the fair value of the shares and demand payment of that estimate plus interest and less any payment due under section one thousand three hundred twenty-four of this article. A shareholder offered payment under section one thousand three hundred twenty-five of this article who is dissatisfied with that offer must reject the offer and demand payment of the shareholder's stated estimate of the fair value of the shares plus interest.

(b) A shareholder who fails to notify the corporation in writing of that shareholder's demand to be paid the shareholder's stated estimate of the fair value plus interest under subsection (a) of this section within thirty days after receiving the corporation's payment or offer of payment under sections one thousand three hundred twenty-four or one thousand three hundred twenty-five of this article, respectively, waives the right to demand payment under this section and is entitled only to the payment made or offered pursuant to those respective sections.

WV Legislature

PART 3. JUDICIAL APPRAISAL OF SHARES.

§31D-13-1330. Court action.

(a) If a shareholder makes demand for payment under section one thousand three hundred twenty-six of this article which remains unsettled, the corporation shall commence a proceeding within sixty days after receiving the payment demand and petition the court to determine the fair value of the shares and accrued interest. If the corporation does not commence the proceeding within the sixty-day period, it shall pay in cash to each shareholder the amount the shareholder demanded pursuant to section one thousand three hundred twenty-six of this article plus interest.

(b) The corporation shall make all shareholders, whether or not residents of this state, whose demands remain unsettled parties to the proceeding as in an action against their shares, and all parties must be served with a copy of the petition. Nonresidents may be served by registered or certified mail or by publication as provided by law.

(c) The jurisdiction of the court in which the proceeding is commenced is plenary and exclusive. The court may appoint one or more persons as appraisers to receive evidence and recommend a decision on the question of fair value. The appraisers have the powers described in the order appointing them, or in any amendment to it. The shareholders demanding appraisal rights are entitled to the same discovery rights as parties in other civil proceedings. There is no right to a jury trial.

(d) Each shareholder made a party to the proceeding is entitled to judgment: (1) For the amount, if any, by which the court finds the fair value of the shareholder's shares, plus interest, exceeds the amount paid by the corporation to the shareholder for the shares; or (2) for the fair value, plus interest, of the shareholder's shares for which the corporation elected to withhold payment under section one thousand three hundred twenty-five of this article.

WV Legislature

§31D-13-1331. Court costs and counsel fees.

(a) The court in an appraisal proceeding commenced under section one thousand three hundred thirty of this article shall determine all costs of the proceeding, including the reasonable compensation and expenses of appraisers appointed by the court. The court shall assess the costs against the corporation, except that the court may assess costs against all or some of the shareholders demanding appraisal, in amounts the court finds equitable, to the extent the court finds the shareholders acted arbitrarily, vexatiously, or not in good faith with respect to the rights provided by this article.

(b) The court in an appraisal proceeding may also assess the fees and expenses of counsel and experts for the respective parties, in amounts the court finds equitable:

(1) Against the corporation and in favor of any or all shareholders demanding appraisal if the court finds the corporation did not substantially comply with the requirements of section one thousand three hundred twenty, one thousand three hundred twenty-two, one thousand three hundred twenty-four or one thousand three hundred twenty-five of this article; or

(2) Against either the corporation or a shareholder demanding appraisal, in favor of any other party, if the court finds that the party against whom the fees and expenses are assessed acted arbitrarily, vexatiously or not in good faith with respect to the rights provided by this article.

(c) If the court in an appraisal proceeding finds that the services of counsel for any shareholder were of substantial benefit to other shareholders similarly situated, and that the fees for those services should not be assessed against the corporation, the court may award to counsel reasonable fees to be paid out of the amounts awarded the shareholders who were benefitted.

(d) To the extent the corporation fails to make a required payment pursuant to section one thousand three hundred twenty-four, one thousand three hundred twenty-five, or one thousand three hundred twenty-six of this article, the shareholder may sue directly for the amount owed and, to the extent successful, are to be entitled to recover from the corporation all costs and expenses of the suit, including counsel fees.

WV Legislature

PART 1. VOLUNTARY DISSOLUTION.

§31D-14-1401. Dissolution by incorporators or initial directors.

A majority of the incorporators, or initial directors of a corporation, that has not issued shares or has not commenced business may dissolve the corporation by delivering to the Secretary of State for filing articles of dissolution that set forth:

(1) The name of the corporation;

(2) The date of its incorporation;

(3) Either: (A) That none of the corporation's shares has been issued; or (B) that the corporation has not commenced business;

(4) That no debt of the corporation remains unpaid;

(5) That the net assets of the corporation remaining after winding up have been distributed to the shareholders, if shares were issued; and

(6) That a majority of the incorporators or initial directors authorized the dissolution.

WV Legislature

§31D-14-1402. Dissolution by board of directors and shareholders.

(a) A corporation's board of directors may propose dissolution for submission to the shareholders.

(b) For a proposal to dissolve to be adopted:

(1) The board of directors must recommend dissolution to the shareholders unless the board of directors determines that because of conflict of interest or other special circumstances it should make no recommendation and communicates the basis for its determination to the shareholders; and

(2) The shareholders entitled to vote must approve the proposal to dissolve as provided in subsection (e) of this section.

(c) The board of directors may condition its submission of the proposal for dissolution on any basis.

(d) The corporation shall notify each shareholder, whether or not entitled to vote, of the proposed shareholders' meeting. The notice must also state that the purpose, or one of the purposes, of the meeting is to consider dissolving the corporation.

(e) Unless the articles of incorporation or the board of directors acting pursuant to subsection (c) of this section require a greater vote, a greater number of shares to be present or a vote by voting groups, adoption of the proposal to dissolve requires the approval of the shareholders at a meeting at which a quorum consisting of at least a majority of the votes entitled to be cast exists.

WV Legislature

§31D-14-1403. Articles of dissolution.

(a) At any time after dissolution is authorized, the corporation may dissolve by delivering to the Secretary of State for filing articles of dissolution setting forth:

(1) The name of the corporation;

(2) The date dissolution was authorized; and

(3) If dissolution was approved by the shareholders, a statement that the proposal to dissolve was duly approved by the shareholders in the manner required by this chapter and by the articles of incorporation.

(b) A corporation is dissolved upon the receipt by the corporation of a certificate of dissolution from the Secretary of State.

(c) The Secretary of State shall issue a certificate of dissolution to the corporation delivering articles of dissolution upon receipt by the Secretary of State of a notice from the Tax Commissioner and Bureau of Employment Programs to the effect that all taxes due from the corporation under the provisions of chapter eleven of this code, including, but not limited to, taxes withheld under the provisions of section seventy-one, article twenty-one of chapter eleven of this code, all business and occupation taxes, motor carrier and transportation privilege taxes, gasoline taxes, consumers sales taxes and any and all license franchise or other excise taxes and corporate net income taxes, and employment security payments levied or assessed against the corporation seeking to dissolve have been paid or that the payment has been provided for, or until the Secretary of State received a notice from the Tax Commissioner or Bureau of Employment Programs, as the case may be, stating that the corporation in question is not subject to payment of any taxes or to the making of any employment security payments or assessments.

www.legislature

§31D-14-1404. Revocation of dissolution.

(a) A corporation may revoke its dissolution within one hundred twenty days of its effective date.

(b) Revocation of dissolution must be authorized in the same manner as the dissolution was authorized unless that authorization permitted revocation by action of the board of directors alone, in which event the board of directors may revoke the dissolution without shareholder action.

(c) After the revocation of dissolution is authorized, the corporation may revoke the dissolution by delivering to the Secretary of State for filing articles of revocation of dissolution, together with a copy of its articles of dissolution, that set forth:

(1) The name of the corporation;

(2) The effective date of the dissolution that was revoked;

(3) The date that the revocation of dissolution was authorized;

(4) If the corporation's board of directors or incorporators revoked the dissolution, a statement to that effect;

(5) If the corporation's board of directors revoked a dissolution authorized by the shareholders, a statement that revocation was permitted by action by the board of directors alone pursuant to that authorization; and

(6) If shareholder action was required to revoke the dissolution, the information required by subdivision (3), subsection (a), section one thousand four hundred three of this article.

(d) Revocation of dissolution is effective upon the effective date of the articles of revocation of dissolution.

(e) When the revocation of dissolution is effective, it relates back to and takes effect as of the effective date of the dissolution and the corporation resumes carrying on its business as if dissolution had never occurred.

WV Legislature

§31D-14-1405. Effect of dissolution.

(a) A dissolved corporation continues its corporate existence but may not carry on any business except those appropriate to wind up and liquidate its business and affairs, including:

(1) Collecting its assets;

(2) Disposing of its properties that will not be distributed in kind to its shareholders;

(3) Discharging or making provision for discharging its liabilities;

(4) Distributing its remaining property among its shareholders according to their interests; and

(5) Doing every other act necessary to wind up and liquidate its business and affairs.

(b) Dissolution of a corporation does not:

(1) Transfer title to the corporation's property;

(2) Prevent transfer of its shares or securities, although the authorization to dissolve may provide for closing the corporation's share transfer records;

(3) Subject its directors or officers to standards of conduct different from those prescribed in article eight of this chapter;

(4) Change quorum or voting requirements for its board of directors or shareholders; change provisions for selection, resignation or removal of its directors or officers or both; or change provisions for amending its bylaws;

(5) Prevent commencement of a proceeding by or against the corporation in its corporate name;

(6) Abate or suspend a proceeding pending by or against the corporation on the effective date of dissolution; or

(7) Terminate the authority of the registered agent of the corporation, if any.

WV Legislature

§31D-14-1406. Known claims against dissolved corporation.

(a) A dissolved corporation may dispose of the known claims against it by following the procedure described in this section.

(b) The dissolved corporation shall notify its known claimants in writing of the dissolution at any time after its effective date. The written notice must:

(1) Describe information that must be included in a claim;

(2) Provide a mailing address where a claim may be sent;

(3) State the deadline, which may not be fewer than one hundred twenty days from the effective date of the written notice, by which the dissolved corporation must receive the claim; and

(4) State that the claim will be barred if not received by the deadline.

(c) A claim against the dissolved corporation is barred:

(1) If a claimant who was given written notice under subsection (b) of this section does not deliver the claim to the dissolved corporation by the deadline; or

(2) If a claimant whose claim was rejected by the dissolved corporation does not commence a proceeding to enforce the claim within ninety days from the effective date of the rejection notice.

(d) For purposes of this section, "claim" does not include a contingent liability or a claim based on an event occurring after the effective date of dissolution.

WV Legislature

§31D-14-1407. Unknown claims against dissolved corporation.

(a) A dissolved corporation may also publish notice of its dissolution and request that persons with claims against the corporation present them in accordance with the notice.

(b) The notice must:

(1) Be published one time in a newspaper of general circulation in the county where the dissolved corporation's principal office or if the corporation had no principal office in this state, in any county where it transacts its business;

(2) Describe the information that must be included in a claim and provide a mailing address where the claim may be sent; and

(3) State that a claim against the corporation will be barred unless a proceeding to enforce the claim is commenced within five years after the publication of the notice.

(c) If the dissolved corporation publishes a newspaper notice in accordance with subsection (b) of this section, the claim of each of the following claimants is barred unless the claimant commences a proceeding to enforce the claim against the dissolved corporation within five years after the publication date of the newspaper notice:

(1) A claimant who did not receive written notice under section one thousand four hundred six of this article;

(2) A claimant whose claim was timely sent to the dissolved corporation but not acted on; and

(3) A claimant whose claim is contingent or based on an event occurring after the effective date of dissolution.

(d) A claim may be enforced under this section:

(1) Against the dissolved corporation, to the extent of its undistributed assets; or

(2) If the assets have been distributed in liquidation, against a shareholder of the dissolved corporation to the extent of his or her pro rata share of the claim or the corporate assets distributed to him or her in liquidation, whichever is less, but a shareholder's total liability for all claims under this section may not exceed the total amount of assets distributed to him or her.

WV Legislature

§31D-14-1420. Grounds for administrative dissolution.

(a) The Secretary of State may commence a proceeding under §31D-14-1421 of this code to administratively dissolve a corporation if:

(1) The corporation does not pay within 60 days after they are due any fees, franchise taxes, or penalties imposed by this chapter or other law;

(2) The corporation does not notify the Secretary of State within 60 days that its registered agent or registered office has been changed, that its registered agent has resigned, or that its registered office has been discontinued;

(3) The corporation's period of duration stated in its articles of incorporation expires;

(4) The professional license of one or more of the license holders is revoked by a professional licensing board and the license is, or all the licenses are, required for the continued operation of the corporation;

(5) The corporation is in default with the Bureau of Employment Programs as provided in §21A-2-6 of this code; or

(6) A misrepresentation has been made of any material matter in any application, report, affidavit, or other record submitted by the corporation pursuant to this chapter.

(b) A corporation administratively dissolved may apply to the Secretary of State for reinstatement within two years after the effective date of dissolution pursuant to the procedure in §31D-14-1422 of this code or appeal the Secretary of State's denial of reinstatement pursuant to the procedure in §31D-14-1423 of this code.

WV Legislature

§31D-14-1421. Procedure for and effect of administrative dissolution.

(a) If the Secretary of State determines that one or more grounds exist under §31D-14-1420 of this code for dissolving a corporation, the Secretary of State shall notify the corporation by certified mail with written notice of the determination pursuant to §31D-5-504 of this code.

(b) If the corporation does not correct each ground for dissolution or demonstrate to the reasonable satisfaction of the Secretary of State that each ground determined by the Secretary of State does not exist within 60 days after service of the notice is perfected under §31D-5-504 of this code, the Secretary of State shall administratively dissolve the corporation by signing and filing a certificate of dissolution that recites the ground or grounds for dissolution and its effective date.

(c) A corporation administratively dissolved continues its corporate existence but may not carry on any business except that necessary to wind up and liquidate its business and affairs under §31D-14-1405 of this code and notify claimants pursuant to §31D-14-1406 and §31D-14-1407 of this code.

(d) The administrative dissolution of a corporation does not terminate the authority of its registered agent.

WV Legislature

§31D-14-1422. Reinstatement following administrative dissolution.

(a) A corporation administratively dissolved under section one thousand four hundred twenty-one of this article may apply to the Secretary of State for reinstatement within two years after the effective date of dissolution. The application must:

(1) Recite the name of the corporation and the effective date of its administrative dissolution;

(2) State that the ground or grounds for dissolution either did not exist or have been eliminated;

(3) State that the corporation's name satisfies the requirements of section four hundred one, article four of this chapter; and

(4) Contain a certificate from the Tax Commissioner reciting that all taxes owed by the corporation have been paid.

(b) If the Secretary of State determines that the application contains the information required by subsection (a) of this section and that the information is correct, he or she shall cancel the certificate of dissolution and prepare a certificate of reinstatement that recites his or her determination and the effective date of reinstatement, file the original of the certificate and serve a copy on the corporation pursuant to section five hundred four, article five of this chapter.

(c) When the reinstatement is effective, it relates back to and takes effect as of the effective date of the administrative dissolution and the corporation resumes carrying on its business as if the administrative dissolution had never occurred.

WV Legislature

§31D-14-1423. Appeal from denial of reinstatement.

(a) If the Secretary of State denies a corporation's application for reinstatement following administrative dissolution, he or she shall serve the corporation pursuant to section five hundred four, article five of this chapter with a written notice that explains the reason or reasons for denial.

(b) The corporation may appeal the denial of reinstatement to the circuit court within thirty days after service of the notice of denial is perfected. The corporation appeals by petitioning the circuit court to set aside the dissolution and attaching to the petition copies of the Secretary of State's certificate of dissolution, the corporation's application for reinstatement and the Secretary of State's notice of denial.

(c) The circuit court may summarily order the Secretary of State to reinstate the dissolved corporation or may take other action the circuit court considers appropriate.

(d) The circuit court's final decision may be appealed as in other civil proceedings.

WV Legislature

PART 3. JUDICIAL DISSOLUTION.

§31D-14-1430. Grounds for judicial dissolution.

The circuit court may dissolve a corporation:

(1) In a proceeding by the Attorney General pursuant to section one, article two, chapter fifty-three of this code if it is established that:

(A) The corporation obtained its articles of incorporation through fraud; or

(B) The corporation has continued to exceed or abuse the authority conferred upon it by law;

(2) In a proceeding by a shareholder if it is established that:

(A) The directors are deadlocked in the management of the corporate affairs, the shareholders are unable to break the deadlock and irreparable injury to the corporation is threatened or being suffered, or the business and affairs of the corporation can no longer be conducted to the advantage of the shareholders generally, because of the deadlock;

(B) The directors or those in control of the corporation have acted, are acting or will act in a manner that is illegal, oppressive or fraudulent;

(C) The shareholders are deadlocked in voting power and have failed, for a period that includes at least two consecutive annual meeting dates, to elect successors to directors whose terms have expired; or

(D) The corporate assets are being misapplied or wasted;

(3) In a proceeding by a creditor if it is established that:

(A) The creditor's claim has been reduced to judgment, the execution on the judgment returned unsatisfied and the corporation is insolvent; or

(B) The corporation has admitted in writing that the creditor's claim is due and owing and the corporation is insolvent; or

(4) In a proceeding by the corporation to have its voluntary dissolution continued under circuit court supervision.

WV Legislature

§31D-14-1431. Procedure for judicial dissolution.

(a) It is not necessary to make shareholders parties to a proceeding to dissolve a corporation unless relief is sought against them individually.

(b) A circuit court in a proceeding brought to dissolve a corporation may issue injunctions, appoint a receiver or custodian pendente lite with all powers and duties the circuit court directs, take other action required to preserve the corporate assets wherever located and carry on the business of the corporation until a full hearing can be held.

(c) Within ten days of the commencement of a proceeding under subdivision (2), section one thousand four hundred thirty of this article to dissolve a corporation that has no shares listed on a national securities exchange or regularly traded in a market maintained by one or more members of a national or affiliated securities association, the corporation must send to all shareholders, other than the petitioner, a notice stating that the shareholders are entitled to avoid the dissolution of the corporation by electing to purchase the petitioner's shares under section one thousand four hundred thirty-four of this article and accompanied by a copy of section one thousand four hundred thirty-four of this article.

WV Legislature

§31D-14-1432. Receivership or custodianship.

(a) A circuit court in a judicial proceeding brought to dissolve a corporation may appoint one or more receivers to wind up and liquidate, or one or more custodians to manage, the business and affairs of the corporation. The circuit court shall hold a hearing, after notifying all parties to the proceeding and any interested persons designated by the circuit court, before appointing a receiver or custodian. The circuit court appointing a receiver or custodian has exclusive jurisdiction over the corporation and all of its property wherever located.

(b) The circuit court may appoint an individual or a domestic or foreign corporation authorized to transact business in this state as a receiver or custodian. The circuit court may require the receiver or custodian to post bond, with or without sureties, in an amount the circuit court directs.

(c) The circuit court shall describe the powers and duties of the receiver or custodian in its appointing order, which may be amended from time to time. Among other powers:

(1) The receiver: (A) May dispose of all or any part of the assets of the corporation wherever located, at a public or private sale, if authorized by the circuit court; and (B) may sue and defend in his or her own name as receiver of the corporation in all circuit courts of this state; and

(2) The custodian may exercise all of the powers of the corporation, through or in place of its board of directors, to the extent necessary to manage the affairs of the corporation in the best interests of its shareholders and creditors.

(d) The circuit court during a receivership may redesignate the receiver a custodian, and during a custodianship may redesignate the custodian a receiver, if doing it is in the best interests of the corporation, its shareholders and creditors.

(e) The court, from time to time, during the receivership or custodianship may order compensation paid and expense disbursements or reimbursements made to the receiver or custodian and his or her counsel from the assets of the corporation or proceeds from the sale of the assets.

WVLegislature

§31D-14-1433. Decree of dissolution.

(a) If after a hearing the circuit court determines that one or more grounds for judicial dissolution described in section one thousand four hundred thirty of this article exist, it may enter a decree dissolving the corporation and specifying the effective date of the dissolution and the clerk of the circuit court shall deliver a certified copy of the decree to the Secretary of State, who shall file it.

(b) After entering the decree of dissolution, the circuit court shall direct the winding-up and liquidation of the corporation's business and affairs in accordance with section one thousand four hundred five of this article and the notification of claimants in accordance with sections one thousand four hundred six and one thousand four hundred seven of this article.

WV Legislature

§31D-14-1434. Election to purchase in lieu of dissolution.

(a) In a proceeding under subdivision (2), section one thousand four hundred thirty of this article to dissolve a corporation that has no shares listed on a national securities exchange or regularly traded in a market maintained by one or more members of a national or affiliated securities association, the corporation may elect, or if it fails to elect, one or more shareholders may elect, to purchase all shares owned by the petitioning shareholder at the fair value of the shares. An election pursuant to this section is irrevocable unless the court determines that it is equitable to set aside or modify the election.

(b) An election to purchase pursuant to this section may be filed with the court at any time within ninety days after the filing of the petition under subdivision (2), section one thousand four hundred thirty of this article or at a later time as the court in its discretion may allow. If the election to purchase is filed by one or more shareholders, the corporation shall, within ten days after the filing, give written notice to all shareholders other than the petitioner. The notice must state the name and number of shares owned by the petitioner and the name and number of shares owned by each electing shareholder and must advise the recipients of their right to join in the election to purchase shares in accordance with this section. Shareholders who wish to participate must file notice of their intention to join in the purchase no later than thirty days after the effective date of the notice to them. All shareholders who have filed an election or notice of their intention to participate in the election to purchase become parties to the proceeding and shall participate in the purchase in proportion to their ownership of shares as of the date the first election was filed, unless they otherwise agree or the court otherwise directs. After an election has been filed by the corporation or one or more shareholders, the proceeding under subdivision (2), section one thousand four hundred thirty of this article may not be discontinued or settled, nor may the petitioning shareholder sell or otherwise dispose of his or her shares, unless the court determines that it would be equitable to the corporation and the shareholders, other than the petitioner, to permit the discontinuance, settlement, sale or other disposition.

(c) If, within sixty days of the filing of the first election, the parties reach agreement as to the fair value and terms of purchase of the petitioner's shares, the court shall enter an order directing the purchase of petitioner's shares upon the terms and conditions agreed to by the parties.

(d) If the parties are unable to reach an agreement as provided for in subsection (c) of this section, the court, upon application of any party, shall stay the proceedings entered pursuant to subdivision (2), section one thousand four hundred thirty of this article and determine the fair value of the petitioner's shares as of the day before the date on which the petition under subdivision (2), section one thousand four hundred thirty of this article was filed or as of another date as the court deems appropriate under the circumstances.

(e) Upon determining the fair value of the shares, the court shall enter an order directing the purchase upon terms and conditions as the court deems appropriate, which may include payment of the purchase price in installments, where necessary in the interests of equity;

WV Legislature

provision for security to assure payment of the purchase price and any additional costs, fees and expenses as may have been awarded; and, if the shares are to be purchased by shareholders, the allocation of shares among them. In allocating petitioner's shares among holders of different classes of shares, the court should attempt to preserve the existing distribution of voting rights among holders of different classes insofar as practicable and may direct that holders of a specific class or classes may not participate in the purchase. Interest may be allowed at the rate and from the date determined by the court to be equitable, but if the court finds that the refusal of the petitioning shareholder to accept an offer of payment was arbitrary or otherwise not in good faith, no interest may be allowed. If the court finds that the petitioning shareholder had probable grounds for relief under paragraph (B) or (D), subdivision (2), section one thousand four hundred thirty of this article, it may award to the petitioning shareholder reasonable fees and expenses of counsel and of any experts employed by him or her.

(f) Upon entry of an order under subsection (c) or (e) of this section, the court shall dismiss the petition to dissolve the corporation under section one thousand four hundred thirty of this article and the petitioning shareholder no longer has any rights or status as a shareholder of the corporation, except the right to receive the amounts awarded to him or her by the order of the court which is enforceable in the same manner as any other judgment.

(g) The purchase ordered pursuant to subsection (e) of this section must be made within ten days after the date the order becomes final unless before that time the corporation files with the court a notice of its intention to adopt articles of dissolution pursuant to sections one thousand four hundred two and one thousand four hundred three of this article, which articles must then be adopted and filed within fifty days. Upon filing of articles of dissolution, the corporation is to be dissolved in accordance with the provisions of sections one thousand four hundred five, one thousand four hundred six and one thousand four hundred seven of this article and the order entered pursuant to subsection (e) of this section no longer has any force or effect, except that the court may award the petitioning shareholder reasonable fees and expenses in accordance with the provisions of subsection (e) of this section and the petitioner may continue to pursue any claims previously asserted on behalf of the corporation.

(h) Any payment by the corporation pursuant to an order under subsection (c) or (e) of this section, other than an award of fees and expenses pursuant to subsection (e) of this section, is subject to the provisions of section six hundred forty, article six of this chapter.

WV Legislature

PART 4. MISCELLANEOUS.

§31D-14-1440. Deposit with State Treasurer.

Assets of a dissolved corporation that should be transferred to a creditor, claimant or shareholder of the corporation who cannot be found or who is not competent to receive them are to be reduced to cash and deposited with the State Treasurer or other appropriate state official for safekeeping. When the creditor, claimant or shareholder furnishes satisfactory proof of entitlement to the amount deposited, the State Treasurer or other appropriate state official shall pay him or her or his or her representative that amount.

WV Legislature

§31D-15-1501. Authority to transact business and jurisdiction over foreign corporations.

(a) A foreign corporation may not conduct affairs in this state until it obtains a certificate of authority from the Secretary of State.

(b) The following activities, among others, do not constitute conducting affairs within the meaning of subsection (a) of this section:

(1) Maintaining, defending or settling any proceeding;

(2) Holding meetings of the board of directors or shareholders or carrying on other activities concerning internal corporate affairs;

(3) Maintaining bank accounts;

(4) Selling through independent contractors;

(5) Soliciting or obtaining orders, whether by mail or through employees or agents or otherwise, if the orders require acceptance outside this state before they become contracts;

(6) Creating or acquiring indebtedness, mortgages and security interests in real or personal property;

(7) Securing or collecting debts or enforcing mortgages and security interests in property securing the debts: Provided, That this exemption does not include debts collected by collection agencies as defined in subdivision (b), section two, article sixteen, chapter forty-seven of this code;

(8) Owning, without more, real or personal property;

(9) Conducting an isolated transaction that is completed within thirty days and that is not one in the course of repeated transactions of a like nature;

(10) Conducting affairs in interstate commerce;

(11) Granting funds or other gifts;

(12) Distributing information to its shareholders or members;

(13) Effecting sales through independent contractors;

(14) The acquisition by purchase of lands secured by mortgage or deeds;

(15) Physical inspection and appraisal of property in West Virginia as security for deeds of trust, or mortgages and negotiations for the purchase of loans secured by property in West Virginia;

WV Legislature

(16) The management, rental, maintenance and sale or the operating, maintaining, renting or otherwise dealing with selling or disposing of property acquired under foreclosure sale or by agreement in lieu of foreclosure sale;

(17) Applying for withholding tax on an employee residing in the State of West Virginia who works for the foreign corporation in another state; and

(18) Holding all, or a portion thereof, of the outstanding stock of another corporation authorized to transact business in the State of West Virginia: Provided, That the foreign corporation does not produce goods, services or otherwise conduct business in the State of West Virginia.

(c) The list of activities in subsection (b) of this section is not exhaustive.

(d) A foreign corporation is deemed to be transacting business in this state if:

(1) The corporation makes a contract to be performed, in whole or in part, by any party thereto in this state;

(2) The corporation commits a tort, in whole or in part, in this state; or

(3) The corporation manufactures, sells, offers for sale or supplies any product in a defective condition and that product causes injury to any person or property within this state notwithstanding the fact that the corporation had no agents, servants or employees or contacts within this state at the time of the injury.

(e) A foreign corporation's making of a contract, the committing of a manufacture or sale, offer of sale or supply of defective product as described in subsection (d) of this section is deemed to be the agreement of that foreign corporation that any notice or process served upon, or accepted by, the Secretary of State in a proceeding against that foreign corporation arising from, or growing out of, contract, tort or manufacture or sale, offer of sale or supply of the defective product has the same legal force and validity as process duly served on that corporation in this state.

WVLegislature

§31D-15-1502. Consequences of transacting business without authority.

(a) A foreign corporation transacting business in this state without a certificate of authority may not maintain a proceeding in any circuit court in this state until it obtains a certificate of authority.

(b) The successor to a foreign corporation that transacted business in this state without a certificate of authority and the assignee of a cause of action arising out of that business may not maintain a proceeding based on that cause of action in any circuit court in this state until the foreign corporation or its successor obtains a certificate of authority.

(c) A circuit court may stay a proceeding commenced by a foreign corporation, its successor or assignee until it determines whether the foreign corporation or its successor requires a certificate of authority. If it so determines, the circuit court may further stay the proceeding until the foreign corporation or its successor obtains the certificate.

(d) A foreign corporation which conducts affairs or does or transacts business in this state without a certificate of authority is liable to this state for the years or parts of years during which it conducted affairs or did or transacted business in this state without a certificate of authority in an amount equal to all fees and taxes which would have been imposed by this chapter, or by any other provision of this code, upon the corporation had it duly applied for and received a certificate of authority to conduct affairs or do or transact business in this state as required by this article and had filed all reports, statements or returns required by this chapter or by any other chapter of this code, plus all penalties imposed for failure to pay any fees and taxes.

(e) Notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b) of this section, the failure of a foreign corporation to obtain a certificate of authority does not impair the validity of its corporate acts or prevent it from defending any proceeding in this state.

WV Legislature

§31D-15-1503. Application for certificate of authority.

(a) A foreign corporation may apply for a certificate of authority to transact business in this state by delivering an application to the Secretary of State for filing. The application must set forth:

(1) The name of the foreign corporation or, if its name is unavailable for use in this state, a corporate name that satisfies the requirements of section one thousand five hundred six of this article;

(2) The name of the state or country under whose law it is incorporated;

(3) Its date of incorporation and period of duration;

(4) The mailing address of its principal office;

(5) The address of its registered office in this state, if any, and the name of its registered agent at that office, if any;

(6) The names and usual business addresses of its current directors and officers;

(7) Purpose or purposes for transaction of business in West Virginia; and

(8) An e-mail address where informational notices and reminders of annual filings may be sent, unless there is a technical inability to comply.

(b) The foreign corporation shall deliver with the completed application a certificate of existence, or a document of similar import, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State or other official having custody of corporate records in the state or country under whose law it is incorporated.

WV Legislature

§31D-15-1504. Amended certificate of authority.

(a) A foreign corporation authorized to transact business in this state must obtain an amended certificate of authority from the Secretary of State if it changes:

(1) Its corporate name;

(2) The period of its duration; or

(3) The state or country of its incorporation.

(b) The requirements of section one thousand five hundred three of this article for obtaining an original certificate of authority apply to obtaining an amended certificate under this section.

WV Legislature

§31D-15-1505. Effect of certificate of authority.

(a) A certificate of authority authorizes the foreign corporation to which it is issued to transact business in this state subject to the right of the state to revoke the certificate as provided in this chapter.

(b) A foreign corporation with a valid certificate of authority has the same rights and has the same privileges as, and except as otherwise provided by this chapter is subject to the same duties, restrictions, penalties and liabilities as, a domestic corporation of like character.

(c) This chapter does not authorize this state to regulate the organization or internal affairs of a foreign corporation authorized to transact business in this state.

WV Legislature

§31D-15-1506. Corporate name of foreign corporation.

(a) If the corporate name of a foreign corporation does not satisfy the requirements of section four hundred one, article four of this chapter, the foreign corporation to obtain or maintain a certificate of authority to transact business in this state:

(1) May add the word "corporation", "incorporated", "company" or "limited" or the abbreviation "corp.", "inc.", "co." or "ltd." to its corporate name for use in this state; or

(2) May use a fictitious name to transact business in this state if its real name is unavailable and it delivers to the Secretary of State for filing a copy of the resolution of its board of directors, certified by its secretary, adopting the fictitious name.

(b) Except as authorized by subsections (c) and (d) of this section, the corporate name, including a fictitious name, of a foreign corporation must be distinguishable upon the records of the Secretary of State from:

(1) The corporate name of a corporation incorporated or authorized to transact business in this state;

(2) A corporate name reserved or registered under section four hundred three or four hundred four, article four of this chapter;

(3) The fictitious name of another foreign corporation authorized to transact business in this state;

(4) The corporate name of a nonprofit corporation incorporated or authorized to transact business in this state; and

(5) The name of any other entity whose name is carried in the records of the Secretary of State.

(c) A foreign corporation may apply to the Secretary of State for authorization to use in this state the name of another corporation incorporated or authorized to transact business in this state that is not distinguishable upon his or her records from the name applied for. The Secretary of State shall authorize use of the name applied for if:

(1) The other corporation consents to the use in writing and submits an undertaking in form satisfactory to the Secretary of State to change the name so that it is distinguishable upon the records of the Secretary of State from the name applied for; or

(2) The applicant delivers to the Secretary of State a certified copy of a final judgment of a circuit court of competent jurisdiction establishing the applicant's right to use the name applied for in this state.

(d) A foreign corporation may use in this state the name, including the fictitious name, of

WV Legislature

another domestic or foreign corporation that is used in this state if the other corporation is incorporated or authorized to transact business in this state and the foreign corporation:

(1) Has merged with the other corporation;

(2) Has been formed by reorganization of the other corporation; or

(3) Has acquired all or substantially all of the assets, including the corporate name, of the other corporation.

(e) If a foreign corporation authorized to transact business in this state changes its corporate name to one that does not satisfy the requirements of section four hundred one, article four of this chapter, it may not transact business in this state under the changed name until it adopts a name satisfying the requirements of section four hundred one, article four of this chapter and obtains an amended certificate of authority under section one thousand five hundred four of this article.

WV Legislature

§31D-15-1507. Registered office and registered agent of foreign corporation.

Each foreign corporation authorized to transact business in this state may continuously maintain in this state:

(1) A registered office that may be the same as any of its places of business; and

(2) A registered agent who may be:

(A) An individual who resides in this state and whose business office is identical with the registered office;

(B) A domestic corporation or domestic nonprofit corporation whose business office is identical with the registered office; or

(C) A foreign corporation or foreign nonprofit corporation authorized to transact business in this state whose business office is identical with the registered office.

WV Legislature

§31D-15-1508. Change of registered office or registered agent of foreign corporation.

(a) A foreign corporation authorized to transact business in this state may change its registered office or registered agent by delivering to the Secretary of State for filing a statement of change that sets forth:

(1) Its name;

(2) The mailing address of its current registered office;

(3) If the current registered office is to be changed, the mailing address of its new registered office;

(4) The name of its current registered agent;

(5) If the current registered agent is to be changed, the name of its new registered agent and the new agent's written consent, either on the statement or attached to it, to the appointment; and

(6) That after the change or changes are made, the mailing addresses of its registered office and the business office of its registered agent will be identical.

(b) If a registered agent changes the mailing address of his or her business office, he or she may change the mailing address of the registered office of any foreign corporation for which he or she is the registered agent by notifying the corporation in writing of the change and signing, either manually or in facsimile, and delivering to the Secretary of State for filing a statement of change that complies with the requirements of subsection (a) of this section and recites that the corporation has been notified of the change.

WV Legislature

§31D-15-1509. Resignation of registered agent of foreign corporation.

(a) The registered agent of a foreign corporation may resign his or her agency appointment by signing and delivering to the Secretary of State for filing a statement of resignation. The statement of resignation may include a statement that the registered office is also discontinued.

(b) After filing the statement, the Secretary of State shall mail a copy of the filed statement of resignation and receipt to the corporation at its principal office.

(c) The agency appointment is terminated, and the registered office discontinued if provided in the statement of registration, on the thirty-first day after the date on which the statement was filed.

WV Legislature

§31D-15-1510. Service on foreign corporation.

(a) The registered agent of a foreign corporation authorized to transact business in this state is the corporation's agent for service of process, notice or demand required or permitted by law to be served on the foreign corporation.

(b) A foreign corporation may be served by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, addressed to the secretary of the foreign corporation at its principal office shown in its application for a certificate of authority or in its most recent return required pursuant to section three, article twelve-c, chapter eleven of this code if the foreign corporation:

(1) Has no registered agent or its registered agent cannot with reasonable diligence be served;

(2) Has withdrawn from transacting business in this state under section one thousand five hundred twenty of this article; or

(3) Has had its certificate of authority revoked under section one thousand five hundred thirty-one of this article.

(c) Service is perfected under subsection (b) of this section at the earliest of:

(1) The date the foreign corporation receives the mail;

(2) The date shown on the return receipt, if signed on behalf of the foreign corporation; or

(3) Five days after its deposit in the United States mail, as evidenced by the postmark, if mailed postpaid and correctly addressed.

(d) In addition to the methods of service on a foreign corporation provided in subsections (a) and (b) of this section, the Secretary of State is hereby constituted the attorney-in-fact for and on behalf of each foreign corporation authorized to do or transact business in this state pursuant to the provisions of this chapter. The Secretary of State has the authority to accept service of notice and process on behalf of each corporation and is an agent of the corporation upon whom service of notice and process may be made in this state for and upon each corporation. No act of a corporation appointing the Secretary of State as attorney-in-fact is necessary. Service of any process, notice or demand on the Secretary of State may be made by delivering to and leaving with the Secretary of State the original process, notice or demand and one copy of the process, notice or demand for each defendant, along with the fee required by section two, article one, chapter fifty-nine of this code. Immediately after being served with or accepting any process or notice, the Secretary of State shall: (1) File in his or her office a copy of the process or notice, endorsed as of the time of service or acceptance; (2) transmit one copy of the process or notice by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, by a means which may include electronic issuance and acceptance of electronic return receipts, to: (A) The foreign corporation's registered agent; or (B) if there is no registered agent, to the individual whose name and address was last given to the

WV Legislature

Secretary of State's office as the person to whom notice and process are to be sent and if no person has been named, to the principal office of the foreign corporation as that address was last given to the Secretary of State's office. If no address is available on record with the Secretary of State, then to the address provided on the original process, notice or demand, if available; and (3) transmit the original process, notice or demand to the clerk's office of the court from which the process, notice or demand was issued. Service or acceptance of process or notice is sufficient if return receipt is signed by an agent or employee of the corporation, or the registered or certified mail sent by the Secretary of State is refused by the addressee and the registered or certified mail is returned to the Secretary of State, or to his or her office, showing the stamp of the United States postal service that delivery has been refused, and the return receipt or registered or certified mail is received by the Secretary of State by a means which may include electronic issuance and acceptance of electronic return receipts. After receiving verification from United States postal service that acceptance of process, notice or demand has been accepted, the Secretary of State shall notify the clerk's office of the court from which the process, notice or demand was issued by means which may include electronic notification. If the process, notice or demand was refused or undeliverable by the United States postal service the Secretary of State shall return the refused or undeliverable mail to the clerk's office of the court from which the process, notice or demand was issued. No process or notice may be served on the Secretary of State or accepted by him or her less than ten days before the return day of the process or notice. The court may order continuances as may be reasonable to afford each defendant opportunity to defend the action or proceedings.

(e) Any foreign corporation doing or transacting business in this state without having been authorized to do so pursuant to the provisions of this chapter is conclusively presumed to have appointed the Secretary of State as its attorney-in-fact with authority to accept service of notice and process on behalf of the corporation and upon whom service of notice and process may be made in this state for and upon the corporation in any action or proceeding arising from activities described in section one thousand five hundred one of this article. No act of a corporation appointing the Secretary of State as its attorney-in-fact is necessary. Immediately after being served with or accepting any process or notice, of which process or notice one copy for each defendant are to be furnished to the Secretary of State with the original notice or process, together with the fee required by section two, article one, chapter fifty-nine of this code, the Secretary of State shall file in his or her office a copy of the process or notice, with a note endorsed of the time of service or acceptance, and transmit one copy of the process or notice by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, by a means which may include electronic issuance and acceptance of electronic return receipts, to the corporation at the address of its principal office, which address shall be stated in the process or notice. The service or acceptance of process or notice is sufficient if the return receipt is signed by an agent or employee of the corporation, or the registered or certified mail sent by the Secretary of State is refused by the addressee and the registered or certified mail is returned to the Secretary of State, or to his or her office, showing thereon the stamp of the United States postal service that delivery thereof has been refused and the return receipt or registered or certified mail is received by the Secretary of State by a means

www.legislature

which may include electronic issuance and acceptance of electronic return receipts. After receiving verification from the United States postal service that acceptance of process, notice or demand has been signed, the Secretary of State shall notify the clerk's office of the court from which the process, notice or demand was issued by a means which may include electronic notification. If the process, notice or demand was refused or undeliverable by the United States postal service the Secretary of State shall return refused or undeliverable mail to the clerk's office of the court from which the process, notice or demand was issued. No process or notice may be served on the Secretary of State or accepted by him or her less than ten days before the return date thereof. The court may order continuances as may be reasonable to afford each defendant opportunity to defend the action or proceedings.

(f) This section does not prescribe the only means, or necessarily the required means, of serving a foreign corporation.

WV Legislature

PART 2. WITHDRAWAL.

§31D-15-1520. Withdrawal of foreign corporation.

(a) A foreign corporation authorized to transact business in this state may not withdraw from this state until it obtains a certificate of withdrawal from the Secretary of State.

(b) A foreign corporation authorized to transact business in this state may apply for a certificate of withdrawal by delivering an application to the Secretary of State for filing. The application must set forth:

(1) The name of the foreign corporation and the name of the state or country under whose law it is incorporated;

(2) That it is not transacting business in this state and that it surrenders its authority to transact business in this state;

(3) That it revokes the authority of its registered agent to accept service on its behalf and appoints the Secretary of State as its agent for service of process in any proceeding based on a cause of action arising during the time it was authorized to transact business in this state;

(4) A mailing address to which the Secretary of State may mail a copy of any process served on him or her under subdivision (3) of this subsection; and

(5) A commitment to notify the Secretary of State in the future of any change in its mailing address.

(c) After the withdrawal of the corporation is effective, service of process on the Secretary of State under this section is service on the foreign corporation. Upon receipt of process, the Secretary of State shall mail a copy of the process to the foreign corporation at the mailing address set forth under subsection (b) of this section.

(d) The Secretary of State shall withhold the issuance of any certificate of withdrawal until the receipt by the Secretary of State of a notice from the Tax Commissioner and Bureau of Employment Programs to the effect that all taxes due from the corporation under the provisions of chapter eleven of this code, including, but not limited to, taxes withheld under the provisions of section seventy-one, article twenty-one, chapter eleven of this code, all business and occupation taxes, motor carrier and transportation privilege taxes, gasoline taxes, consumer sales taxes and any and all license franchise or other excise taxes and corporate net income taxes, and employment security payments levied or assessed against the corporation seeking to dissolve have been paid or that payment has been provided for, or until the Secretary of State received a notice from the Tax Commissioner or Bureau of Employment Programs, as the case may be, stating that the corporation in question is not subject to payment of any taxes or to the making of any employment security payment,

WV Legislature

security payments or assessments.

WV Legislature

§31D-15-1521. Revocation of withdrawal.

(a) A corporation may revoke its withdrawal within one hundred twenty days of its effective date.

(b) Revocation of withdrawal must be authorized in the same manner as the withdrawal was authorized unless that authorization permitted revocation by action of the board of directors alone, in which event the board of directors may revoke the withdrawal without shareholder action.

(c) After the revocation of withdrawal is authorized, the corporation may revoke the withdrawal by delivering to the Secretary of State for filing articles of revocation of withdrawal, together with a copy of its application of withdrawal, that sets forth:

(1) The name of the corporation;

(2) The effective date of the withdrawal that was revoked;

(3) The date that the revocation of withdrawal was authorized;

(4) If the corporation's board of directors or incorporators revoked the withdrawal, a statement to that effect; and

(5) If the corporation's board of directors revoked the withdrawal authorized by the shareholders, a statement that revocation was permitted by action by the board of directors alone pursuant to that authorization.

(d) Revocation of withdrawal is effective upon the effective date of the articles of revocation of withdrawal.

(e) When the revocation of withdrawal is effective, it relates back to and takes effect as of the effective date of the withdrawal and the corporation resumes carrying on its business as if withdrawal had never occurred.

WV Legislature

§31D-15-1530. Grounds for revocation.

The Secretary of State may commence a proceeding under section one thousand five hundred thirty-one of this article to revoke the certificate of authority of a foreign corporation authorized to transact business in this state if:

(1) The foreign corporation does not pay within sixty days after they are due any fees, franchise taxes or penalties imposed by this chapter or other law;

(2) The foreign corporation does not inform the Secretary of State under section one thousand five hundred eight or one thousand five hundred nine of this article that its registered agent or registered office has changed, that its registered agent has resigned or that its registered office has been discontinued within sixty days of the change, resignation or discontinuance;

(3) An incorporator, director, officer or agent of the foreign corporation signed a document he or she knew was false in any material respect with intent that the document be delivered to the Secretary of State for filing;

(4) The Secretary of State receives a duly authenticated certificate from the Secretary of State or other official having custody of corporate records in the state or country under whose law the foreign corporation is incorporated stating that it has been dissolved or disappeared as the result of a merger;

(5) The professional license of one or more of the license holders is revoked by a professional licensing board and the license is or all the licenses are required for the continued operation of the foreign corporation; or

(6) The foreign corporation is in default with the Bureau of Employment Programs as provided in section six, article two, chapter twenty-one-a of this code.

WV Legislature

§31D-15-1531. Procedure for and effect of revocation.

(a) If the Secretary of State determines that one or more grounds exist under section one thousand five hundred thirty of this article for revocation of a certificate of authority, he or she shall serve the foreign corporation with written notice of his or her determination pursuant to section one thousand five hundred ten of this article.

(b) If the foreign corporation does not correct each ground for revocation or demonstrate to the reasonable satisfaction of the Secretary of State that each ground determined by the Secretary of State does not exist within sixty days after service of the notice is perfected pursuant to section one thousand five hundred ten of this article, the Secretary of State may revoke the foreign corporation's certificate of authority by signing a certificate of revocation that recites the ground or grounds for revocation and its effective date. The Secretary of State shall file the original of the certificate and serve a copy on the foreign corporation pursuant to section one thousand five hundred ten of this article.

(c) The authority of a foreign corporation to transact business in this state ceases on the date shown on the certificate revoking its certificate of authority.

(d) The Secretary of State's revocation of a foreign corporation's certificate of authority appoints the Secretary of State the foreign corporation's agent for service of process in any proceeding based on a cause of action which arose during the time the foreign corporation was authorized to transact business in this state. Service of process on the Secretary of State under this subsection is service on the foreign corporation. Upon receipt of process, the Secretary of State shall mail a copy of the process to the secretary of the foreign corporation at its principal office shown in its most recent return required pursuant to section three, article twelve-c, chapter eleven of this code or in any subsequent communication received from the corporation stating the current mailing address of its principal office or, if none are on file, in its application for a certificate of authority.

(e) Revocation of a foreign corporation's certificate of authority does not terminate the authority of the registered agent of the corporation.

WV Legislature

§31D-15-1532. Reinstatement following administrative revocation.

(a) A corporation that has had its certificate of authority administratively revoked under section one thousand five hundred thirty-one of this article may apply to the Secretary of State for reinstatement within two years after the effective date of revocation. The application must:

(1) Recite the name of the corporation and the effective date of the administrative revocation;

(2) Demonstrate that the ground or grounds for revocation have been eliminated;

(3) Demonstrate that the corporation's name satisfies the requirements of section one thousand five hundred six, article fifteen of this chapter; and

(4) Obtain a certificate from the Tax Commissioner reciting that all taxes owed by the corporation have been paid.

(b) If the Secretary of State determines that the application contains the information required by subsection (a) of this section and that the information is accurate, the Secretary of State shall cancel the Certificate of Revocation and prepare a Certificate of Reinstatement that recites the Secretary of State's determination and the effective date of reinstatement. The Secretary of State shall send notice of the reinstatement to the corporation within thirty days of the determination.

(c) When a reinstatement is granted, the reinstatement relates back to and takes effect as of the effective date of the administrative revocation and the corporation resumes its business as if the administrative revocation had never occurred.

WV Legislature

§31D-15-1533. Appeal from denial of reinstatement.

(a) If the Secretary of State denies a corporation's application for reinstatement following administrative revocation, the Secretary of State shall notify the corporation within thirty days of application by written notice that explains the reason or reasons for denial.

(b) The corporation may appeal the denial of reinstatement to the circuit court of Kanawha County within thirty days after service of the notice of denial.

(c) The corporation may appeal by petitioning the circuit court of Kanawha County to set aside the revocation and attaching to the petition copies of the Secretary of State's Certificate of Revocation, the corporation's application for reinstatement and the Secretary of State's notice of denial.

(d) The circuit court's final decision may be appealed to the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals in accordance with article six, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code.

WV Legislature

PART 1. RECORDS.

§31D-16-1601. Corporate records.

(a) A corporation shall keep as permanent records minutes of all meetings of its shareholders and board of directors, a record of all actions taken by the shareholders or board of directors without a meeting and a record of all actions taken by a committee of the board of directors in place of the board of directors on behalf of the corporation.

(b) A corporation shall maintain appropriate accounting records.

(c) A corporation or its agent shall maintain a record of its shareholders, in a form that permits preparation of a list of the names and addresses of all shareholders, in alphabetical order by class of shares showing the number and class of shares held by each.

(d) A corporation shall maintain its records in written form or in another form capable of conversion into written form within a reasonable time.

(e) A corporation shall keep a copy of the following records at its principal office:

(1) Its articles or restated articles of incorporation and all amendments to them currently in effect;

(2) Its bylaws or restated bylaws and all amendments to them currently in effect;

(3) Resolutions adopted by its board of directors creating one or more classes or series of shares and fixing their relative rights, preferences and limitations if shares issued pursuant to those resolutions are outstanding;

(4) The minutes of all shareholders' meetings, and records of all action taken by shareholders without a meeting, for the past three years;

(5) All written communications to shareholders generally within the past three years, including the financial statements furnished for the past three years under section one thousand six hundred twenty of this article; and

(6) A list of the names and business addresses of its current directors and officers.

WV Legislature

§31D-16-1602. Inspection of records by shareholders.

(a) A shareholder of a corporation is entitled to inspect, during regular business hours at the corporation's principal office, any of the records of the corporation described in subsection (e), section one thousand six hundred one of this article if he or she gives the corporation written notice of his or her demand at least five business days before the date on which he or she wishes to inspect.

(b) A shareholder of a corporation is entitled to inspect, during regular business hours at a reasonable location specified by the corporation, any of the following records of the corporation if the shareholder meets the requirements of subsection (c) of this section and gives the corporation written notice of his or her demand at least five business days before the date on which he or she wishes to inspect and copy:

(1) Excerpts from minutes of any meeting of the board of directors, records of any action of a committee of the board of directors while acting in place of the board of directors on behalf of the corporation, minutes of any meeting of the shareholders and records of action taken by the shareholders or board of directors without a meeting, to the extent not subject to inspection under subsection (a), section one thousand six hundred two of this article;

(2) Accounting records of the corporation; and

(3) The record of shareholders.

(c) A shareholder may inspect and copy the records described in subsection (b) of this section only if:

(1) His or her demand is made in good faith and for a proper purpose;

(2) He or she describes with reasonable particularity his or her purpose and the records he or she desires to inspect; and

(3) The records are directly connected with his or her purpose.

(d) The right of inspection granted by this section may not be abolished or limited by a corporation's articles of incorporation or bylaws.

(e) This section does not affect:

(1) The right of a shareholder to inspect records under section seven hundred twenty, article seven of this chapter or, if the shareholder is in litigation with the corporation, to the same extent as any other litigant; or

(2) The power of a circuit court, independently of this chapter, to compel the production of corporate records for examination.

WV Legislature

(f) For purposes of this section, "shareholder" includes a beneficial owner whose shares are held in a voting trust or by a nominee on his or her behalf.

WV Legislature

§31D-16-1603. Scope of inspection right.

(a) A shareholder's agent or attorney has the same inspection and copying rights as the shareholder represented.

(b) The right to copy records under section one thousand six hundred two of this article includes, if reasonable, the right to receive copies by xerographic or other means, including copies through an electronic transmission if available and requested by the shareholder.

(c) The corporation may comply at its expense with a shareholder's demand to inspect the record of shareholders under subdivision (3), subsection (b), section one thousand six hundred two of this article by providing the shareholder with a list of shareholders that was compiled no earlier than the date of the shareholder's demand.

(d) The corporation may impose a reasonable charge, covering the costs of labor and material, for copies of any documents provided to the shareholder. The charge may not exceed the estimated cost of production, reproduction or transmission of the records.

WV Legislature

§31D-16-1604. Court-ordered inspection.

(a) If a corporation does not allow a shareholder who complies with subsection (a), section one thousand six hundred two of this article to inspect and copy any records required by that subsection to be available for inspection, the circuit court may summarily order inspection and copying of the records demanded at the corporation's expense upon application of the shareholder.

(b) If a corporation does not within a reasonable time allow a shareholder to inspect and copy any other record, the shareholder who complies with subsections (b) and (c), section one thousand six hundred two of this article may apply to the circuit court for an order to permit inspection and copying of the records demanded. The circuit court shall dispose of an application under this subsection on an expedited basis.

(c) If the circuit court orders inspection and copying of the records demanded, it shall also order the corporation to pay the shareholder's costs, including reasonable counsel fees, incurred to obtain the order unless the corporation proves that it refused inspection in good faith because it had a reasonable basis for doubt about the right of the shareholder to inspect the records demanded.

(d) If the circuit court orders inspection and copying of the records demanded, it may impose reasonable restrictions on the use or distribution of the records by the demanding shareholder.

WV Legislature

§31D-16-1605. Inspection of records by directors.

(a) A director of a corporation is entitled to inspect and copy the books, records and documents of the corporation at any reasonable time to the extent reasonably related to the performance of the director's duties as a director, including duties as a member of a committee, but not for any other purpose or in any manner that would violate any duty to the corporation.

(b) The circuit court may order inspection and copying of the books, records and documents at the corporation's expense, upon application of a director who has been refused inspection rights, unless the corporation establishes that the director is not entitled to inspection rights. The circuit court shall dispose of an application under this subsection on an expedited basis.

(c) If an order is issued, the circuit court may include provisions protecting the corporation from undue burden or expense and prohibiting the director from using information obtained upon exercise of the inspection rights in a manner that would violate a duty to the corporation and may also order the corporation to reimburse the director for the director's costs, including reasonable counsel fees, incurred in connection with the application.

WV Legislature

§31D-16-1606. Exception to notice requirement.

(a) Whenever notice is required to be given under any provision of this chapter to any shareholder, notice may not be required to be given if:

(1) Notice of two consecutive annual meetings and all notices of meetings during the period between two consecutive annual meetings have been sent to the shareholder at the shareholder's address as shown on the records of the corporation and have been returned undeliverable; or

(2) All, but not less than two, payments of dividends on securities during a twelve-month period, or two consecutive payments of dividends on securities during a period of more than twelve months, have been sent to the shareholder at the shareholder's address as shown on the records of the corporation and have been returned undeliverable.

(b) If any shareholder delivers to the corporation a written notice setting forth the shareholder's then-current address, the requirement that notice be given to the shareholder is to be reinstated.

WV Legislature

PART 2. REPORTS.

§31D-16-1620. Financial statements for shareholders.

(a) Unless unanimously waived by the shareholders, a corporation shall furnish its shareholders annual financial statements, which may be consolidated or combined statements of the corporation and one or more of its subsidiaries, as appropriate, that include a balance sheet as of the end of the fiscal year, an income statement for that year and a statement of changes in shareholders' equity for the year unless that information appears elsewhere in the financial statements. If financial statements are prepared for the corporation on the basis of generally accepted accounting principles, the annual financial statements must also be prepared on that basis.

(b) If the annual financial statements are reported upon by a public accountant, his or her report must accompany them. If not, the statements must be accompanied by a statement of the president or the person responsible for the corporation's accounting records:

(1) Stating his or her reasonable belief whether the statements were prepared on the basis of generally accepted accounting principles and, if not, describing the basis of preparation; and

(2) Describing any respects in which the statements were not prepared on a basis of accounting consistent with the statements prepared for the preceding year.

(c) A corporation shall mail the annual financial statements to each shareholder within one hundred twenty days after the close of each fiscal year. On written request from a shareholder who was not mailed the statements, the corporation shall mail him or her the latest financial statements.

WV Legislature

§31D-17-1701. Application to existing domestic corporations.

This chapter applies to all domestic corporations in existence on its effective date that were incorporated under any general statute of this state providing for incorporation of corporations for profit.

WV Legislature

§31D-17-1702. Application to qualified foreign corporations.

A foreign corporation authorized to transact business in this state on the effective date of this chapter is subject to this chapter but is not required to obtain a new certificate of authority to transact business under this chapter.

WV Legislature

§31D-17-1703. Effective date.

This chapter takes effect October 1, 2002.

WV Legislature