§ 55-9-03. Exception to voting requirement.

The voting requirement of G.S. 55-9-02 shall not be applicable to a business combination if each of the following conditions is met:

(1) The cash, or fair market value of other consideration, to be received per share by the holders of the corporation's common stock in such business combination bears the same or a greater percentage relationship to the market price of the corporation's common stock immediately prior to the announcement of such business combination by the corporation as the highest per share price (including brokerage commissions and/or soliciting dealers' fees) which such other entity has theretofore paid for any of the shares of the corporation's common stock already owned by it bears to the market price of the corporation's common stock immediately prior to the commencement of acquisition of the corporation's common stock by such other entity, directly or indirectly;

(2) The cash, or fair market value of other consideration, to be received per share by holders of the corporation's common stock in such business combination (i) is not less than the highest per share price (including brokerage commissions and/or soliciting dealers' fees) paid by such other entity in acquiring any of its holdings of the shares of the corporation's common stock and (ii) is not less than the earnings per share of the corporation's common stock for the four full consecutive fiscal quarters immediately preceding the record date for the solicitation of votes on such business combination, multiplied by the then price/earnings multiple, if any, of such other entity as customarily computed and reported in the financial community;

(3) After the other entity has acquired a twenty percent (20%) interest and prior to the consummation of such business combination: (i) the other entity shall have taken steps to ensure that the corporation's board of directors included at all times representation by continuing directors proportionate to the outstanding shares of the corporation's common stock held by persons not affiliated with the other entity (with a continuing director to occupy any resulting fractional board position); (ii) there shall have been no reduction in the rate of dividends payable on the corporation's common stock, except as may have been approved by a unanimous vote of its directors; (iii) the other entity shall have not acquired any newly issued shares of the corporation's capital stock, directly or indirectly, from the corporation, except upon conversion of any convertible securities acquired by the other entity prior to obtaining a twenty percent (20%) interest or as a result of a pro rata stock dividend or stock split; and (iv) the other entity shall not have acquired any additional shares of the corporation's outstanding common stock, or securities convertible into common stock, except as part of the transaction which resulted in the other entity acquiring its twenty percent (20%) interest;

(4) The other entity shall not have (i) received the benefit, directly or indirectly, except proportionately with other shareholders, of any loans, advances, guarantees, pledges, or other financial assistance or tax credits provided by the corporation or (ii) made any major change in the corporation's business or equity capital structure unless by a unanimous vote of the directors, in either case prior to the consummation of the business combination; and

(5) A proxy statement responsive to the requirements of the Exchange Act shall be mailed to the public shareholders of the corporation for the purpose of soliciting shareholder approval of the business combination and shall contain prominently in the forepart thereof any recommendations as to the advisability or inadvisability of the business combination which the continuing directors, or any of them, may choose to state and, if deemed advisable by a majority of the continuing directors, an opinion of a reputable investment banking firm as to the fairness (or not) of the terms of the business combination to the remaining public shareholders of the corporation, which investment banking firm shall be selected by a majority of the continuing directors and shall be paid by the corporation a reasonable fee for its services upon receipt of such opinion. (1987, c. 88, s. 1; 1989, c. 265, s. 1.)