Delaware Standards of Review

Controller on both sides and/or receiving a unique benefit?

Yes

No

Half of the board interested and/or not independent?

Yes

No

Change of control or deal protections?

Yes

No

Business Judgment Rule

Corwin?

Special committee?

Yes

No

Business Judgment Rule

Business Judgment Rule

Entire Fairness

Entire Fairness

Entire Fairness

Entire Fairness

Note 1: In Kahn v. M&F Worldwide Corp., 88 A.3d 635 (Del. 2014) (MFW), the Delaware Supreme Court held that where a controller agrees upfront, before any negotiations begin, that the controller will not proceed with the transaction without both (1) the affirmative recommendation of an independent and disinterested special committee and (2) the affirmative, fully informed and uncoerced vote of a majority of the minority stockholders, the business judgment rule will apply.

Note 2: In Corwin v. KKR Financial Holdings LLC, 125 A.3d 304 (Del. 2015) (Corwin), the Delaware Supreme Court held that where a fully informed, disinterested and uncoerced stockholder majority approves a transaction, the business judgment rule will apply.

Note 3: The Delaware Supreme Court has not definitively ruled that the business judgment rule is applicable in this scenario, but there is authority for the argument that the business judgment rule nonetheless be applicable (or, in the case of a change of control or usage of deal protections, Revlon or Unocal, respectively). See, e.g., Saltzgiver v. Lev, C.A. No. 2019-0044-SG (Del. Ch. Feb. 27, 2020).

Note 4: In the instance where stockholders are generally disinterested and independent, the Corwin “cleansing” vote is the same as the vote required under section 251(c) of the Delaware General Corporation Law.

Note 5: Delaware courts have held that Corwin ratification “cleanses” board-level conflicts and Revlon breaches, but whether Unocal breaches are given the same cleansing effect remains an open question.