

BIG SPRING SCHOOL DISTRICT

Newville, Pennsylvania

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF THE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 8, 2024



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1. Call to Order - President John Wardle

The Committee of the Whole Board of School Directors for the Big Spring School District met in the Big Spring Middle School Auditorium at 7:07 pm with nine (9) Board of School Directors present: John Wardle, President; Michael Hippensteel, Vice-President; Frank Myers, Treasurer; Julie Boothe, Secretary; Seth Cornman, David Fisher, Kenneth Fisher, Robert Over, and Lisa Shade.

Absent: No absences

Others in attendance: Nicholas Guarente, Superintendent; Nadine Sanders, Assistant Superintendent; Michael Statler, Business Manager; Nicole Donato, Director of Curriculum & Instruction; Rob Krepps, Director of Technology; Darin Baughman, Technology, and Donna Minnich, Board Minutes

President Wardle announced the Board met in Executive Session this evening prior to the Committee of the Whole Meeting to discuss legal updates pertaining to the pending law suits.

2. Presentation:

2.a. Student Internships - Cherie Powell, High School Career Coordinator

Mrs. Powell presented Career Education Updates for 2023-2024 to the Board which included internships, explorations, pre-apprenticeships, certifications, and other career opportunities.

High School student Katie Elder spoke about her internship at Oak Flat Elementary, Landon Cornman shared his internship experience at Agar Welding and Rylee Koser shared her career exploration experience at Penn State Holy Spirit Hospital and Big Spring Physical Therapy.

President Wardle thanked Mrs. Powell and the students for presenting to the Board.

2.a. Student Internships - Cherie Powell, High School Career Coordinator (continued)

Mr. Cornman asked if the certifications mentioned are tailored student to student and Mrs. Powell said sometimes students approach her about a specialized certification but there are also certifications commonly available to students such as the OSHA certifications made available by Bulldog Foundation grants. Mr. Cornman asked how these opportunities are advertised to the students and Mrs. Powell said she offers an exhibition during advisement for students to circulate and see what exists. She also said she speaks with classes during course selection to make students aware of the opportunities which also spread by word of mouth.

2.b. School Security – Gareth Pahowka, Esquire

Gareth Pahowka shared School Security information with the Board:

- School Security Guards
- School Police Officers
- School Resource Officers

President Wardle said this is information to digest for discussion to make decisions in the future to select who would work with our students and how that works within our budget.

Mr. Myers asked Mr. Pahowka to speak to the liability concerns of each option and he responded that if done properly through the creative process of court approval, appropriate trainings, and certifications, we would be covered for liability. He said we would maintain due diligence up front if we're going in a new direction to make sure we have all the components in place for liability purposes. Mr. Myers asked if we are free of liability with our current resource officers and Mr. Pahowka said he doesn't believe any school district is ever free of liability. He said the contract in place with the Sheriff's Department provides another layer but it would almost be the same liability to the District. He said we would make sure we follow the process in the school code and doesn't believe liability would be a factor one way or another.

Mr. Cornman asked if the current SRO's we're using through the Sheriff's Department could be given more authority and Mr. Pahowka said no, in-house security employed by Big Spring could have authority from the court but SRO's through the Sheriff's Department would be a matter of what is spelled out by contracted duties and responsibilities.

Dr. Guarente responded to Mr. Cornman's question and said we met with our current SRO's this year and expanded the authority of one person based upon training and said there is a PA State Police protocol and governance also in place and said for the Board's peace of mind, all potential powers are presently exercised with the SRO's at Big Spring.

2.b. School Security – Gareth Pahowka, Esquire (continued)

President Wardle said we call the state police when needed and they are in communication with the Sheriff's Department behind the scenes.

Mr. D. Fisher asked if we would go with our own police officer, would we have the same involvement with the state police? Dr. Guarente confirmed the state police would still be a partner with Big Spring no matter which direction we pursued.

3. Other Items – Nothing Offered

4. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Mrs. Shade was seconded by Mr. Myers

Voting Yes: Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Over, Shade, and Wardle

Motion Carried unanimously. 9-0

Meeting adjourned at **7:49 pm**

