

# BIG SPRING SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Newville, Pennsylvania

### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF THE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

MAY 2, 2022



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## 1. Call to Order

The Committee of the Whole of the Board of School Directors for the Big Spring School District met in the Big Spring School District Middle School Auditorium at 6:00 pm with eight (8) Board of School Directors present; William Swanson, Board President; Todd Deihl, Vice President; William Piper, Secretary; Kenneth Fisher, Robert Over, Frank Myers, John Wardle, and Richard Roush

Absent: No absences

Others in attendance: Kevin C. Roberts, Jr., Superintendent; William August, Assistant Superintendent; Michael Statler, Business Manager; Rob Krepps, Director of Technology; Darrin Baughman, Technology, and Donna Minnich, Board Minutes

## 2. Interviews for Vacant Board of School Director Position

- Julie Boothe – 6:00 pm
  1. Question: What motivates you to want to become a Board member?  
Answer: Candidate shared experiences as a nurse and a desire to be an advocate in that role and as a prospective Board member.
  2. Question: What do you see as the Board's roles and responsibilities?  
Answer: Candidate discussed PSSA scores, the desire for higher achievement, and the Board's role in this.
  3. Question: What role does policy play or have in the functioning of the Board?  
Answer: Policies guide staff decisions. Candidate discussed situations when policy wasn't followed during an athletic practice.
  4. Question: What is your vision for education in this community?  
Answer: Candidate stated education needs to be tailored to each student with increased levels of achievement.
  5. Describe the difference between the Board's role and the superintendent's role.  
Answer: Candidate stated the Board oversees and makes rules and judgement calls and the superintendent oversees the daily organization of the schools to make sure things run smoothly.
  6. Question: Can you or should you support a Board decision that you were not in favor of?  
Answer: Candidate stated that she could, but would want to also know the context.
  7. Question: What is the most important responsibility of a School Board?  
Answer: Candidate stated the Board should ensure the school is doing what it is supposed to do to educate students.

- Ursus Fedin – 6:20 pm
  1. Question: What motivates you to want to become a Board member?  
Answer: Candidate stated I don't like the polarization that we're seeing and don't want politics to play into how we make choices in the schools.
  2. Question: What do you see as the Board's roles and responsibilities?  
Answer: Candidate stated managing the budget, overseeing faculty, staff, not just hiring but granting leave.
  3. Question: What role does policy play or have in the functioning of the Board?  
Answer: Candidate outlined the importance of interpreting state and federal regulations and developing/implementing policy in a pragmatic way.
  4. Question: What is your vision for education in the community?  
Answer: Candidate stated to increase opportunities for students both in and out of the classroom.
  5. Question: Describe the difference between the Board's role and the superintendent's role.  
Answer: Candidate stated the superintendent is the public face and oversees the day to day operation of the schools. The School Board kind of collaborates with the superintendent to make sure everyone is on the same page and ultimately if expectations are being reached.
  6. Question: Can you or should you support a decision that you were not in favor of?  
Answer: Candidate stated depends on the situation, but if it were a matter of preference, it would be supported.
  7. Question: What is the most important responsibility of a School Board?  
Answer: Candidate stated serve the student body and ensure they are receiving the greatest education possible.
  
- Dorothy Pastor – 6:40 pm
  1. Question: What motivates you to want to become a Board member?  
Answer: Candidate outlined some frustrations with COVID and the desire to see better communication from the Board.
  2. Question: What do you see as the Board's roles and responsibilities?  
Answer: Candidate stated the Board's role is to efficiently manage the education of the children in the school district and be fiscally responsible to parents and residents of the school district with tax dollars. Candidate also outlined the importance of parents' rights.
  3. Question: What role does policy play or have in the functioning of the Board?  
Answer: Candidate outlined the importance of policy while maintaining critical skills to evaluate for oneself.
  4. Question: What is your vision for education in this community?  
Answer: Candidate outlined that we need to be discerning in educational rights now to ensure our system isn't at risk.
  5. Question: Describe the difference between the Board's role and the superintendent's role.  
Answer: Candidate stated the Board hires the superintendent and the superintendent answers to the Board and needs to continue to critically analyze all information.
  6. Question: Can you or should you support a Board decision that you were not in favor of?  
Answer: Candidate stated absolutely, as long as there is free dialogue and each person can speak up but in reality, everyone gets their own vote.

7. Question: What is the most Important responsibility of a School Board?

Answer: Candidate stated to provide a quality education at a reasonable cost and to provide some community services for some at risk kids and to listen to your constituents.

- Donna Webster – 7:00 pm

1. Question: What motivates you to want to become a Board member?

Answer: Candidate stated I would say the kids...I had two kids come through the system and I thought Big Spring was a great place for them. Candidate also said being able to represent the people of Upper Mifflin and bringing concerns forward if they have them.

2. Question: What do you see as the Board's roles and responsibilities?

Answer: Candidate stated to make decisions financially responsible for the school district.

3. Question: What role does policy play or have in the functioning of the Board?

Answer: Candidate outlined that policy guides actions and some in a capacity similar to laws.

4. Question: What is your vision for education in this community?

Answer: Candidate described the importance of taking part in preparing students for blue collar work and stated the demand is there and also the ability to make a good living.

5. Question: Describe the difference between the Board's role and the superintendent's role.

Answer: Candidate compared a superintendent to the president of a corporation and Board members to shareholders like a check and balance system.

6. Question: Can you or should you support a Board decision that you were not in favor of?

Answer: Candidate stated I feel that I should vote with what my conscience guides me to vote but if I am in the minority then it is my job to step up and support the decision of the whole unit and I would have to support if it was a Board policy but it doesn't mean I have to be happy with the decision.

7. Question: What is the most Important responsibility of a School Board?

Answer: To support our school district and our students but also to support our own individual townships or municipalities and try to do what's best for the whole unit. There's a balance.

- Steve Wiser – 7:20 pm

1. Question: What motivates you to want to become a Board member?

Answer: Candidate outlined the importance of education and his desire to help public education do better.

2. Question: What do you see as the Board's roles and responsibilities?

Answer: Candidate stated that the primary responsibility should be to the quality of education that we can give to our children and young people.

3. Question: What role does policy play or have in the functioning of the Board?

Answer: Candidate explained that policies are rules and these rules, like others, are what we follow.

4. Question: What is your vision for education in this community?

Answer: Candidate explained that education should prepare students for their future.

5. Question: Describe the difference between the Board's role and the superintendent's role.

Answer: Candidate explained the Board sets the agendas for the district and the superintendent carries that out.

6. Question: Can you or should you support a Board decision that you were not in favor of?

Answer: Candidate stated just because I wouldn't agree with the Board decision doesn't mean that it shouldn't be going on. It would depend upon the issue for me.

7. Question: What is the most Important responsibility of a School Board?

Answer: Candidate stated I feel the School Board has to represent the parents and the children both.

### 3. Preview of the Agenda

President Swanson requested the Board address item 14 New Business Personnel Items and combine items 14a through 14d into one motion.

### 4. Other Items – Nothing Offered

### 5. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Deihl was seconded by Mr. Wardle

Roll call vote: Voting Yes: Swanson, Deihl, Piper, Fisher, Over, Myers, Wardle, and Roush

Motion Carried unanimously. 8-0

Meeting Adjourned at 7:10 pm

Meeting called back to order by President Swanson at 7:10 pm to hear Board Reports since the regular Board Meeting has a long agenda this evening.

### 6. Board Reports

a. **District Improvement Committee - Mr. Fisher and Mr. Myers** – Nothing offered

b. **Athletic Committee - Mr. Deihl, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Myers, and Mr. Wardle** – The meeting next week is on May 10

c. **Cumberland Perry Area Career and Technical Center - Mr. Piper and Mr. Wardle** - Mr. Piper provided meeting updates to the Board including mention of the Career Fair that will be taking place on May 16 and 17 and also a Middle School Career Camp that will be offered for \$25.00 to students in grades 6-8 from June 6-9 and June 13-16. Mr. Wardle stated they are moving ahead on the building project which is still in the planning stages and also said it is great to see enrollment numbers increasing for fall 2022.

d. **Building and Property Committee - Mr. Over, Mr. Piper, Mr. Roush, and Mr. Wardle** - Nothing offered

e. **Finance Committee - Mr. Deihl, Mr. Over, and Mr. Piper** – Nothing offered

f. **South Central Trust - Mr. Deihl** – Nothing offered

g. **Capital Area Intermediate Unit - Mr. Swanson** – Mr. Swanson stated our meeting was held last Thursday. Negotiations continue and are getting very close. Renovations are under way and on track to be completed later this summer provided there are no problems with materials. There are bus driver shortages. The CAIU transports students 3 million miles which requires a lot of drivers at a great expense. There are 30 faculty shortages but with 32 school districts in the IU, it is manageable. President Swanson stated they have had many long meetings with executive sessions but the complete meeting information was included in the Board member packets.

h. **Tax Collection Committee - Mr. Swanson** - Nothing offered

i. **Future Board Agenda Items** – Nothing offered

## **j. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Roberts thanked all of the candidates that applied for the Board of School Directors vacancy and stated the primary function of our system is to make sure that we provide our students with the best programming possible so that we are able to create successful citizens. Board leadership plays a critical role in governing our District to ensure that we realize that commitment. Dr. Roberts said It is outstanding that we were able to have such great interest from our community in leading in this capacity.

Dr. Roberts shared the April enrollment report which was completed by Mrs. Katelyn Minnich and extended kudos to Katelyn on her hard work. We currently serve 2,444 students in our schools and another 70 in our own cyber offering. 119 of our students benefit from programming at the Cumberland Perry Area Career and Technical Center. 163 students attend outside cyber programming. Dr. Roberts stated that Mr. August and Mrs. Donato look forward to employing additional efforts to recruit those students back to the Big Spring School District.

Dr. Roberts said later this evening, the PA National Guards Association and Wilbur Wolf will recognize the Big Spring High School with two awards which is not only a tremendous honor for our high school and District, but also speaks to the rich history of pride and support for our military that exists in our entire community.

Dr. Roberts stated this past Saturday evening was our Prom and it was held at the Letort View Community Center on the Army War College – Carlisle Barracks. The Prom was not only well attended by students, but Dr. Roberts said he is always grateful for the staff turnout to support the students. Dr. Roberts shared congratulations to our Queen – Rebecca Cohick and our King – Trevor Richwine and extended a big thank you to Mrs. Michelle Bear for the work that she puts into coordinating the event which was outstanding.

Dr. Roberts said that next Monday he, Mr. Swanson, and Mr. Sinkovich will have the privilege of accompanying two of our student-athletes to an awards ceremony where Penn-Live / The Patriot News will give the John Travers Award. The John Travers Award has been presented to the top male and top female athletes from our region since 1982. Dr. Roberts said Miss Laney Noreika and Mr. Matthew Raudabaugh were selected as finalists this year and we are excited to honor them as finalists and hopeful for their selections as award recipients. Dr. Roberts said it is rare for school districts to have one finalist and this marks the first time in the award history that Big Spring has had two in the same year.

## **7. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Deihl was seconded by Mr. Wardle  
Committee of the Whole Board Meeting adjourned at 7:22 pm

  

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