

BIG SPRING SCHOOL DISTRICT

Newville, Pennsylvania

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF THE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 7, 2025



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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 7:00 pm with eight (8) Board of School Directors present: John Wardle, President; Vice-President; Lisa Shade, Treasurer; Julie Boothe, Secretary; Seth Cornman, David Fisher, Kenneth Fisher, and Frank Myers (Michael Hippensteel participated virtually).

Absent: Robert Over's resignation effective March 18, 2025 was accepted during the regular Board Meeting.

Others in attendance: Nicholas Guarente, Superintendent; Nadine Sanders, Assistant Superintendent; Cristy Lentz, Business Manager; Thomas King, Solicitor; Rob Krepps, Director of Technology; Darin Baughman, Technology, and Donna Minnich, Board Minutes

2. Public Comment – Nothing Offered

3. Presentations

a. Big Spring School Police Update – Mike Sturm, Shane Cohick, and Kyle Schlusser

Officer Shane Cohick provided a School Police update to the Board explaining the work by Director Mike Sturm to organize a School Police Force and described the daily operations that have been established. He explained the value of building relationships with students and staff as well as constant safety checks to identify areas in need of improvement and said the school police officers also provide security at extra-curricular events.

Mr. Wardle thanked the group for the presentation and efforts to keep our students safe.

School Police Update (continued)

Mr. Myers asked if the officers change their routine and schedule at the buildings and Officer Schlusser said they rotate their efforts to spend time at each school and work together to cover all buildings.

Mrs. Shade asked if certifications are annual and Officer Cohick said most of the certifications are January to December. Mrs. Shade thanked Officer Cohick for being visible at the middle school.

Mr. Wardle asked how the relationship is with the State Police and Sheriff's Department and Officer Cohick said the State Police are our first backup and the working relationship with both agencies has gotten better now that we have an established school police department and said they are presently working with Cumberland County for expanded authority.

b. Middle School Furniture - Principal Clarissa Nace, Assistant Principal Brad Fry and Kevin Moore, Corbett Inc.

Kevin Moore from Corbett, Inc. spoke on the benefits of the middle school furniture being considered for purchase.

Middle School Principal Clarissa Nace spoke on the need for new desks and chairs and provided insight on the choice of the proposed furniture which includes the ability to rearrange the chairs and desks based on curriculum delivery in an effort to promote innovative learning options.

Mr. Wardle asked how easy the desks and chairs are to clean and Mr. Moore said standard gentle cleaners or typical cleaning products will work well. Mr. Wardle asked if they have done a study on the different ways to sit in the chairs and Mr. Moore said it has been important for their company to visit schools on the backend after selling the chairs and said half of the kids sit forward and half sit any other way. Mr. Wardle asked if the desk height is adjustable and Mr. Moore said there are adjustable desks available but not the ones currently priced.

Mrs. Shade asked if Mrs. Nace favors felt gliders or casters and asked if teachers were consulted on that option and Mrs. Nace said teachers could be polled but she personally leans toward casters. Mr. Hippensteel asked if felt pad gliders are the only option and Mr. Moore said felt, nylon or steel are available.

The Board continued to discuss the options and benefits of the proposed furniture purchase.

Mr. Cornman said this is a large expenditure and asked why we aren't going with the same desks in bigger sizes and Mrs. Nace explained the current desks are problematic for classroom space and said book bag storage is a problem. Mrs. Shade said she spoke with students and offered comments including the chairs are uncomfortable. Mr. D Fisher said he likes the concept but would have a hard time justifying the cost. Mrs. Shade pointed out we have a 5 million dollar surplus and this was already a budgeted expense.

President Wardle offered an opportunity for **Community Comment**:

Sally Winder said if there is a different price for adjustable frame desks which is a higher price, the Board should know that cost.

A question from the audience was asked if training is offered on how best to use the chairs and Mr. Moore confirmed there is training included in the cost.

Charlotte McDonald said we do not need to spend money just because we have it and said she can barely make her tax payment. She said no, absolutely not. She said this is frivolous and ridiculous to spend \$200.00 for a child's chair and said this is nonsense.

Mrs. Boothe asked if the company has been selling these chairs in this area and how long and Mr. Moore said the KI Company has sold approximately 20,000 chairs across the northeast region and he has personally sold them for the past 4 years.

Adam Oldham said he can understand if you are not an educator that you may not understand the value of furniture but said we have learned a lot over the years and that static furniture is not an effective way to learn. He said we know what works well and the concept of flexible seating has increased student outcomes and also said we have learned that kids need more than sitting in a room to be able to effectively learn.

Mr. Hippensteel asked what is the number 1 selling chair for middle schools and asked if this is a top seller and what is the second-best option. Mr. Moore said the intellect wave chair is number one and the second-best option is the ruckus which is the proposed chair. He said other options are the limelight and cogni chairs which are static.

Lawrence Flynn said he totally understands how someone not paying taxes in Big Spring School District would support this and said he pays taxes through his rent and doesn't want this.

Mrs. Shade reminded everyone the last furniture purchase lasted us more than 40+ years, said we can only hope this will last decades again, and said they are due for an upgrade. She said she doesn't think \$200,000 is that much for 40 years of use.

Mrs. Boothe asked how much research has been done on these chairs, how was that conducted, and is there safety data? Mr. Moore said he has a pamphlet and can share that data and is happy to follow-up on that question.

4. Other Items – Nothing Offered

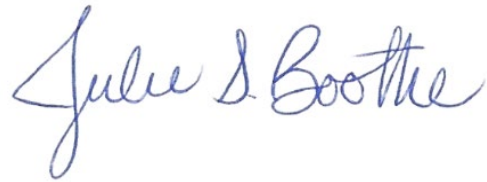
5. Adjournment

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

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

Motion Carried unanimously. 8-0

Meeting adjourned at **7:58 pm**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie S. Boothe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a distinct 'S'.