

SAUCON VALLEY LIBRARY TASK FORCE MEETING

Date: Thursday, May 10, 2012
Time: 5:03 PM
Location: Lower Saucon Township

Present: Lower Saucon Township: Jack Cahalan, Cathy Gorman, Allan Johnson, Mike Karabin
Hellertown Borough: Gail Nolf, Joe Pampanin, Tina Krasnansky
Hellertown Area Library: Jessica Goedel, Allison Finkbeiner, Rev. Lamar Handwerk, Mike Evangelista, Robin Rotherham
Absent: Tom Maxfield & Cathy Kichline

Lynn Koehler arrived at 6:00 PM; Kim LaBrake left at 6:16 PM.

Committees:

Demographic/Statistics:

Alison Finkbeiner
Lynn Koehler
Jessica Goedel

Building:

Kim LaBrake
Joe Pampanin
Mike Evangelista

Technology:

Gail Nolf
Mike Karabin
Jack Cahalan

Finance:

Reverend Lamar Handwerk
Tom Maxfield
Cathy Gorman
Tina Krasnansky

1. Approval of Minutes from the April 12th Meeting

Kim asked if anyone had any changes or corrections? Jack said there was a blank line in the minutes where Lynn was speaking, which was filled in to say "Lynn said the databases that Hellertown Area Library does not have is very expensive. One of the things the District Library offers is something called _____ where they purchase these types of databases at a group or lower rate or provide them with a service as part of the district service." (David Dunlap indicated that the missing words were "group buy").

2. Discussion of April 12th Interim Meeting

Kim asked if anyone had any comments or questions on the April 12th interim meeting? Does anyone want to say anything about how that meeting went?

Robin said during that public meeting, she sat and listened to many, many shortcomings of the HAL. Most of them were emotional concerns and not totally directly related to library service. Some of the things she heard was the HAL needs to be brought up to date; losing a library would affect the quality of life for someone; it's unsophisticated; and so on. She's not even going to address any of those remarks. It's those remarks that relate to library service that she feels she needs to say something about. One of the comments she heard was that the HAL has a small town feeling. She's sorry, but she doesn't see that as a negative. The Saucon Valley is a small region, and it's exactly that, that makes small libraries special. Don't think that physical size means small service because at the beginning of these discussions with the Township, we proved because we're small doesn't mean we don't give good service.

Joe said he was keeping a list of questions during the meeting also. He tried to provide some answers. He'll let Robin go through her prepared statements and if he has something similar, he'll add to it at that time. He wrote down a similar question that the comment came up that BAPL would be considered more cosmopolitan or sophisticated. He had written that this is a judgment call. There's really no basis for saying that. In his opinion, the other is part of his answer is that it's not really part of a mission for the library in any case.

Jessica said she sees a lot of people who come into the library and they like the fact that Robin knows their card number by heart. It's just depends what a patron is looking for. It's not going to come down to an individual basis, if they want a big or smaller library. That was apparent with some people who spoke.

Robin said especially the residents of Hellertown, they don't want to lose that. They don't want to take people on from the Township and then lose that. It's something they like in their library. She's heard that time and time again.

Robin said the second comment was that the Township would lose the bookmobile. Yes, we all know that's pretty much true, and we as a library staff and board are concerned about that. This week the HAL received a grant to provide on-site service to residents of Saucon Valley Manor. She thinks this is pretty cool. We are going to buy crates and set up a schedule and buy our laptop and check out things to people in the Manor who can't get to the library. She likes this kind of approach to library services. These people get to see a face, and that's kind of a neat thing. With more of a little creativity on their part, they could bring that to the Township, to the Township building, call her up and she'll bring a book to your door. It's not unheard of; she used to deliver audio books to people. She thinks we can work that out. Joe said potential loss of bookmobile would be an issue. He had written down would there be other means available to duplicate that type of service? The other thing we may want to do as a committee, what is the cost benefit analysis of this? How many people in LST are actually using this bookmobile and that may help answer the first question – are there other means or do we really want to keep it. Jessica said if you look at the statistics, a lot of the people who are using the bookmobile are 30 and 35 years old. You'd think it would be kids or older people. Joe said do you know why, is this more like a working schedule conflict? Jessica said she thinks it's just the location of the bookmobile stops, they are in urban developments. Joe said it would be a convenience. Jessica said yes, it would be right there. She thought there would be a high number of kids utilizing that or they could be checking out things for the kids.

Robin said lack of databases and technology. Let's look again to the future, as she thinks that was the mission of this Task Force when we started. We wanted to think about 20th century libraries. They will provide the LST residents with databases they will use. Since they don't have the figures from BAPL on what databases the residents use, she suggests we start with a general reference, language, and a genealogy database, along with the Pennsylvania power library, and this would satisfy most needs of the people in LST and the Borough. Looking forward, the library could provide access to the mobile unit on your phones. When we started all this, we started with the vision of what a library would look like in 10 to 15 years, and instead of a big library building, with a lot of staff and outdated staffing models, we should be looking at the library service which goes beyond the walls and can provide programs and materials that focus on literacy, leisure reading, and early childhood. Joe said he has some other things on the database, but related to potential duplication.

Robin said no resources or fewer resources. We're not as big as the BAPL, and we don't have as many square feet. We're our own entity. Compare 33,000 materials at HAL to 230,000 materials at BAPL and those are 2010 figures. The Township residents checked out 30,636 things from the crappy HAL, 35% of our checkouts. Township residents checked out 34,464 things at BAPL for a total of 6% of their checkouts. Kind of disturbing to her, after the public meeting, Mike Karabin, expressed to her his concern over the numbers that were provided by the Statistics Committee and you were thinking that they were somewhat maybe inflated. She apologizes if we created any misunderstanding or you misunderstood what their numbers are or were, and she wished he had discussed that with the Committee first. Mike K. said consider the source that the message came from. Depending on how and what he said, his comments, on other cases been distorted. Jessica said do you have any concerns about our numbers? Mike K. said no. The numbers are numbers, you can't change that. He thinks what he was more or less was saying was the stats in themselves can be changed, not that they are false, but it may be a different method on how BAPL looks at things and how the HAL looks at things. Robin said she would say circulation is circulation no matter where you are. Mike said it wasn't all the circulation in her conversation, it was related to a variety of things on there. He didn't have the data in front of him at the time. The way he was expressing it was because of numbers, the way they look, maybe they aren't always correct in the sense of we think they are correct, but if you dig deeper and spend more actual time on studying the facts, they can change drastically. Jessica said in defense of the numbers as she's on the Demographic Committee, they did find some things

that they looked deeper into to get accurate numbers. They looked at it from every possible angle. They were going back and forth, was it by zip code, do we have to break it down, so she feels pretty confident that any numbers that were provided were accurate. Mike K. said he has no problem with the numbers. Robin said it wasn't the message, it was the messenger.

Joe said just to go back to the main point of Hellertown not having adequate services; HAL already serves a significant portion of LST residents. He's not going to get into the specific number, but you would have to say it's significant even if you have a question as to what are the actual percentages are. With a merger, the services would definitely increase beyond that. With the already significant number of LST residents using the library, he thinks it does provide sufficient service, at least for them. Kim said without knowing specifically, and the numbers, to her, it's interesting there are basically 30,000 checkouts for each library. There's no way to tell that those are the library users and those are the same users and they use both libraries. That's where she can understand what Mike K. is saying, there's 30,000 here and 30,000 there, there's a percentage that will always use HAL and a percentage that will always use BAPL, and then there's the group in the middle who are using both. There is this many from BAPL, this many from HAL, then library cardholders. There's no gray area in the way their number is presented. If you look at cardholders, you can say 42%, but you don't know how many are using both. Kim said people will tailor where they are going to based on what they need at that time. Mike K. said even when the Committee met with BAPL; they said their catalog of uses and so forth, wasn't a pure science. Robin said she thinks they were switching software. Mike K. said they can't tell you this number, they can't tell you that number, right there it says something has got to be off somewhat. Robin said our numbers are not incorrect. We looked at last year's summer reading, we are little, we know these people and their addresses and we can tell that 50% of the people came from LST. It's pretty unscientific.

Robin said this comment doesn't come out of the public meeting, but it does come out of Lynn's email that said about public library and school library cooperating. They are doing that. They have already started. They created a forum for student requests. If a student comes in and wants something on ecosystems, and they don't have it, we'll put in a request for it, and somewhere down the road, she will purchase it. That's a good process for them. Recently she met with the Assistant Superintendent and all three school librarians and talked about how the program can work at the school district and it will be available for all the kids in the district. She just had an open discussion with the school librarian about database sharing, not funding, but let's look at what you have and what we have and let's get things that are complimentary. Those discussions are on-going. She just wants to relate when the Library Task Force was created, her feelings are then as they are now that the Township has the opportunity to create a library that's going to carry you into the 21st century and beyond. With fair funding from both municipalities, it could be a reality. Someone said the impression she got from the school email was more like tying the library into the school. Mike K. said he had the same thought. That's a project in itself to merge the possibility of the school library and the HAL. That's a whole other step the entity will have to take. The school isn't opposed to possibly doing something or coordinating something. Kim said if there's x amount of dollars to spend per year on maybe databases on HAL and the school district, it's only common sense that you are serving the same public, let's make sure if she's already ordered it, it's not something you don't have to order and we can share it. Mike K. said there's something that may be really convenient and easy to the school as utilizing now that the library itself can join in or the community. Kim said exactly, to serve the community. Jessica said we should make it clear that none of the money for the library comes from the school district. There are libraries that are set up that way. An example is the Easton Library and they basically just lost the funding from the school district. Jack said Whitehall-Coplay Library is another one. The funding from the school district stopped. One municipality got a library tax, the other one is still looking for funding.

Joe said starting from the top of the list, there was a criticism that the online surveys didn't necessarily capture a true cross section of residents. That might be true, but he thinks there are still some specific items in there that can show specific interest even if they are narrowly defined. He knows one of the things he saw in there, there was a request or some suggestion that more music be provided, and things like that. He's done a search through BAPL and they seem like they have a large selection of classical or older music, but not so much modern music. That might be an area, regardless of the outcome of this Task Force, that the HAL can use. If your database is not duplicated, and there are some deficiencies exist at

BAPL, we could offer that there. In any case, the same things from the online survey, even if it's not a true cross section, looking at the specific items that are mentioned that can be used as a guide to audit our resources at BAPL and that would get into the comparison of services which was also another criticism that came up. There wasn't a lot of comparison of BAPL services to HAL services. Jessica said to keep in mind, the thing about libraries is they are always changing. When they don't have it, they are going to order it. Robin keeps track of what people are talking about. If it were her, she would rather start with the basics and then as things start moving forward, you add things little by little and keep an eye on things. You don't want to have databases that no one uses and the same with books. She sees where people are coming from with the comparison, but you are better off starting off from the bottom and working your way towards what you would like. That's why it's important for individuals who are using the library to speak up and say this would be great for me to use or I would like to have this and go from there.

Joe said again, no comparison between HAL and BAPL was another comment. He thinks we said a lot on that already. He would reiterate it would be useful to look at that for unnecessary duplication. Mike K. said how do you avoid duplication? BAPL, Easton and all your other surrounding libraries do the same things every day. What's the duplication issue? Robin said it's so hard as you have to have the best sellers. It's a library. Mike K. said there are certain things all libraries have to do. Joe said he had a note specifically on duplication. Exactly what you said, the best sellers still would be something you would want to duplicate. It doesn't make sense to not have that or everybody over a large distance, a regional approach, has to drive to a central location to look for one or two books if it's on the best seller list. That doesn't make sense. Kim said duplication is not a bad word. You have to look at each segment separately to see if it's necessary. Mike K. said you are saying duplication, give a description. Kim said the word duplication is too easy to use. Jessica said what's your guideline for duplication? You say you should only do one library in a 45 mile section. Kim said libraries are already duplicated in what's in them. Allan said what you have to look at is the service you provide. Some of the people he heard talking are so hung up on cost efficiencies and cost consciousness, but he doesn't think that's the thing. The thing is service and what the people want. In our case, some people want to use the HAL and some want to use the BAPL, so that's what we are going to have to provide. That's the way it looks to him. Many of the people at the meeting suggested sharing the money. It doesn't sound like a difficult thing. It's a concept that from his point of view and the Township's point of view, it would be a simple thing. Maybe the library doesn't like that idea, especially the BAPL. To provide people in the Township with what they are looking for, people's ideas are going to have to change. That's part of the problem. He can go into more details, but this isn't the place to do it. The solution to all of it is sharing the money. One of the things the Township talked about at some of their Council meetings was how much money. Right now, BAPL has been deciding how much per capita money we should spend on libraries. LST might have a different idea when it's all said and done and that would be worked into the sharing business. The other thing is how would you share, how much would you give? He thinks a good way of doing it is based on what you were talking about a few minutes ago, and that's the actual load the people put on the library measured by how many checkouts are there at each library. It really surprised him to see that there are only about 35,000 checkouts at the BAPL and about 30,000 at the HAL. That would be dividing the money up about 55/45. He thinks both libraries should keep very good statistics on that as the decision-making process evolves, that's probably how they are going to decide if the money is shared. That's got to be the most realistic way to do it. Jessica said to keep in mind, she agrees with him, about the split, but that's going to be something if you were to go in that direction, ask for those numbers and apply those numbers. Allan said you would use this year's number to decide what the split would be for next year. You don't know what it's going to be next year. Jessica said if you do it that way, the Township will be tasked with getting those numbers each year. Allan said the Township might want to decide what they want to spend on the library each year. Kim said if you are looking at that split, make sure you are comparing apples to apples. There has to be an agreement on how those numbers are kept so that when you get the numbers for that year, at least we understand it's all by zip code or something like that. Allan said so everyone trusts the numbers. Kim said in a numbers game, it comes down to I don't believe your numbers. It is what it is, so there has to be an agreement. Allan said the nice thing about the sharing process is each individual library can do with the money what they want. If you want to increase your databases, buy more books, or get more computers, it's up to the professionals to do what's best. Cathy said the only problem she sees with that is a budgetary one for both. You have to have a somewhat consistent budget. Hypothetically speaking - if one year a large portion of people decide to check out materials at HAL, then HAL is going to get a huge surplus the

following year and BAPL is relying on a certain amount of money, and they will get shortchanged and will have to modify their expenses. Allan said they also have to consider we are going to promote the use of our library and try to get as many people as possible to use their library and get the biggest chunk of change. All those kinds of things have to be figured out if the Township goes in that direction. Mike K. said at this moment, he doesn't see BAPL coming to agreement with that scenario. Kim said we are just making a recommendation. Mike K. said he's thinking of BAPL and what they have did in the past. Allan said LST is the one who has the money to spend. Jessica said if BAPL were to do that, then she would if they don't want to split it, well, that's their answer. Allan said if you want to look at either this further, who caused all these problems to get so serious? The State, they cut back in funding. Kim said just like the libraries may not have a consistent budget at this point, that's the economics of our world, township's, states and schools. No one has a consistent budget anymore. It's a new sort of way with the world. No one is going to like it, but there's a new norm now. Allan said flexibility is required.

Joe said at least one item for getting restored ACCESS PA funding is something HAL and BAPL would all agree on and probably should be part of the report that that's one important item we need in general, to discuss it. Kim said for the betterment of all the libraries in the State. Joe said he wants to bring up a point about the sustainability and centralization of library services and the criticism of having a single library would be more sustainable. Allan said he didn't ask or give any arguments about that question. The question was brought up by a resident and most of the arguments were given by Tom Maxfield. Joe said he doesn't agree with the woman's statements about the regional approach or that centralization would necessarily be more sustainable than having multiple locations. One of the issues we just talked about was the best sellers. You would still have to have some kind of duplication on that. The other issue is, is it more sustainable to have multiple users traveling long distances to go to a central location versus a set of, under the district library approach, where you would have multiple access locations where the multiple user trips would be very small. Jessica said her issue with that is it's been a discussion over a decade in this area and has never come to fruition. She's not saying it's not going to happen in the future, but she's not recommending that we come up with a recommendation that banks on that. Kim said it's something that's out of our control. Joe said it's very difficult to analyze what the actual situation would be, whether one would be more efficient than others. The whole issue of sustainability is hard to wrap the accounting around. One of the other criticisms that came up was square foot per person, and under the largest expansion proposed, the building size per service area would be smaller. When they did the building studies, they looked at a few local places just around here and basically is was kind of rule of thumb, one square foot per person of service area, even under the increased building area, they were coming out to half a square foot per person. On that basis, you could say it looks low, but they really didn't look at it from an absolute term to say it is sufficient. They didn't look at it from the point of view that they had some floor to say there's some minimum square foot per person, per service area that would be adequate. They were looking at it as a rule of thumb. Were we in the ballpark? Mike K. said in relation to that, he generally uses in most cases, the BAPL. No matter what time day or night, he never sees enough people that would hinder HAL's applications on a given day. They don't have 500 people walking around on any given moment and HAL, from what he sees, you could fit the amount of people he sees in BAPL's library into the HAL, with the exception of special functions. Robin said there is a fire code limit in the building. Allan said when you came up with that number of people per square foot, for number of people, did you use the overall population of BAPL or use the actual people who are using the library? Joe said they used population. If the residents of LST that are currently going to BAPL and don't go to HAL, it would probably not be as bad as that. Kim said it really comes down to peak usage time. You see that at BAPL also. Typically after school is the peak because of proximity to the school, and you don't get the crossovers. That peak will typically never double because another segment is coming because most people in that working age are working at that point; hence, that's why a lot of them are going to the library because it gives them a reason not to go home. She knows people who say go hang out at the library as I'll be an hour late in getting home. It happens at the library; it happens at the bike shop. That's the way it is for need or lack of appropriate supervision. Allan said that's more a case at the HAL where more people have walking distance to get there, whereas in BAPL, there's a huge area to cover and kids just can't go to the library as it's not within walking distance. Kim said they did look at it based on total population just because of the money factor. We used the census numbers. Allan said there are a lot of humans that aren't going to be using the library. There are babies, there are sick people, and there are all kinds of people in the population who are never going to use the library. Joe said that's why they think their numbers would

be absolute worst case scenario. Kim said she did a lot of research in the rule of thumb usage in architecture saying when you design a library, how much space do you need. All of the problematic things come back to the type of library it is. The district library, based on the number of books they have, it's how much space you need to hold your collections and the rest of the space works with the number of people who are there. It's a collection based thing. There's more being written lately about libraries changing. It's not as much as book space as assembly space. You're basically looking at it like it's an assembly usage that you have to have bodies in there and places to have people, not books. There's a change in the buildings that are being built now as that's where they can get their data from. How big is your building, how many residents do you have was their only way to correlate it, but that's really changing a lot now as it's more about having people in it and virtual things than actual book storage.

Joe said the last note he has is there was a question why does Hellertown have a seat at the table? He can't remember from the meeting whether they asked Hellertown in general or Hellertown Council, or whatever. The overall framework of this Task Force looking at what a possible merger would be, implicit in that, if there is a merger, it's between LST and HAL for a library. If the criticism was specifically for Hellertown Borough outside of the library, he still thinks we would have an role at the table because the site that the current library is on is subsidized by a low rent, low lease on the property, and the expansion would be looked at favorably by Hellertown, but would still have to be part of the negotiating process because Hellertown Borough still owns the property. Kim said it was a shot at the task we were given. Like Jack had explained our task as it was given to us, was the comparison and the possible merger with HAL. We were not asked to compare services between. That was where the issue, well, Bethlehem should be at the table as they should tell you what they have. We understand what they have and we're not trying to dispute what you give or what you don't give, it's not what we were asked to do, so that sort of where that played in, and Jack had stated the mission quite a few times. It's hard as people see it as an emotional issue that someone's not getting their say. It's not that they are getting their say, that's not the questions we are asking because we are not tasked on the Task Force to ask them. Jessica said it's a public meeting and she does have some qualms that Janet Fricker did not attend any of the meetings. For her to come and complain that she wasn't invited, you are still able to come. You can come and speak and be here, you're just not on the Task Force itself. That got to her as if it was her library, she'd be here. She had other people her, but her specific comment was that she wasn't asked to be here. Jack said the answer to that question, you look at the finance sheets that were handed out by Tina and Cathy, and there are two figures on there. One is from Hellertown and one is from Lower Saucon. Somewhere along the line, if this goes forward, you are going to have to make a decision and so are these people going to have to make a decision. That's why you are here. Joe said there's an implicit assumption here that we are the two entities looking.

Jack said he made up a list of questions. One of the things we have to focus on is there's three meetings left of the Task Force. What we have to start deciding, as a group is which of these issues do we want to address in the final report that this Task Force is going to make. There were some things that were brought up and are these the things we need to include in our final summation? Joe touched on the square footage. The minutes said the two issues on that were do we need to show square footage from other libraries. The other question was do we need to show the statistics on the BAPL square footage. Kim said one of the newest one was Parkland Library and they used that for comparison, just because it is current. They have a big population and that's where they got the square footage. Jessica said if you are going to compare square footage, you are going to have to look at ten different libraries that are all different sizes and population. If you are going to compare it to something we want, it's going to look wrong, or if we compare it to something smaller, we might look big. Jack asked Kim if there was a way that could be done? Kim said there's probably a way they can do it. They can get pretty accurate square footages even if you Google Earth it and do a footprint of each of the buildings and get statistics off of the census. They could probably do ten and that way pull an average from it. Mike E. said did we figure out Bethlehem's? Jack said no, that was the second one, should we include that one? Jack said you are saying yes. Jessica said if we could get ten more. Kim said let her see how hard it would be. With Bethlehem, they could get the footprint and see how many floors are being used. There are a lot of libraries that have downsized for multiple reasons and they are not using the entire building they are in. Allan said what we discussed a few minutes ago was dividing the total square footage by the population isn't the way to do it. We can't come up with those numbers for ourselves; we certainly couldn't come up with them for other libraries. Kim said

you probably can. Most libraries are of public record and their plans are available. Allan said we were talking about dividing the square footage of the libraries by the population isn't really the right number to be looking at. It's dividing the figures of the library by the number of people who are using it. Kim said which is harder to do. Allan said we can never come up with those numbers. Jessica said that was her reason for using ten, then you could come up and see is this number constant or not constant. If we just looked at three, they might be constant, but then there are different factors that apply if we look at a larger sample. Kim said what does that really give us. Jack said we brought up the issue of square footage, and the question was why aren't we showing comparisons with other libraries? Kim said the only reason we have square footages is there has to be a basis to assign a number to. They will see what they can do. There's a cost factor with Hellertown. Jack said No.4 is asking how is the additional crowding at HAL going to be addressed? We did touch on that when Mike K. made a comment that the people you saw at the BAPL could easily fit in the HAL. He doesn't know how that can be addressed. Mike K. said he's not seeing the comparison part of any major value. What he's seeing is the reality of what square footage or potentially projections we can have on what HAL would have for us. If we could have one square foot if we join HAL, that's enough for him. He doesn't need to know all the comparison as it clouds the picture and they'll say they have this and BAPL has this. We need to say this is what it is. Kim said based on the biggest plan they did, that's really looking the site that's contiguous. Cathy said it's feasible for that property. If your library was on a site that could not be expanded at all, and we determined it would need to be expanded, that would have been a finding and we would have said HAL can't be expanded and it's going to be required. Kim said exactly. That's why they looked at it. This is what can be expanded based on where it sits. Mike K. said that makes a stronger statement as you know what you expect to get possibly. Jack said the questions comes from the larger issue, where does it compare to what's at the BAPL. Joe said that's a comparison, but the real figure you would want is adequacy. If half of a square foot per person in the service area is fine, then it doesn't have to be one square foot. Maybe it's just one square foot as that's standard. Jack said we need a consensus as the Building Committee is going to try and pull this together. What we're trying to do is decide if we are going to address that or pass on it. Mike E. said at least find out what the square footage is at the BAPL. If you are taking the total population, the total population of Bethlehem is large and all the communities that they serve. In the great scheme of things, it really doesn't matter. Allan said it may be a small number. If it's a small number and Bethlehem says we feel we are adequately serving our population that we need to, then it turns out that number doesn't mean much. Gail said she's interpreting it two different ways. Do we have to show a square footage number for the library? If we're trying to figure out how much it will cost to expand, that could be a meaningful number, but if it means does it matter in terms of how many customers we serve, she doesn't know that it matters. Jessica said if we can get that number, then maybe we can find it's completely worthless or not. Kim said the only way we can look at it across the board is to have to do it on population which is the worst possible number. Just like Allan said, every child, baby, elderly person in the world would be in there. Jack said do you want to take a vote on this, we can do it that way? Kim said it's basically one, two and four play into this. Does the committee feel that the Building group should look into this to at least have the numbers in the building section, whether it's an adequacy number or not, a number of compare to. Allan said BAPL only. The group said no. Kim said look at a couple more libraries within the service area that do not use BAPL. She may not be able to find that many that she can get reliable numbers on. We can actually take a shot at doing it and then make the vote.

Lynn said on question No. 2, it says BAPL, if you are gathering statistics from other libraries, will you also gather that information. Jack said that's No. 1. Lynn said no, it's the square footage numbers from other libraries. The other one asks per person, No. 2, specifically with BAPL. Her question is, when you get the square footage, the square footage per person is also available at these other libraries, will you include that also? Jack said they are both per person. It's just the way they were phrased. Gail said your answer is yes. Kim said that's the goal.

Kim said No. 3 is the question on the additional parking. Jack said you did discuss that. Kim said what it comes down is the zoning for Hellertown. It's also based on where the property is. Jack said No. 5, should we address that question. Kim said based on where the property is, there's a piece of property adjacent that the Borough already uses for additional parking for community events at the park. Jack said should that be covered? Kim said she thinks there should be something in there saying that the potential exists and whether that means your parking overflows. Allan said can Hellertown Borough Council come up with an

answer for us by June on that question. Jack said he doesn't know if they can answer, but you can put in the report that there's a potential to use it. Gail said she doesn't see why there would be an issue for allowing overflow parking. Kim said because it's already been used for parking. As far as the question about property for expansion, that's another thing we can have an informal discussion on. Kim said in the report, it should note that those items would have to be discussed. The potential exists, and it's Borough, and we can do that in the Building section. Joe said if he recalls, the north side of the property, they had only estimated an expansion up to half of that lot. He doubts there would be an issue with Council on that. They will meet the zoning, and since they are only expanding up to the property dividing line where the lease for the library exists, that's not an issue. The question we would really have to answer is the parking. It's used for other events there. Jessica said we should ask regardless if Lower Saucon comes to the library, just so we know ahead of time. Hellertown would say you can have the 100 extra yards this way or that way. Cathy said the answer should be noted that there is on street parking. There's parking at Dimmick Park. There are other places to park which require a little bit of walking, but in comparison to Bethlehem, it's the same thing. Mike K. said if we expand the building, would they request the additional parking spaces, or have the space in the area we are looking at without this other piece. Joe said that's where the parking is more of an issue than the building. There would be adequate parking for the increased use of the building. The library was going to have half of it, and there were plans to lease the rest of it to the Saucon Valley Community Center. For the building to stay on the property, even though the land was rented to the library, that wasn't an issue. Mike K. said if we're not covered and someone researches that and finds it out. Kim said for the sake of the report, all it has to state who owns it, what the understanding of the lease is to this point, and the zoning. We're not solving it, we're just saying those are the opportunities existing at that site. Lynn said however, because we're feasible if there is more parking available either in a formal lot or informally permitted, which it is at this point, is Hellertown looked into any formal way for parking? There has never been any study for environmental impact? There could be other reasons why it wouldn't work out as a permanent parking lot. Joe said the total number of spaces dictated would be based on the amount of impervious coverage. Lynn said it's used for parking of overflow games? Gail said people go on bus trips can park there, football, softball, swings, fireworks at the park, etc. Lynn said is that a resolution from Council? What entity approved that? Kim said it's not a paved lot. Lynn said that should be in there that Hellertown Borough has approved it for parking. Jack said No. 6, that was in reference to the Finance reports. Cathy is going to do the handout later. No. 7, Lynn brought up the other options that were explored by the Task Force. Does the Task Force want a section in the report that talks about those other options? Gail said that would be a great idea. Jessica said she thinks we should address them. She would like to know about things like splitting the funding and things like that. Allan said he didn't think the other options were explored very carefully. There were options brought up, but they never came to any kind of solution about these options. Lynn said we did not touch base with joining other libraries, beyond that, in this Task Force. Someone said that wasn't our charge. Allan said he disagrees. We never explored them as we didn't have the answers and the big effort here is that Hellertown people are here, and we are coming up with the feasibility to go with Hellertown. We never explored all the other things we wanted to explore. Lynn said we explored them in the Library Committee. Allan said but not here. Lynn said this committee is a feasibility study for joining with HAL. She'd like to include options along with that which would be steps from that point. Kim said what are those options?

Gail said Lynn missed the first part of the meeting, and she respects that you had a prior commitment, but you asked them not to interrupt you when you were speaking, so for her own piece of mind, she should not interrupt them. She would like to hear what everyone has to say without being interrupted. Lynn said she apologizes for interrupting anyone.

Jack said can we just run down what the options are. Kim left. The time was 6:16 pm. Jessica said what about the funding between the two libraries. Jack said that wasn't an option in the beginning, that came up with the State representative. Lynn said she'd like to see that option included and the option about the County library system. Jessica said that was discussed earlier. With the County system, that has been discussed for a very long time and it shouldn't even be brought up because of the chances of that even happening. It's not a realistic option. Any discussions on Hellertown becoming a branch of BAPL, is not an option. Lynn said she did not say branch. Jack said let's just get the four options. Cathy said she could only think of four – stay with BAPL, go with HAL, not have any library service at all, split the money 50/50. Allan said share the money. Hellertown doesn't want to be part of the BAPL. Lynn said Hellertown

is already part of the district library and to makes the district library more of a system, and expand the system in a way that benefits everybody and slowly go toward regionalization with the County library and the Lehigh Valley library. It's already happened with the catalog and already shared things. It's not unrealistic to put that in there as an option. Jessica said if there's any movement in that direction, it's going to stay in that direction as in the sense that's not an option. We are all doing things as a district together and whatever decision comes out, we'll still be a district library and want to cooperate together and will not change. Mike K. said it's not an option for this Task Force to decide. Gail said now she understands it. That's not an option for this Task Force. Mike E. said it has nothing to do with this Task Force. Lynn said you are saying part of Bethlehem, and that was not an option. That's not the option they are discussing. It's not the option we are discussing. That's not the option that was on the table ever. We never agreed that. Becoming part of the BAPL as a branch is not an option discussed. What she is discussing is that looking towards the future, talking about the district library, BAPL is part of the district, may or may not change anyway because of what the State library is doing. To solidify that it's already there, wherever Lower Saucon people go is important, and to look towards the next step and be participating in that and looking toward unifying and becoming more of a regional system. It is a goal and we need to stay on top of that. We talked about it before and the library committee talked about it. Allan said it was brought up at a public meeting by one of the constituents and it was also brought up by the lady who runs the BAPL. Lynn said she would like to see that even if it's a subset of something and mention we are looking towards the future to Lehigh Valley and/or County system. She doesn't think that's harmful. Jessica said that's not an option to fall under whether Lower Saucon stays or goes to HAL. That whole thing applies regardless. It's not an option. Jack said maybe it's not a feasible option, is that what you are saying? Jessica said no, that kind of scenario could play out under all three. To her, it means we might work together in the future, all that could happen under all three scenarios. It's not a separate outcome. Jack said is it possible we could have a description of the options, whether they are possible, feasible or impossible. Gail said how about if you include them as an umbrella. It sounds like everyone is saying that it's possibly an option in the future, and yet it falls over the top of all three of them. Allan said could we say these options were brought up during the discussion of the Task Force. Jessica said Gail's solution is a good one. Jack asked Lynn to put together a list of those options and bring them back and they will look at them.

Jack said No. 8, there was a mention about the original proposal from the HAL. Does the Task Force think that should be included or referenced or somehow made a part of the final report? Gail said is that relevant? Jack said historically, he thinks it is relevant. It has been referred back to as some people were confused as was that the figure. Jessica said that's a good plan, is it feasible or not feasible. She can take the information we have and apply it to that plan, does it fit or doesn't it fit.

Jack said No. 9 there was a comment that was made that the survey we reviewed didn't include the comments that people made online. He has a list of those comments. Tom Rieger gave them to Jack, but they weren't included in the Power Point. Does the group feel that those comments should be included as an appendix to the final report? Jessica said you should include anything else you got as well. Jack will look at the comment and if it has any reference to names, will take the name off. We'll include the comments as an appendix.

Jack said the next one, we covered under what Joe brought up. It was about the ACCESS PA program. Should we include a description of that, and the answer is yes. Lynn said it's really important to get the most up-to-date information on where the status is. That's really key. Allan said who is going to give us that information? Jack asked if anyone wants to volunteer to put that information together. Lynn asked David if she could work with him on the ACCESS program. David said yes. Jack said that will become part of the report.

Jack said No. 11, Cathy and Tina, has some handouts. There was a question about the finance numbers. Cathy said she revised it. There was an error in two of the slides that projected more in State aid. It certainly didn't throw off the numbers in any significant amount of what was presented. Bottom line – these are just guesstimates. They aren't going to have concrete information. State aid could be increased. State aid could be eliminated. The per capita information shows basically the total price per capita for both municipalities and how much would be required for the new census analysis. She did provide on the bottom section eliminating the capital expenses as if it was done. What would be required financially by

the municipalities if everything is said and done and any kind of expansion is done, this would be a normal operating budget.

Jessica said she you have a couple different options and she'd like to say as a HAL Board member, that any plan that would increase the taxes in HAL, they would not stand behind. If a plan like that would go through, they would not approve it. Robin said they got prior approval from the Borough. Cathy said there are a lot of variables in this; funding is going to be decided upon and that's up to both Councils to negotiate that. She could throw in a million and with variables and designs, and it would just confuse everyone. They tried to keep it as consistent as possible. Here's the information, here's what it could possibly cost, and if Hellertown Council and LST Council decide to go in a different direction, we will modify this based on the direction that they decide to go. She would not want to start modifying something and using different variables in it until it's decided. Jack said they are not recommending any numbers. All they are doing is putting out scenarios. Cathy said we are saying here's what an operating budget would look like. Mike said Hellertown is paying \$10.65 and that's what we want LST to pay eventually. LST shouldn't be paying \$17.00 either. Jack said we are trying to be realistic with the numbers we are presenting and what the cost is. Some of them are numbers that are higher than what's being done now, but that doesn't have anything to do with this Task Force. That's up to the elected officials. Mike E. said it was about here's what our residents pay and how we operate off that amount. Cathy said one of the things on these proposals which Lynn and Robin have brought up before, is that there is potential for State grants to pay for some of this. Let's say hypothetically we had a grant and it paid for all of it, capital improvements, the one line that says operating budget Option A, three years, it would total \$6.88 per person, so it would be a savings to both municipalities to a great degree. We discussed how we're going to look at this, the different aspects. She understands where Mike E. is coming from. We just wanted to put it in a consistent way across the board, and it was feasible, and everybody said this can be done, then the process would start kicking in. This is subject to change. This is just a hypothetical scenario so we can move forward. You have to start someplace. Joe said they tried to provide the lower cost option which would be more of a financial approach, and then they looked at the top of the wish list. They looked at what they would want in facilities and what would it take to get there. Cathy said that's where they pulled the numbers from was the building plans and the increase in utilities and things like that based on their projections. She can understand the municipal funding of it is going to be what the issue really is, but like she said, there could be a thousand different options and to categorize all of them and put it in the Task Force report, it would just be confusing in the end.

Jack said No. 12 is should the final report include the information about the splitting of the payments and that was discussed and we agreed that we would include it.

Jack said No. 13 is an ACCESS PA question and he thinks we can address that. It came up several times in discussion that you can still go to the BAPL and check out books and vice-versa. Lynn said one of the options she didn't mention was if LST joined HAL, they could rent a bookmobile for a day. Gail said the HAL talked about different delivery types of options that they are working on that earlier in the meeting.

Jack said No. 14 was the report should explain how the Task Force was formed and what the charge of the Task Force was. That will be in there. It was referenced in the minutes.

Jack said the last question was can you find out how many LST residents attend the 500 programs that the BAPL offers. Jessica said she asked many times, and if you have to register online, you have to put in your address, and she doesn't understand why they can't pull those numbers. She asked Lynn and the Board President many times. Lynn said if they do get it, it will be for a short time as it has never been done.

Jack said what he gave you was a draft outline of what the Task Force report would contain, all of the pieces. You've done a lot of the work already with the different Committee reports that were put into a PowerPoint and they can be put into a written summary in the beginning of each section of the report and the PowerPoint charts will be at the end of that section. There will be an executive summary which will summarize what the group has come up with. The overview of the Task Force is basically put together. The history of the Township library services with BAPL, we are working on that now. Right now it goes back to 1968. We have a chronology for the Hellertown Library. He shared that with Robin. The Task

Force process – you have some findings already, the charts, the technology list, so if you could look at the data and come back to the next meeting and say this is what we can reasonably conclude from this data. Looking at those numbers, what can you conclude? You could come back with a statement or a bulleted list saying this is what we concluded. We have to really summarize what did you come up with your collection of data? Jessica said like with 34,000 checkouts at the BAPL, we can conclude that checkouts are 50/50 between each library. Lynn said something like a geographic position that more people on the eastern side use HAL as you have it by zip code. Joe and Kim have some determinations. Joe said they will have to check based on the conservation district, how much build out is permissible there, etc. Jack said he thinks Finance can come up with some conclusions on the fiscal stuff. Technology – He, Mike and Gail we will email back and forth to each other. Those are the pieces. The end of it will be the survey, the charts and the comment we talked about tonight; and the other appendixes. Bring things in like ACCESS PA and we'll discuss at the next meeting where we want to put that. The next meeting will be on June 14th and we'll have a little bit more of information. The overview and two histories will be done. If you can think about an introduction into each of your sections, like maybe describe the process you did, how you gathered it, where it came from, and then go into your findings. We'll look at that at the next meeting and say how we want to final version to look like. At the July meeting, we really have to take a vote on it and say this is what the final report will look like. Gail said how do you see the formation of an executive summary come together? Jack said basically after you get finished saying what the conclusions are, then we're going to have to pull that together. Gail said when you say July meeting, can we say away from the 4th of July. It's a bad time of year. Jack said there are three meetings that his Task Force has to attend. There's the LST Council meeting in the middle of July. There's a Hellertown Council meeting and a HAL Board of Trustees meeting. We have to have a report finished and present it to those groups in July if we are going to meet our charge. If the Council's are okay to wait until August, we can push it back. That will give us the July meeting to finalize the whole thing. Hopefully it will be put together by that time. Jessica said if we get further than we think, we can still do it in July. Jack said sure. All we have to do is ask to be put on the agenda at any of the meetings and go and present the report and answer questions. We also need a team who is willing to go and present the report. He will volunteer for LST. He's sure the public will be at the Council meetings. Lynn said should we have another meeting at night and change the time for the last meeting? Jack said we can change the time to 7:00 pm. Gail said that would be fair to Lynn to do 7:00 pm. Jack said he'd like to have it here. Lynn said this would give people who work 5:00 to 5:30 come to the meetings. Jack said the meeting on June 14th will be at 6:00 pm at LST.

Mike K. said he doesn't know if it applies to our Task Force or not, but since he's heard a lot of conversation about it from time to time, is it likely this Task Force make a suggestion, not a recommendation, for the Board to seriously put this on referendum and make it a public statement, or do we let the boards of the Township and Borough handle this? Jessica said her concern would be as a Hellertown Library go out and educate people and there are going to be costs to be paid. Allan said it's too early in the whole process to do a referendum. We have all these other possibilities and options to look at. Jack said if you go with a referendum and want to do it at the November election, it has to be approved 13 weeks before the General Election which is the second week in August and the LST Council would have to adopt an ordinance approving the referendum. Jessica said it's up to LST at that time, and they as a Board, know that's an option. She can see where he is going, but yes, they already know about this. Allan said just tell the public it's too early in the process to do that. Lynn said she disagrees. We're deep in the process. We need some kind of method that the people can voice their opinion, and there really isn't one other than public sessions, letters. What they are doing is making a recommendation from the Task Force, but once it's in place and it goes to Hellertown Library Board, Hellertown Borough and LST Council, then what happens. It's not up to her to decide or dictate, but there needs to be something that needs to be stated that says that this is a hot subject for the residents and if they want a say, rather than have it dictated to them by elected or non-elected officials, may not sit well with them. Her suggestion is there needs to be some way people can participate in this. Mike K. said he sees two ways, but from his perspective, it would be the Council's job to come up with a referendum question and decide to put it on the referendum. Mike E. said would there be multiple choices? Jack said it's not easy to do. Lynn said let's say we make a recommendation, and say it seems like it would be feasible why this would be a good option and we're recommending. Then what happens next? The people need to know what that process is. Allan said we're not recommending anything. All we're doing is giving a report. Gail said this committee was supposed to be an objective committee, but this committee is not totally objective, so some of you are missing the entire

point from the beginning. Number one would be to not tell LST what to do. Hellertown, based on the data, and if LST decides to buy into the HAL, we would approve that. That will be a conditional approval. They would not tell you to put it on a referendum. Truthfully, she used to live in LST and if you try to shovel all that down her throat in a three month period, she'd be irate. If you are going to do it, she'd suggest you wait until the spring and you can do a quality job, put together a nice package, put together a totally objective process to occur and then do it. Jessica said to Lynn's comment, how many Township's and Council's make a decision with more money involved than this one. To be frank, she was extremely disappointed with the BAPL in the promotional materials that they put out as there were some things on there that were not factual. To have to try and fight through that again and having to spend the time and money that we don't have would be a burden to the HAL. She would hope that the Township would, as they do this every month, make decisions on their own and that's what they are elected to do. If they feel this is something that needs to be referendomed, they will know. She'd rather not even approach that topic. Jack said the question on the ballot is a hard thing to get correct, but the education part of it, you people have done a large part of that already, by gathering that information and putting it into a report. Jessica said coming from a purely emotionally standpoint, to have to go through that again, she just wants this over with. Jack said you will be over with. Jessica said as a board member or as a patron of the HAL, to go through it again.

Robin said the thing that is missing here is the LST residents can still go to the BAPL. Jack said that will be in our report.

3. Open Public Discussion

Jane Stavola said if there are four people in a family, she pays four times that amount, how does per capita work? Cathy said per capita is what your local municipalities population is, so that includes children, adults, seniors, everyone, based on the last census. What LST is charged, and what normally every library system does is charge a rate per capita. When the demographic change occurs, the amount changes. It's not a fee to the household, it's a fee to the amount of people in the jurisdiction. Allan said it's a fee to the Township. Cathy said we were paying the BAPL based on the 2000 census. Those demographics changed over the last ten years. When they do a census again, it balances out. There's no accurate way of saying in their jurisdiction the number of people in their municipality as it's done every ten years.

Ms. Stavola said Robin said about the number amount of people every building has, do you know what that is? Robin said the maximum occupancy number for the main floor is 75, but she doesn't know the rest of the library. Jack said they can get that and bring it back. Robin said she thinks the lower level is also 75 people. Someone said that will be a good number to know. Jack said that's factored into your square footage numbers.

Ms. Stavola said you talk about ACCESS PA, which is a wonderful thing which should be completely funded, and her fear is that you go to legislature and talk about funding it, they'll just get rid of the whole thing. She said you keep talking about ACCESS PA and say you can continue using the BAPL, should you decide to go with the HAL, or you can continue to use the HAL and go with the BAPL. That program is unfunded and it's not a permanent thing. Cathy said the State wanted to make it a permanent thing, and therefore they provided funding for it. They wanted everybody in the State of PA to be able to go to any library you wanted. They still want that. That's the incentive of most of their grant programs that they want all municipalities to do a certain thing and provide funding for it. Eventually the State funds out of money and starts pulling it back. That goes with almost every program which the State provides funding for. Jessica said they can bring that up in their statement that at any time that program could disappear, but reality is this is why it's unlikely. Jim Hollinger was here at one of our meetings, and you can see it in the minutes, but he doesn't see it going away. Lyn said almost all libraries are public, and you can still go to any library with the ACCESS PA program. Joe said if ACCESS PA wasn't there, you could look at the book but not check it out.

Ms. Stavola said it was mentioned that the BAPL Is not represented on the board and you explained what you were charged with. She understands what you were charged with, but they are not represented at the table. She still thinks it's wrong that they are not at the table. There are 4 or 5 members at the table from

HAL and she wonders if what you were charged with wasn't crafted deliberately to exclude BAPL from the table. Jack said he'll agree that it was crafted not to focus on BAPL. It was created to look at the feasibility of consolidating library services for LST at the HAL. That's how the charge was crafted. Did it exclude BAPL? Yes, in a sense, as that responsibility was already part of the Township Library Committee's responsibility who has been meeting for years. They have been responsible for looking at the services that the Township residents receive from the BAPL and continue to receive. They've had meetings with Janet Fricker and Lynn is the representative who is on that committee and is part of the Board of Trustees, so that arrangement is already in place. They were not looking to go back and duplicate that. They were looking at something new and that was the feasibility of this scenario with the HAL, and that's why it was crafted that way. It wasn't done to exclude anybody. We didn't feel we needed to focus on the BAPL.

4. Next Meeting Date – June 14, 2012 – 6:00 PM