

# Minutes

---

Lower Saucon Township  
Parks & Recreation Board

Business Meeting

February 1, 2010

---

1. **Meeting Called To Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chair Dave Spirk at 7:05 PM.
2. **Roll Call:**

**Present:** Dave Spirk, Chair; Scott Schanzenbach, Donna Bristol, Bill Ross, members; Jack Cahalan, Staff Liaison.

**Absent:** Tom Butera, Vice Chair; Sheri Herman & Jr. Council member, Stephen Prager.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Dave said on the approval of minutes for January 4, 2010, it should read: "Motion by Dave, second by Donna to approve the December 7, 2009 minutes. All in favor, 3-0, with Tom and Bill abstaining." Motion by Scott, second by Dave to approve and accept the January 4, 2010 minutes, as amended. All in favor.
4. **Citizen Non-Agenda Items:** None
5. **Projects:**
  - **Town Hall Park** – No update.
  - **Southeastern Park** – No update.
  - **Steel City Park** – No update.
  - **Heller Homestead** – No update.
  - **Polk Valley Park** – Jack said everything from the Phase II improvements has been concluded. It's been inspected and the Township has agreed to accept the improvements and let them enter into an 18-month maintenance period. They did a good job on the landscaping improvements and the fencing. The trees and shrubs were planted. Dave asked if this was the original contract? Jack said no. Dave said this was a new contract? Jack said yes, this is the second landscape contract. The contractor for Phase I, we had some issues from him. He's the guy that subbed out the backstops and we had some problem that had to be corrected. Popple Construction did the actual land development, but this was the landscaper that came in after Popple. Dave said he knew there was an issue with Popple. Jack said yes, with the seeding. Phase I landscaping was with Land Tech and we had some issues with them also. We are now working with All Seasons. They did a good job. They will be in the maintenance period. We do have some shrubs from Land Tech that they are going to have to replace under their contract. If you see anything dead out there, they have to replace it. Dave said you don't give them a chance to replace it? Jack said they have to under the contract. We have security, and if they don't replace it, the Township will replace it and deduct the cost from the security. All Seasons, during the maintenance period, same deal. All Seasons also did some plantings in the detention basins. Dave said they put a herbicide down, now they are going to do the plantings. Jack said they already did them. Dave said including some of the banks, and that would be the wild mix. Jack said some is wet meadow plantings and some other things which are in the basin. Dave said is this something that just has to be cut every two weeks or maybe once a year, that sort of thing? Jack said yes. That should be pretty good and dress up the detention basin to

make it look more natural. Donna asked if they did the plantings along the meadows, on the back? Jack said not the top meadow. The meadow plantings were along the road. If you went up there and saw the brown grass, that's where the herbicide was sprayed. Dave said they did a nice job. Jack said they did plantings over by the ball field. For the top meadow, there's a grant we have from DCNR, and that's going to be planted, probably this coming fall. Donna said will they plow it up to plant it? Jack said they probably will apply the herbicide and kill the growth, and start fresh with the meadow planting. There is another phase of the landscaping to come. The agronomist did his final inspection of the turf on the playing fields and gave us some recommendations we're going to follow this coming spring. We're going to do the pre-emergent herbicide and the over seeding recommended in his report. We'll closely follow his recommendations and make sure the turf is in good shape. We renewed the contract for lawn mowing with Hillcrest. We have the two sided entrance sign for the park ordered, and that will be installed. There will be a bulletin board installed up in the top parking lot where we can post announcements. We did close the dog park temporarily about a week ago as it was very wet and we didn't want the turf chewed up. We're trying to keep the turf in good condition. He understands at other dog parks, it turns into dirt. Dave said he's driven by and seen crowds of people up there. It seems like a gathering. Donna said what's the deal on it as someone said they have seen a lot of the dogs fighting? Jack said the dogs run around and play. He's only had one complaint so far about one dog mounting another dog; he did some research and found out that if that continues, the dog can get aggressive. Jack told the person that the facility is kind of self policing. He hasn't heard a problem since. They got approval for the connector trail permit from DEP, which is what we have been waiting for. Now that we have the permit, we are going to start getting the plan together as we can figure out what length we need for the pedestrian bridge as the permit gives us the amount of the encroachment allowed on both sides of Polk Valley Run. We have to figure out what kind of bridge we want. We want something that can be delivered and assembled on site. Public Works can build the foundations and hopefully put it in place and we'll do the rest of the construction on the trail. Donna said are you talking about Jersey barriers? Jack said no, this is the connector trail between Polk Valley Park and the school campus. The only barriers that are going to be there will be wood barriers. The rest of it is going to be a gravel surface and we have to be careful of the trees in front of the Herman's house. Donna asked what material are they going to use for the bridge? Jack he has to see what our consultants recommend. Whatever is nice and looks good and is economical and long lasting. Donna said what if a hurricane comes through? Dave said you have to put the bridge a foot above the flood level. It is likely water will never get that high. Jack said as soon as he has something on that, he'll bring it back to a meeting to discuss.

- **Kingston Park** – Jack said at Kingston Park, they cut the parking lot and walkways in up there, put down the geo-fabric and the stone. They'll come back in the springtime and finish the paving of the parking lot and the walkways.
- **Saucon Rail Trail** – Jack said the leases with all four of the communities have been signed as of January 28, 2010. Hellertown and Lower Saucon have been moving ahead with our representatives to the Rail Trail Advisory Committee. Upper Saucon and Coopersburg do not have any representatives named yet. We're not too sure what their plans are. We have heard that Upper Saucon wants to take their time to get the trail open. According to the paper they have \$250,000 in their budget for the trail. They have the same length as we have. Scott said do they still have issues with Lutron? Jack said that was settled. We thought they were going to have the trail bypass the Lutron plant, but apparently they are going straight through the property. He doesn't know how that will be handled. Lutron has an internal driveway that crosses over the trail. That's going to have to be treated as a crossing with stop signs and other warning types of signs. We would like to get portions of the trail open this year so we're trying to get some ideas on the table about what needs to be done plus the engineers and planners are out there checking everything out. There are three priorities we are focusing on, the surface, the road crossings and bridges. For the bridges, we just need to get people safely across the bridges on their bikes, on foot, or on a horse, etc. We need some sort of barriers there so they don't fall off. In some places, the bridges are

high. In some places, the original railings are there which are sixty to seventy years old, so they wouldn't hold anyone. They are looking for a temporary solution which may be Jersey barriers with fencing on top of them. We can get them up fairly quickly. They are not permanent and they'll be safe enough until we get permanent fencing put up on the bridges. On the road crossings, we have about fourteen crossings along the whole trail. Hellertown has two which are Water Street and Walnut Street, and are heavy traffic. Lower Saucon has Meadows Road and Old Mill Road. Walnut and Water Street are PennDOT roads so you have to go through a whole approval process for those roads. Meadows Road in the Township is an issue because if you've ever come down Meadows towards Giant, you come down that hill by the PPL substation and take a little jog to the left, and head down towards the bridge. When you make that turn, there is no site line and the trail pops out on you. That's going to be a problem so we're probably going to have to install some lights and do some things on that. Old Mill Road, anyone who goes down there, basically it's a dead end and you have to turn around. There will not be any parking down there and we will have signage there so they won't park on the lawns of the residences there. We need to work on the crossings and on the bridges. The last thing is the surface. We are looking at a gravel surface. There are samples put down if you want to go and take a look at the corner of Bingen and Reading Road. There's an unofficial parking lot the contractor put in. You'll see it if you go down Bingen and turn right onto Reading. You can see its a little pull off area with Jersey barriers by the trail. Public Works put down about five different types of surfaces on the trail. They are numbered and are No. 8, and 10 stone, some anti-skid stone and some crushcrete. They wanted everyone to take a look. No. 9 stone or screenings will probably be the best. The one thing we want to experiment with is slag, of which there is tons of it in Hellertown. If it gets crushed, it is kind of like a type of limestone and could be used. We want to test it, put it down and see what kind of surface it is. That pull off area is not Township property. We are negotiating with the owner who lives in New Jersey. We think we can get a long term lease on it so we can put a parking lot in there. It looks like you can put about 20 cars in there. It's perfect as you can get right onto the trail. Donna said in the discussion at the Rails to Trails meeting about liability issues and not opening the trail until all these safety measures are done. Probably the last thing that will be done is the surface. She was wondering if we wanted to put the surface down earlier because people are starting to walk on it anyway and put up signs at the crossings saying "Trail Not Complete, Walk at Your Own Risk"? Jack said we don't have any signage up yet, and we're not publicizing that the trail is open. If someone says they are going to walk on the trail, and walk over one of the bridges, we are not encouraging that. The railroad also has some liability. We just leased the surface, but we don't want anybody on a bike or whatever to fall off one of the structures. Dave said any attorney representatives of the Township would say until you are ready to go and put the surface down, the surface should be last. Jack said the day Roger goes down with the chipper and the roller, right behind them, will be people their bikes. That's how quickly people are going to be on it. Donna said they are on it already. She went down to check out the different surfaces and where the projected parking lot is going to be, a kid comes out on a 4-wheeler. They had already cut a way to go through and he was racing up and down the trail while they were looking at the surface. When she got finished looking at the surface, she went across to the street to where he came out of and knocked on the door and said in a nice way that the trail is not open for motorized vehicles. She wanted them to know because if the police would catch him racing up and down on that, then he's going to be in a lot of trouble. They thanked her very much. Jack said there are no motorized vehicles allowed on the trail. Whether you post it or not, you are going to have people who break the law. He thinks at their February meeting, they will have some recommendations from the Advisory Committee, the Planners and the Engineers. They can start putting that together. They have to cost this out. They are putting together a grant application so they have a lot of work to do to get it open in 2010. Hopefully, Coopersburg and Upper Saucon will be joining in with us. Up North, we are talking to the City of Bethlehem who is working on their Greenway in South Bethlehem. Portions of that have been finished by the casino and they started to work on the skate plaza. That will go all the way down to Saucon Park. There will be a section from Saucon Park to the Hellertown line that is still controlled by Norfolk Southern. Some day we hope that we can secure the rights to that and connect the Saucon Rail Trail and the

Bethlehem Greenway so you can go all the way into Bethlehem and go to the D & L canal trail and go either east or west. Dave said he thinks the slag is not a good idea because there's a rotten egg odor when it gets wet. They had customers who had slag under their patio and they couldn't go outside as it smelled so bad. They had a doctor's office on Delaware Avenue and the slag was put in by mistake in the crawl space and they had to rip it out. They couldn't stand the odor in the house. When he started in the business in the early 80s, they used it in a lot of places and it was plentiful. People coped with it, but not anymore. The smell never goes away and never dissipates. He would say not to use it. If you use it for a stretch of a mile or so and it smells, that would be a catastrophe. Donna said it's also dusty when it's dry. Dave said everything is going to be dusty when it's dry whether it's the blue stone, which is a limestone or the crush crete. The crush crete is very dusty and then when it gets wet, it is a little sticky. He would probably stick with the blue stone or limestone. Jack said he will pass that information along to everyone. Dave said when he thinks about the Meadows Road issue, when you do come around that corner, it is a bad situation. He would think you would have to do one of three things. One is put a stop sign up, and they have to stop there every time or put a flashing light where they have to stop if anyone presses a button. Jack said it's going to be activated by motion sensors. The blinkers will go off when somebody trips it. Dave said the problem he sees if you don't tell the driver to stop and it's just a blinking light, watch out. Dave said the third thing is that Meadows Road area and Springtown Hill Road, is an issue at that intersection. Maybe it's wise for us to recommend that nobody come down Meadows Road and over the bridge and out, and that it be one way. The other could be from the Meadows driveway up. Come down but not up. Jack said that is contained in a recommendation from the Township engineer. The whole Meadows Road corridor, they had a whole series of recommendations and that was one of them - one way from 412 up. Jack said one thing that would improve it a little bit is the light at Polk Valley Road and 412. They are hoping we can get that signal there this year. That and the light at the shopping center will cause some gaps in the traffic and will give people pulling out of the Meadows a break. The traffic is going to be bumper to bumper anyway, but this will be a little gap. Dave said if we are successful and there are hundreds of people on this rail trail on a Sunday afternoon, then we have to think about those people crossing that particular road. Jack said with the weight limit on the bridge, the problem is the delivery trucks going to the Giant; they come down Meadows and go down the bridge. If we do make it one way, we need a turnaround area for them somewhere. A lot of them come up 412 and the dispatcher says go left, then they have no place to turn around. That is a recommendation that was made a couple of years back, but Council hasn't taken any action on that. Dave said the people come down the hill, and there is a blinking caution light, watch out, he doesn't think that's going to do it. Donna said most rails to trails require the people to stop, not the car. Dave said if you are standing there and want to cross Meadows Road, coming south, and you look to the right, you will not see anything as the car will only be 20 to 30 feet from you. Now you start to walk across and you're a sitting duck for anyone who is coming down that little hill. Scott said we could have blinking lights there, and could have a stop sign that lights up when there is motion. It's nice to have the stop sign there in the first place, but something that lights up when you are crossing the street. That's going to do more to attract their attention. Dave said he doesn't think we can do anything but a stop sign if we don't change the traffic pattern. Bill said he agrees. People are just going to ignore the stop sign. Dave said the pedestrian is not going to be able to get across the road quick enough. Jack said those are good recommendations. We also have to deal with some storm water issues. Water comes down Meadows by the PPL substation and when it gets down to the railroad, it's on the rail trail, so now we're going to have to deal with that. We will have to look and see what our options are. One previous recommendation was to pipe it further down to the creek. The Rails Trail Advisory Committee meets the fourth Monday of the month. Donna is the representative. Hopefully we can come up with a plan and as soon as we have the plan we can get out there and execute it. He's hoping that definitely by September, we have something ready to go out there on the trail.

- **Grants** – No update.

- **Volunteer/Scout Projects** – No update.

## 6. Old Business:

- **Draft Pest Management Policy** – Dave asked if the draft was recommended to Council? Jack said it is being tweaked a little bit and he'll bring it back.
- **Draft Township Parks & Athletic Facilities Uses Policy** – Jack said we want to finalize this. The attorney has reviewed it and cleaned up anything that didn't sound correct. It still has the priority of users as we established for the park facilities. We are still working on the special event part of the policy, which would be down the road. We still have to come up with some rules on that. This is strictly for people who want to reserve the baseball, football, soccer, lacrosse fields and the pavilions. This would cover everything. The field closings in inclement weather, we actually have updated that a little bit. We email a notice of the closing, and also have a place on our website what we call "Breaking News" and will put that information on the front page of the website. Dave made a motion to recommend this for approval to Township Council, second by Scott. All in favor. Jack said he will bring it up at the Council meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup>.
- **Christ Lutheran Church Ball Fields - Update** – Jack said the church is on Easton Road. Dave said can we put this new park now on the update list? Jack said it's not actually official yet, but as soon as the settlement he will put it on the website. We signed the agreement of sale, and just need to get the settlement done and the transfer done. The church has a 25-year lease for \$1.00 a year with the Hellertown-Lower Saucon Little League for their use of ball fields. They had permission to put the backstops and an equipment shed up there. The lease also allowed them to install port-a-johns and a concession stand. The most important thing was to put in a parking area and an entrance which never took place as he understood the Little League ran out of money after they built the fields. Jack showed on an aerial photograph the striped area of a little more than six plus acres that the Township is purchasing. The church wanted to retain the old chapel and the cemetery, and also a well they drilled. The Township will be putting in an entrance off of Mockingbird Hill Road and a small parking lot. The first year it will be strictly for maintenance purposes so we can get our equipment in there and get the grass cut. Eventually, for ADA purposes, we are going to have ADA accessible walkways. We need to get in there and evaluate the fields. The fields look like they are in pretty good shape. They will get the grass mowed and evaluate the turf. They'll do the treatment for the grass and fertilization and if there is anything needed like aeration, they'll get that in there. They will provide port-a-johns. They'll do the same thing they are doing at other park properties. There is a small road next to the ball field and driving on that road will be prohibited. People were using that to get to the field up above. They will discourage that. Dave said even though we wouldn't get a parking lot in the first year, we're not going to inhibit the Little League from doing what they've been doing? Jack said they can continue what they've been doing. The Township will honor the terms of their lease. Dave said you are not going to send the Police out there and give out parking tickets? Jack said it doesn't have any parking, so we're going to have to work with them. We don't want people walking across Easton Road. They won't allow anyone parking up that small road though. Dave said he doesn't want to see the Township gets ownership and then makes it more restrictive than before. Jack said no, that's not the idea. It's to continue to be used as it has been, and then within a year or two, there will be a paved parking entrance and a lot there and walkways to the fields and other amenities. He doesn't even think there are bleachers there, so maybe they will put bleachers in. They will work with the Little League and see what their plans are. According to the lease, they can put up a concession stand. Dave said the Dimmick Park situation is a little different; they are first and second graders. They are into hot dogs and candy. Jack said they can put a temporary coke wagon there if they want. Someone said they asked Herb Payung about naming the park, and Herb will get back to him. Dave said Kim Brown from the Little League said they just call it the Easton Road Park. Jack said you could call it the Easton Road Fields. You can look into that and make some recommendations on it. Dave said he would say we put it on here as the Easton Road Fields until someone comes up with a better idea that is acceptable to us. We were

talking about the Christ Lutheran Field, but then it sounds like it belongs to the Church. Easton Roads Fields, you at least know where it is.

- **Joint Recreation Study Committee – Update** – Jack said they met on January 28<sup>th</sup>. They have had two or three meetings. Bob Frey is there from the school district. John Bate and Gail Nolf are there from Hellertown. Dave is there along with Glenn Kern, John Landis from the Planning Commission, and Charlie Luthar. Bob Frey has been doing a lot of the inventory. Dave said we should try to really have our sports groups show up at this meeting if we can. Jack said the next one will be February 25<sup>th</sup>. He invited everybody, and they got a poor turnout with three people showing up. They really didn't get a dialogue back and forth with them. They heard about a lot that has to get done at the high school. Dave said the high school has a lot of venues in one big area, so that tends to be the focal point of what we're trying to do. It is also the body where everybody pays their taxes into as whereas Hellertown and Lower Saucon, they each have half of the people paying taxes. If we wanted to get something done as a unified body, it almost makes more sense to do it through the school district. What they are trying to do is get a voice maybe back to the school district and say these are the community groups we have and this is what we tend to need and this is what we think we are going to need in the future. Jack and Charlie are going to work on a grant for a study through DCNR to basically analyze how many children and citizens there are involved in these youth groups and when do they tend to use them. Therefore, what are the fields that are most needed and take that information so we know what we really need. That's the first step. Jack handed out the chart and said it will be expanded with additional information. If you see anything on there that needs to be changed, let him know. Dave said that's why we were asking the different groups to show up at the next meeting. Dave asked Scott to talk to Joe Long about it for soccer. Jack said that Carol put a list of contacts together and we sent out an email invitation. He will send the Parks & Rec Board a copy of the next one that goes out. They are trying to get the data correct. They want to get down to some descriptions about the fields and the different venues, what kind of shape they are in, what kind of maintenance they would need, what kind of storage facilities they would need, all kinds of information we can gather; then the capacity of each facility, the frequency they use the fields, etc. Dave said only the clubs that have the real detailed knowledge of what the needs are. They are ready for more detail now. Jack said one of the reasons they wanted to get together was the school district had indicated they were in need of additional fields because of the PIAA rules changes. He thought they were talking about this fall, but after the meeting, Bob said they don't have to worry about that until 2012. The school district has retained an architect and they are looking at fields up above the football stadium. They have a couple of different proposals. None of the fields there are of regulation and are used for practice. They have a plan that they can do some earthmoving and create a regulation field and take some of the earth that's moved here and move it to the other spot and move a couple of the things around. If they go with that, it's about \$400,000.00 in cost and it's going to close all the fields down for the construction. That could be 2011 that they need to use some of our fields. What Bob did say is if they have a rainout in one of their fields, they might have to use one of our fields. That's where this is. We're going to keep working. It's a good start. Dave said he wonders if it's going to fizzle out. They tried it twenty years ago and tried to get together. The difference is there are really greater needs at this time and more people involved. Just the whole world is more worried about physical fitness and that sort of thing. Jack said if there's ever going to be an indoor facility, it's going to have to be done by this group. He doesn't think the Township wants to get involved with anything that costs \$10 million. Hellertown definitely doesn't want to get involved in it, but he did hear they might be considering putting up a pole building at Reinhard. If we ever get an indoor facility, it's going to have to be done with everybody at the table, the school district, Hellertown and Lower Saucon. Dave said Jack's point is that anything that is done in the future, it has to be or it will be a synergy. For example, anything that is done in Catasauqua, it is still one school district, the residents, it's the one municipal taxing body. We are unique that we have a couple of municipalities paying into the school district. Bill said the Polk Valley Road is a perfect area as you have Hellertown, the school district and Lower Saucon right there. Dave said the park is in a good spot. Any indoor facility would probably end up there, more than likely on the school district property. Scott said there are

some open fields on Polk Valley Road, can that be looked at? Jack said looking at the stretch, it may be ideal for a future fire station or regional library one day. The Borough owns the Compost center in the back, where there are 30 some acres. There are all kinds of possibilities. That is a good location for future ideas. The group will be meeting every month.

- **Saucon Valley Lacrosse Request to Have Vendors at Event at PVP** – Dave said he didn't receive anything else from Lacrosse. They were supposed to send in more detail about how many tents, etc. Dave said he got the information and he thought he sent it to everyone. He will send it to Jack tomorrow. It was a very, very brief description. Jack said if they want to do this in April, we need more details. We can put it on the agenda at the February meeting.

7. **New Business:** Jack said he has a minor subdivision, Repyneck, who is right up the road; they paid their recreation fee of \$3,113.00. He needs a recommendation to deposit that into Town Hall Park. Bill moved for recommendation to have the \$3,113.00 recreation fee put into Town Hall Park fund, second by Scott. All in favor.

8. **Adjournment:** Motion by Dave, second by Donna to adjourn. All in favor. The time was 8:14 PM.