

1. The meeting was called to order at Town Hall. The time was 7:05 PM.
2. **Roll Call:** Present: Dave Spirk, Chair; Tom Butera, Vice Chair, Sheri Herman, Donna Bristol, John Sweeney, members; Jack Cahalan, Township Manager; Glenn Kern, Council Liaison. Guests – Carol Schneider from the Township; and Pete Kowalski from Lacrosse. Scott Schanzenbach arrived at 7:07 PM.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Dave moved for approval of the February 2, 2009 minutes; second by Tom. All in favor.
4. **Citizen Non-Agenda Items** - None
5. **Projects**
 1. **Town Hall Park** – Jack said there is no update.
 2. **Southeastern Park** – Jack said there is no update.
 3. **Steel City Park** – Jack said we did have the public meeting in Steel City last summer and the Planner came up with a couple of different versions. This is a sketch plan, far from finished. The Planner had given us three different design concepts and Jack had given her back the input that had come from the meeting when we went over this. It was the one where we liked the volley ball court, we liked the location of the picnic pavilion with the tot lot, it had the basketball court running along Riverside Drive, some parking spaces on Riverside Drive, and the parking that is internal along Schwab Avenue. There is a note on that as some of us liked the parking area and some of us didn't and the note says "an additional parking area could be located within the park itself in the southeastern corner, an additional nine spaces could be located in this area and should this additional parking not be desired, this area could be used as passive open space or a picnic grove". There's an option on that. Take this with you. We won't have to take any action on this now. At some point, we should make a recommendation on it to Council. Council is going to be looking at this with the Planner and we want to make recommendations for any changes for this setup, then we can start doing that at this meeting and subsequent meetings. Dave said they have parallel parking along Riverside, is there some ordinance about the other side, head on parking. Parallel parking is probably safer. Jack said we'd have to look at the ordinance. This looks like there is an area that has been widened on Riverside Drive. Parking is according to the ordinance. If we wanted to do that, Council would have to designate that. Dave said if you park head on, you could get nine or ten spaces. He doesn't think you should use green spaces for such a little park. Let's go with the recommendation that we'd rather see some green space where the nine parking spaces would go, whether it's just grass or what. He'd opt for head on parking off of Riverside Drive instead. All members agreed, no one opposed.

Someone asked if it was a full size major league field? Jack said no, it's for practice games. Sheri said what is the necessity of the six foot high chain link fence around the entire park, does it really need it? Couldn't we just put something around the baseball park? Jack said there is a fence there now. Sheri said they are saying across Riverside Drive. Jack said what they are saying is fencing will allow officials and law enforcement to close and lock the park facilities and it will make it more difficult for people to trespass on park property after closing time. It's a problem there at Steel City Park. Dave said what about a green link chain fence? Jack said we can ask them.

Jack will pass this along to the Planner and he will put it on the agenda for next month.

4. **Heller Homestead** – Jack said the Township Solicitor met with the Society Hill Homeowners Association (HOA). This was on straightening out the property, that lot line. We'll give them a little bit of land and they will give us a little bit of land so that we will have the property that is in the park proper. It's like a jig saw puzzle now. The HOA seems to be supporting that right now and they have to have a vote by all the property owners. Dave said no one is objecting? Jack said there is a little bit of an issue unofficially with that open space that's been used by dogs. We're hoping with the dog park being opened at Polk Valley Park, they will use that. There have been some complaints on people who are dog owners there, they let them run around in the open field, and the homeowners who do not have dogs, call and complain about it. They are concerned that the Township will not be enforcing the dog laws if that property goes over to Society Hill. That's a minority of residents. Hopefully, they'll take all of the dogs over to the dog park when that opens up.

5. **Polk Valley Park** – Jack said speaking about dogs, the dog park, we were thinking over the winter of opening that up as soon as springtime came, and that would have been the beginning of April, but we are kind of hesitating because we want to see how the turf inside the park itself is. That's the key. That was planted last year and it had to be over seeded in some spots. We are hoping it comes up very strong and we are going to check it any day. If we get the green light from the Planner, we will probably be scheduling a grand opening, hopefully by the end of April. Park and Rec and Council will be there. We have a couple of events scheduled for the opening – the K-9 dog will be there to do a demonstration, and some people from the Animal Food Bank will be there. We will make it into a public event. We'll keep you posted on that. He showed a picture to Parks and Recs member and said this page is on the township website and as soon as the grass starts turning green inside the dog park, we'll take a picture of the actual dog park. He showed the trail going over from the park into the dog park area.

Jack said the other thing on Polk Valley Park is when we discussed this previously, we had recommendations on fencing. The Planner had given us some recommendations that we brought to this group and last time, Mike Heenan from soccer had been very helpful. He looked at those plans and came back and made some recommendations on the fencing. Those recommendations have been incorporated into these fencing options. What they are proposing here is to put fencing on the north side of field 3, 4 and 5, and also have fence breaks on the north side and a fence break along the goals. Lou Moyer was the one that mentioned that at the meeting. This has been sent to Mike and he is okay with that. This will be part of the recommendation that staff will be making to Council in the Phase II landscaping additions to Polk Valley Park. Someone said there are fence breaks behind the goals which are perfect and on the sides are fine.

Motion by Dave, second by Sherri to recommend the fencing as stated above. All in favor.

Jack said the issue about field No. 3, drainage was mentioned on that field. Scott said the east side of the field does not drain and it just puddles. He didn't get up there on Saturday. Dave said his guess is it's not draining properly or there is a spring there. Scott said he hasn't been up there lately. The problem is it drains okay. We only have two teams playing there this spring as there will only be ten games. It kills the field when you put older, adult teams on the field when it's wet. Jack said he sent Roger up there and Roger said it's too wet up there to tell to see if there is a drain problem. We will look into that and if there is corrective action we can take, we can ask and will take care of that. Someone said LVSL has changed their rules and they have no say in their schedules.

Dave said let's figure out what's wrong with the field and then put in some kind of trench or drain. It can't be from misuse. There must be some other issue. Someone said it seems like it is too compacted, but the grading is okay. Dave said maybe they rolled it so tight, and it just isn't letting the water drain correctly. The other corners aren't bad, the corner adjacent to it isn't bad. We have

to go through this all the time when we build a house and when we change the topography. Pete said if we get to the end of March when the soccer schedules come out and we look, and think we should give it a break, we'd take the Lacrosse schedule and see where there are empty slots and tell Lacrosse we can't use the field, and the two or three teams will just have to arrange it. Someone said that's how the Grist Mill used to be, it was so compacted. Dave said when they were building, they were compacting it all the time as when it rained, it ran off. They put very little topsoil down. Jack said Roger should have an answer next week and he'll let everybody know what's causing it and we will propose a solution and see if that can take care of it. Jack said we need to put signage up on the fields if they are closed.

Jack said with the inclement weather, you are restricted where you can practice and someone came up with the parking lot and they used it this weekend. One of the Council members did go up and he was not happy. Jack said he understands what the issue is. Sheri said it was a last minute decision on Friday. Jack said he spoke to an old soccer coach who told him that many times they had to take his kids out and look for a parking lot when the weather was bad. Dave said every township has an opinion, and certainly Council does. He thinks they did a great job, they called everyone, and they bumped everyone. You have to use the best judgment if there are cars in the parking lot. Sheri said would you rather play in the parking lot like you guys were or destroy the fields. Someone said it's only happening in March and there are no cars up there anyway. Scott said sometimes they get the gym, but the girls practiced on Saturday night. Jack said you just scramble for the nearest open space. We'll endeavor to let everyone plus the police know if they are using the parking lot for practice. He will talk to Tom Maxfield and see what his objection was. Dave said if you get to the field and your intentions were to use the field, and best judgment says, use the parking lot, then use it. The kids are outside getting exercise. Jack said he will circulate something around. Someone said there are specials mats you can put down where the goalie stands (after the season) and the grass comes up pretty fast.

6. **Kingston Park** – Jack said the final plan for Kingston Park should be coming before the Council at one of the April meetings and be finalized. Once this is approved, we will move ahead with the trails and the parking lot and Council has to make a decision about the building up at Kingston Park.
7. **Grants** - Jack said they submitted a grant to DCNR to defray some of the cost of the landscaping and that's a \$25,000 grant for the TreeVitalize program. That will help us with the cost of landscaping.
8. **Volunteer/Scout Projects** – Jack said there are some scouts out working with the EAC on some bird boxes and some bat boxes out at Polk Valley Park.

6. Old Business

- **Polk Valley Park Phase I Improvements – Update** – Talked about earlier.
- **Draft Maintenance Policy for Township Parks** - Jack said the Maintenance Policy had gone around a couple of times. It came by us at our last meeting. You all had a chance to look at it. The EAC just looked at it and Council has looked at it. Everybody has chimed in with some good suggestions and recommendations. We feel it's close to the point where we can bring it back to Council if it looks okay to everybody here. We spent some time on working with the Planner on fertilization sections. On the Integrated Pest Management (IPM), it's mentioned in here, that we have an intention of working further on here and expand and amplify the pest management and see how far we can go with a stand alone policy with the IPM procedures. It's flexible for that. There will be times the best choice, there will be some chemical pest management used in certain areas. For example, up in the meadows, in the upper part of the park, we will start working in the

springtime with the planting of the meadow mix up there, so that can start growing in. In order to do that, you have to remember when Larry Weiner did Southeastern Park, he did have to put down herbicide because you want to kill off any of the weed growth before you put any of the plants in there. There are occasions when we will be using chemical methods. We want to work on the IPM and bring that back as a stand alone policy. Everybody has looked at everything about the maintenance of nursery stock, the management of the non native and invasive species, the mowing, everyone has had a good look at that. We've actually used this policy. We put out a bid announcement for the mowing of the township parks and we were able to use this as kind of a basis. March 16th, we'll be opening up the bids for the lawn mowing of the parks. On page 8, under snow removal, we originally had that the park would not be plowed in the winter time, but what we realized was when it started snowing, there were a lot of people who wanted to go out there and sled and ski and slide all over the place. They were driving on top of the snow and ice, and in a day or two, it was just a sheet of ice. We realized we have to plow up to the top of Polk Valley Park to an area through the parking lot. We didn't do all of the parking spaces, but it will at least give access and the police will have access in an emergency. The rest of the policy has not had any major changes, just a couple of little tweaks here and there. If there are no further recommendations from the Park and Rec board for this policy that he can take back to the Township Council to their meeting on March 18.

Motion by Scott, second by Tom, to recommend approval to Council on the Maintenance Policy of Township Parks. All in favor.

- **Suggested Duties for Agronomist/Turf Management Specialist** - Dave asked about an agronomist. Jack said he's working on what we are going to do, and he'll do an RFP and bring that recommendation back to Council. He has the suggested duties and is working on a list of agronomist and turf management specialists and will see if they will respond. We can send out a general invitation letter if that's what you want to do. Jack sent Dave Oatis a copy and asked him for any comments. If we can develop a list of agronomists, and then give a list of five or six people certified in that field. Dave said it doesn't have to go out to bid if it's under \$10,000. Jack said if you can give him some names, he'll do a general letter and just say this is what we're looking for, get in touch with us. Jack will suggest they go and visit the parks. If they do respond, he'll send a copy to everyone. If anyone has any suggestions or knows of anyone else, email them to Jack. Dave said some things could change in here, based on what the professionals say. Jack said this is good because we have a lot of people who are going to be involved in the maintenance of the park. You have people cutting the grass, you have Public Works, the Planner that is involved. We are going to have an agronomist, other consultants, an arborist that Council has been asked to look into. What we wanted to do was to set down a policy that had all of those requirements that we wanted to follow in one place. It will be out on the website for everyone to take a look at. Jack has Kingston on the policy, and it's been updated since then. We need to get all the parameters and anything that goes into Kingston will be maintained under this same policy. The Rail Trail, a little bit different. We'll have to add that and come back and do an amendment. The advisory committee that is working on this is going to come back to this committee and say this is how we want the trail to look, see how it's maintained and that stuff can get put into this policy. The first thing that will happen if this gets adopted by Council, they will be looking at Kingston park, the final design plan for that. They have to approve that. Once that is approved, then we will know what that park will look like and we can start on that.

Park Purpose Statements – Mr. Cahalan said we are still working on the Park Purpose Statements and the policy and for the use. On the policy for the park use, he mentioned this previously, there is really not anything new. It's a compilation of everything we have in place right now. Carol reserves the park athletic facilities. Most of the rules and regulations we use to reserve facilities and fields are in this policy. Also, the park rules that are in the township ordinance are included in here. We wanted to come up with another policy that had all of those rules in one place also.

That's where this came from. That is something we would like to finalize sometime this year. There's no immediacy on this, as Carol hands them out whenever anyone comes in. This would be on the website. This gets into the insurance and what we mentioned at the previous meeting was the priority of users so when the sports organizations do request a field or facility, we know there is a priority for those people requesting it. The rest of it is pretty standard - the rules and regulations, insurance requirements and things like that. If you would take a look at it, and have any comments, give them to Jack, and he'll bring it back to another meeting. The second one is the Park Purpose Statements and that came from the Planner to the staff and was felt that this was the type of background information that would be helpful for each of the parks to let people know what the purpose of that particular park was. If it had a variety of purposes, if it had specific purpose, that would be something you'd let the public know. We'd put it on the website, and one of the Council members also suggested we put a history of how the park was acquired and include that in the information. There are some examples of some other parks that have utilized that type of information in there. We don't have to take any action on this tonight. Sheri said she has a question going back to the rules and she doesn't remember what happened, but she remembers the circumstance where it says, on 10 where it says, "park use rules – no person shall be committing", on page 5, it says carrying, setting off or discharging any firearms, etc.". Whatever came of the people, was it the Boy Scouts, where someone wanted to do bow and arrow practice last summer? They never came, did we allow them to come? She knew it was presented to us? Mr. Cahalan said he doesn't remember them making a request. Someone said the Boy Scouts were setting off rockets. Jack said that was allowed. It doesn't ring a bell. He say, anyway the answer is no.

- **Draft Policy for Use of Township Parks & Athletic Facilities** – Talked about earlier.

PVP – SVSD Connector Trail – Update – Jack said the Polk Valley Park Connector trail between the park and the school, the good news is we reached a settlement with the property owner on the barn addition and that settlement is going to take place by the end of this month. We will take a look at that and do the demolition of that addition, in house. Public Works will be able to remove that addition. That issue will be no more. We are working to finalize the plan for the connector trail. The Planner and the Engineer are putting together the final touches on that plan. We are trying to be very careful as it goes right in front of Stuart Herman's house. Because of the proximity to the steps on that house, and the trail narrows by the steps, there will be a barrier out on the road and there are several trees that have some years on them. We didn't want to impact them to the point where they would be damaged and lost, so one of the considerations that the Planner brought to Council was most of our trails we try to make them pervious so that there is some infiltration through them. We had considered pervious pavement and in the Polk Valley Park, we did pervious concrete. In this particular instance because those two surfaces would require some digging down below the surface, it was felt that the recommendation that they made was to put regular asphalt pavement on the walkway all the way through. By Polk Valley Run, there are some springs and some issues with the water table, so the recommendation was to do a regular pavement from the school district all the way down across the bridge and into the park. The Council considered that and they did agree with the Planner that is what we would do with that surface. Also, the house is not occupied.

- **Suggested Duties for Agronomist/Turf Management Specialist** – Jack said the second recommendation was to get an Arborist in to look at these trees. The trees, that are circled, are going to be the most impacted by the trail as it narrows in front of the house, and where it goes over the bridge and we want to make sure we do everything we can so those trees are protected. The recommendation was to seek the services of an arborist who would come in and do an inspection, if necessary, and treatment of those trees. Council also agreed to move ahead with that. Dave asked the difference between arborist and an agronomist? Jack said the soil would be the connection would between the two of them. He just looked at a different specialty. It would be someone certified by the International Society of Arboricultural, that's different discipline from the

agronomist. We're looking for someone who has to make an assessment of the current health and overall conditions of preservation, liability of the trees, that will be affected by the installation of the trail, as well as recommendation for tree protection measures during and after construction - a plan for the recommended tree protection measures, and cost estimate for those recommendations. This is just asking for proposals to do that. Council would have to make the decision to approve the payment of these services. The digging down for the other two trees would be down several feet and you'd be impacting the roots. We'd have to make this ADA compliant and it either has to be one surface, you can't do one fading into the other. Dave said the house, is going to be coming down? Jack said from what he understands, the answer is no. The barn is. Dave said maybe in a year the house will be torn down. Jack said he doesn't believe that was the plan, especially the trees in front of the house, they don't want to disturb them. We do have enough room, we just have to pay close attention to them. He will look into what you are saying about the arborist.

- **SEPTA Rails-to-Trails Project – Update** – Jack said we are very close to reaching an agreement on a final lease document with SEPTA. What we tried to do was we had one Solicitor from the four municipalities deal with them so it wasn't fragmented. That Solicitor has been back and forth with them. There are a lot of structures on the rail, tunnels, bridges, and culverts. They are very old. If they were going to put the train back, they would have to put all new bridges and a whole new surface. We convinced them we would be responsible for the maintenance, but only for pedestrian, bicycle, and cross country skiing. We won't be responsible for maintenance for rail travel, so that if they have a right of reversion, they can come back and say they want the rails back. We can say fine, they have to come back and put in a whole new series of structures. That was the biggest issue and we have a document that addresses all of the issues we had and all of their issues. We're going to have a meeting later this month with all the Solicitors and Engineers so we have final input into the document and will take it to all the Council's and make recommendations to them. It's a 30 year lease, \$1.00 a year for each municipality. We do have some left over equipment on the track that they promised to take out. There are some signal boxes and some electrical storage boxes, which will be removed as there are some environmental concerns. Some of the signal boxes have asbestos in them. We'll probably be left with the telephone poles which Public Works can take care of. Once the lease is signed, it becomes Township property, and it's being cleared as we speak, up through Hellertown and they took off the rails, but didn't take up the ties as it was wintertime. He heard today the contractor may have left. Apparently the contractor had a box down towards the Hellertown Park and someone vandalized it and they lost about \$1,000 of equipment. He doesn't know if that was the reason, but the contractor is gone again. They'll have to get another contractor to come in and finish the rest of the rail. We have to get that other equipment out of there. As soon as this becomes our responsibility, we will need to have some direction. We will need a Rails to Trails Advisory Committee. We'd need two and an alternate. Donna would be an excellent choice, she uses the trails and knows a lot about them. You might want to think about someone who lives by the trail as they might have issues they want to bring to the organization. In Hellertown, they are going to recommend Steve Lebrake from SV Bikes, so he can bring some expertise there. Upper Saucon and Coopersburg will have representatives. If you have any recommendations, let Jack know. He has information on the Ironton Rail Trail. They have done a beautiful job on that. It's a paved trail. They have a Rail Trail Advisory Committee made up of three or four committees. He spoke to a member of this committee, Bob Abbott, and asked him about helping us and Bob said he'd be more than glad to help us out.

A woman was talking, could not hear her. Jack said we're still in the talking stages. He suggested this a couple of months ago and he's going to bring it to them later this month when he meets with all four municipalities. He is going to say, get started, Hellertown has started and are doing the same thing we are doing. He's hoping that Upper Saucon and Coopersburg will do the same thing. Get some recommendations from their Council for membership, and if we can get a nucleus of people together, we can pick a date, get the representatives together, and get this rolling.

If we sign the lease, and let's say in April or May, there needs to be some guidance for this trail as people are going to be out there, and we're going to have to be ready to be able to operate it. He'd like this to get going, and if you are okay with it, and all satisfied, and Donna would be a great choice, he'd like a recommendation which he can bring to Council with some other recommendations for representatives. Motion by Dave Spirk, second by recommend that Donna Bristol be on the Rail Trail Advisory Committee. All in favor.

Dave said how about Glenn Kern go on the committee. Sheri said she was thinking about a home representative, who came out to every meeting every week. Jack said his name is Dan. He doesn't know what their availability would be. Sheri said someone who came to the meetings would be a good choice. Jack said they can bring a whole new perspective to the meeting. If you have any ideas, let him know.

- **Christ Lutheran Church Property – Update** – Jack said these negotiations are proceeding along. The group of superiors at the church are interested in the offer and they have to take it to the whole church congregation to sign off on it. In the discussions, it did come to our attention that the church has a 20 year lease with HLSLL for the use of those fields and we would be honoring and assuming that lease. The lease basically says that the Little League has first dibs in the fields, so that should be no problem. As soon as they sign off on that, we have to do a survey of the line as there is a well in the area that they were going to sell to us. We will come back to Park & Rec and then to Council with the plans to do the driveway and the parking lot.
- **Lawn Mowing Bid** – Jack said we have bids out for a new lawn mowing contract and those are to be opened on March 16 here at the Township. Hopefully, we'll get some new bidders. We'll see what the price comes out to be. Prices are very competitive right now, so we hope to get a good response with that. With the lawn mowing, one of the reasons we did this maintenance policy was to be on top of what gets done by the lawn mowing crew and we will have somebody out there monitoring it and making sure they do comply with this policy and mow all the areas that are in the contract because there was slippage on that. We kind of thought they were doing a good job the first year, and then the second year, it really slipped and the quality of the work was very poor which we saw in some of the mowing they did.
- **New Port-a-John Contract for 2009** – Jack said we had another problem with the company that was out there that had the Port-a-Johns. The units the put out there were inferior, some of the doors didn't shut and the wind would come and the door would blow open. The maintenance was the biggest issue. We would come by, and there wasn't that many people in the park, and it looked like it hadn't been maintained. The straw that broke the camel's back, he came here for a meeting and it was pitch black outside and he looked over and he saw somebody over by the port-a-john. It was a truck cleaning the unit. He wondered how good you could clean a port-a-john when it is 9:00 PM at night. They found out the next day they didn't clean it very well, and it was signed off that it was maintained. We have given the contract to another company and they will be putting the new units out there by April 1. Let us know if there are any issues or problems. We tried to accommodate the three levels of the field. Carol said if you see people with their doggie bags, they can't throw them in the port-a-potties. It's a problem when they are cleaning it. They think they are doing a good deed, but they have to dispose of it in the proper bin. Jack said they are providing a mutt mitt and they can dispose of it in the container. There are signs by the port-a-potties about not putting doggie bags in them.
- **Heller Homestead/Society Hill Lot Line Change – Update** – Talked about earlier.

7. **New Business:**

- **Integrated Pest Management Program** – Talked about earlier. They will continue to work on this.
- **Recommendation on Tarantino Recreation Fee** – Jack said he has a recreation fee from a two unit subdivision, up on Seidersville Road. They paid a recreation fee of \$3,310.00. This body makes a recommendation on which park it gets deposited in. It's in the area where it could be deposited in the Polk Valley Park and we do need some funding in there because of all of the improvements. Dave moved to deposit the recreation fee from Tarantino of \$3,310.00 into the Polk Valley Park fund, second by _____. All in favor.
- **Review Site Plans (Meadows Grove Land Development Plan)** – Jack said he has the Meadows Grove Land Development Plan. It's the catering business. They do need to get some approval for some existing buildings on the property. They are going through the whole process. There is no recreation land on this. A lot of this, the property is in the flood plain.
- **Wydnor Hall** – Jack said there are plans if you want to look at them. They've been to Council as the Park and Rec meeting was delayed last week. This is the bed and breakfast down the road on Old Philadelphia Pike. They are taking an old building on the property and constructing another room for the bed and breakfast. They are going to the Zoning Hearing Board for a variance. There is no recreation fee.

8. **Adjournment:** Motion for adjournment. All in favor. The time was 8:34 P.M.