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Lower Saucon Township  
Parks & Recreation Board

Meeting Minutes

April 2, 2012

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1. **Meeting Called To Order** – The meeting was called to order by Dave Spirk at 7:00 PM.
2. **Roll Call: Present** – Dave Spirk, Chair; Tom Butera, Vice Chair; Bill Ross, Judie Rossell and Scott Schanzenbach members; Jack Cahalan, Staff Liaison
3. **Approval of Minutes** – Motion by Bill, second by Scott for approval of the March 5, 2012 minutes. All in favor.
5. **Citizen Non-Agenda Items** - None
6. **Projects:**
  - **Town Hall Park** – Jack said no update.
  - **Southeastern Park** – Jack said no update.
  - **Steel City Park** – Jack said we put off the plans for the improvements in this park until next year. He discussed with the Public Works Director on what to do about Steel City Park this year as it has not been used for baseball in several years as its undersized and they decided that all they were going to do was just mow the grass as it's all going to get torn up next year. Jack then got a request from Priscilla deLeon about a guy who wanted to do volunteer work up at the Steel City Park. It turned out he's a coach for the knee-high Little League group and lives up in that area. The coach wanted to use the field to practice so he went down there found out that cutouts for the bases are all overgrown. When it was being used, the volunteers used to go and pull all of that out. We use do weed treatments, but that hasn't been done in a couple of years. We confirmed with the Little League that it was okay for him to use the field. The coach is all registered and the team will be using it on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays for practice. The coach will go up and do some of the work and Public Works will roll it for him. Dave said T-ball is the youngest group, and then it is Knee-high. Bill said it's a good fit for the field. Dave said when his son was that age, they used to practice at Steel City, but there were no games.
  - **Heller Homestead** – Jack said no update.
  - **Polk Valley Park** – Jack said the teams are all registered, and have submitted all the paperwork. They've got the fields lined and they are good to go.
  - **Connector Trail** - Jack said the Connector Trail is going to get finished shortly. They are back out there working on it. They just need to rent a small paver and will put the asphalt on the trail from the park to the bridge, then from the bridge up to the connection with the school campus. They are going to be setting up a ribbon-cutting ceremony at some time and Parks and Rec will be invited. They are trying to figure out what would be the best time. It will probably be during the week so he can get some school officials there. He will send something out to the group. It probably won't be until May. Dave said he is doing the Environmental Education Center Event on April 20. He asked if it could be done by April 20<sup>th</sup>. Jack said he'll see if it can be finished by then, and maybe they can do something there. That would be perfect and it would take place at 1:00 pm. Dave said they are going to take people down for tours of the site and there will be displays in the school foyer. The 20<sup>th</sup> is just an introduction to the EEC. It's something to generate interest. That would be perfect. Jack said hopefully it will be done by then. It doesn't

have to be anything big. We just have to have a ribbon cutting. Dave said he'd like to go to the next EAC meeting. Jack said it's on April 10<sup>th</sup>. He will keep Dave posted.

- **Kingston Park** – Jack said that will be the next thing that Public Works will work on after they are finished with the Connector Trail. They will do the parking lot and will use the paver to do the pathways up there. They also have to install the composting toilet which takes some excavation. The vault will come from Modern Concrete which goes in the ground. The modular unit gets delivered by truck and gets dropped on the vault. The fan gets hooked up and they do some grading and electrical hookups and the composting toilet is good to go. There is no pump. You only have to clean it out every couple of years. There's no fluid, it's all dry. As long as you keep the air circulating with the fan, it dries out. It's supposed to be odorless. That will be finished and then they will work on setting up a ribbon cutting ceremony which will involve the park, Dr. Kingston who donated the property, and Ella's Garden in memory of his mother. The Historic Society will do a plaque. There will be some signs that will be done. He'll keep the group posted and it'll be a bigger ribbon-cutting than on the Connector Trail.
- **Easton Road Fields** – Jack said that Ed Sinko and Mark Smith from the HLSLL were here at the previous meeting. After that meeting, he has been working with Mark primarily to get those fields in shape. They took care of just about everything up there to get them going. They fixed the fence, the backstop problem, repaired the dugout as there was some edging coming off that. Roger tells him that both roofs on the dugouts have to be replaced, so they got an estimate from a roofer to do those. They had been blown off a couple of years ago when a strong wind storm came in and popped both of those roofs off. They were laying out in the grass. They took care of the field and gave them a new equipment box. He's not sure whether they got some more dirt, but they groomed it and everything is good to go for them to play up there. One of the things he did find out was one Sunday about 1 pm he was driving by the field and there was an adult men's team in uniform using the field. He came in and asked Carol if they had been registered. Carol said no one was registered to use it on Sundays. They contacted Bob Mateff, and he said they heard rumors about this organization using the field and said that they leave it a mess. If you are driving by on a Sunday on Easton Road and you see someone using the field, stop and find out who they are. Apparently, they think it's available or they may have spoken to the church. They are adult men. Dave said if the seven of them wanted to go up there and spend time there, that would be okay, but not an organized league in uniform. Jack said unorganized, impromptu play is allowed. If you are an organization you have to register with us.

Jack showed the group the plans for the Easton Road Fields. He said this is a plan primarily to put in a parking lot off of Mockingbird Hill Road, and then to get the people from the parking lot to the two baseball fields. What you are looking at here is Mockingbird Hill, Easton Road, and Route I-78. He showed them the church property, the stone wall, and the chapel. They could see the upper and lower field on the drawings. They have to put in the driveway and it has to go in-between the trees. They have to cut some of the trees down to do that. There is a water crossing that comes down underneath Route I-78 and they have to get a permit from DEP to cross that. The parking lot will have 40 spots. There is some disturbance, and they have to stay within the limits of the permit. The next thing is to get pathways from the parking lot that can go to the two baseball fields. He showed everyone where they could put the ADA spots. This is the first take from the Engineer on this. He's going to discuss this with Council on Wednesday night as they have to ask Council what kind of surface they want, pathways, etc. The Planner has looked at this and said that new ADA rules were adopted by the federal government in March 2012. This type of arrangement is not suitable or adequate. What you have to do for anyone is disabled, you have to have the pathway that will take them to the same spot where all the other spectators are watching the event. Something has to be done, but he doesn't know what, so they'll have to talk about it. One of the ideas he threw out was could

they turn the field and put home plate over by the parking lot. He doesn't know if that's possible. That would put us closer to the parking lot and that way you'd have less distance to travel. Dave said you can't have the fielders looking south as the sun cuts across the sky in the south. It goes directly overhead in the highest part of the summer and the rest of the time it is always cutting across the southern sky. Bill said is there any fencing planned to protect the parking lot from balls? Jack said they haven't thought about that, so they will have to look at it. The one thing this will do is eliminate the parking down at the road. He showed where the port-a-john was. He sent a copy of this to Bob Mateff and they were going to get back to us with comments. The permits are filed, and they don't have anything back yet. Bill said it's standard practice to have a sign at the entrance to the park. We want people to know where the park is. He suggested having the Easton Road Fields sign down on Easton Road with an arrow directing people up Mockingbird Hill to the parking lot. Jack said that's a good idea. Dave said the idea of turning the field may work. At Dimmick Park and Polk Valley Park, it's nice to sit on the bank. He thinks it's a good idea. Jack said he thought they may be able to save the dugouts, but he doesn't know. He will keep the group posted.

- **Saucon Rail Trail** – Jack said the Rail Trail is coming up on one year. They had a real successful clean-up day on March 24<sup>th</sup>. They had about 50 to 60 people out there. They went down to Upper Saucon and we had some people working in the Lower Saucon section. There was also a group in the Hellertown section. They cut back some of the invasives and cleared some of the downed trees from the storm. The trail looks good and everything is cleared away and we are ready for another year. We are getting benches installed along the trail. Scott asked if businesses were sponsoring the benches? Jack said they went with individuals. The businesses did the markers. There have been some individuals like Dave Heintzelman from Hellertown got one, Rett and Priscilla Oren are buying one down from the Old Mill Crossing as they got engaged on the bridge, so they want to have a ceremony down there next month. There was another local woman, a doctor from St. Luke's is getting one, and the last one, was just taken by one of the new Council members. They only had seven locations and they are all taken. They tried to keep them from the populated areas to keep from bothering the residents. If they go out again, they will look for spaces to put more in, and then they will open it up again. It went pretty slow for about a year and nothing was happening. Then they got some publicity out and everybody jumped on it.
- **Grants** – Jack said no update.
- **Volunteer/Scout Projects** – Jack said no update.

#### 7. Old Business:

- **Saucon Valley Recreation Partnership – Update** - Jack said he will find out when the next meeting is.
- **Easton Road Fields Improvements – Update** – Talked about under “Easton Road Fields”.
- **Reading Road Trailhead** – Jack said for the trailhead, he doesn't have a plan yet to bring back on Reading Road. They did locate a port-a-john there. Dave said are there plans to install a composting toilet? Jack said no, the composting toilets will be a Kingston, PVP and Steel City. One of the things they are talking about at the Rail Trail Oversight Commission was they never had the money to do a master plan on how the whole trail would look. They are trying to focus on different areas and talk about what they want such as plantings, trees, flowers and one of the areas that will be first on their list will be around the Reading Road trailhead. They are going to try to meet with the Grounds Superintendent from the Saucon Valley Country Club. There's an

area where they put in a new tee box and they had to clear out some trees and they want to put some plantings back in. They will see what comes of that. Judie said do we have any idea of how many people use the trail? Jack said hundreds, thousands of people so far. At one point, they will try to get a count. We could get some volunteers out there one day and basically just sit there and count people. Dave said he goes on Meadows Road almost every day and you have to stop for somebody and the same for Water Street. Jack said when the weather gets better, the traffic will be constant. Dave said they drove over it today and there were a bunch of bikers on the trail. It's a real success. Judie said it's all word-of-mouth as there are no brochures yet? Jack said there's a Facebook page. That's what's out there now. There will be a website which will be [www.sauconrailtrail.com](http://www.sauconrailtrail.com). The Oversight Commission is going to approve a contract with a website developer at the next meeting at the end of April and there will be lots of content on the site such as schedules of events, maps. They will stay away from printing pamphlets, as you have to constantly fill that and a lot of them just get tossed along the trail. If you want a little map, you will be able to print it from the website. They want to get organized and get connected with some wellness groups. They are getting connected with some of the race organizations. They did an event form. The Water Street Park will be a real hub as there are events there that are related to the Farmer's Market and the historic sites. They are going to hook up with Frank Pazzaglia who is an environmental sciences professor at Lehigh University and he is going to work on several areas where there are stone outcroppings and he can use them for the classes. He will bring the kids from Lehigh down to clean those areas up. There are a whole lot of possibilities. Tom said maybe you can QR codes on the trail. It looks like an ink blot. You go to your Smart Phone and you scan it. It sends you to a site and gives you information. The phone reads the application and scans it and picks up the URL address it the image and it sends it to your phone. Maybe you want to say Jack Cahalan Bench and have the history of it and how it came about. There could be a plaque along the trail and someone scans it and it gives them information. There may be grants. Jack said we can't get any grants with DCNR because of our 30-year lease. Bill asked if we got any feedback from the geocaching going on up there? Jack said it's been very quiet. He dealt with everyone on the geocaching website and spoke to most of the people who got the geocaches out there and posted the policy. He hasn't gone back and checked. The geocaching website identifies where the caches are. Periodically he goes on there and checks if someone dropped an unauthorized cache. They are not supposed to be approved by geocaching.com unless they got approval from the Township. He's been out on the trail and has not seen any caches. Scott said he has seen people looking for them on the trail. Jack said it kind of died down. At one point, everyone was doing it. Judie said it's loads of fun if you've never done it.

## 8. New Business

- **SV LAX Day Special Events Request-** Jack said Saucon Valley Lacrosse wants to do another LAX day at Polk Valley Park. They did one last year and it is very well run. This is going to be on Saturday, April 14, 2012. They checked it out with soccer and everybody and what they do it they have lacrosse games on the fields and set up tents in the park where they have vendors come in. They are indicating that they will have about 400 people, so they have parking monitors who make sure people don't park on the grass and they use the overflow parking area. They gave them some additional trash containers. There's enough port-a-johns. They have Dewey EMS available, and there's no cooking other than stuff they might bring like coffee, hot chocolate and water. It's a good event and they left the park in good shape the last time. The circulated this to the Police, Zoning & Public Works. Tom moved to approve the SV Lax Day on April 14, 2012, second by Dave. All in favor. Jack will take it to the Council meeting on Wednesday and Council will approve it.

- **Historical Impressions of America Special Event Request** – Jack said this event is on the Heller Homestead historic property. It kind of overflows into the park. That’s why there’s an event application. They have been doing these campouts for about five or six years. It’s a Civil War re-enactment. They set up tents and they do demonstrations at the park. There’s one that shows nursing; one shows some sort of housekeeping and one is gunsmithing. They’ve done this before and they are very responsible. It will be in conjunction with Saucon Valley History Day where all the historic sites will be open to the public, the Heller Homestead, the Grist Mill, and the Lutz-Franklin Schoolhouse. They do have some fires, but they use fire pits and there hasn’t been any problems with that. There’s parking and port-a-johns for them to use.
- **Boy Scout Special Event Request** - The Boy Scout group, you already approved them as they were there on March 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 25<sup>th</sup>, and they want to do it again on April 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. It will be on the same day as the re-enactment. They will camp further back in the park. They talked to Priscilla deLeon about it and she invited them to participate. Dave moved for approval of the Historical Impressions of American and the Boys Scouts to use the Heller Homestead property on April 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. Second by Tom. All in favor.
- **Review Site Plan (Ranch Holdings Lot Line Change)** – Jack said this is a lot line change on Old Philadelphia Pike and Clauser Drive. It’s a small piece of property. There are three existing parcels and they want to consolidate it into two parcels, which requires them to change the lot line. There is no recreation fee involved. There were no comments

9. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.

10. **Next Meeting:** Monday, May 7, 2012 at 7 pm at Town Hall. They will meet at Steel City Park in June, July, or August and will have the Planner present. If there’s inclement weather, they will go into the firehouse. At this point, there won’t be any changes in the Steel City Park improvements plan. Bill said we could do one meeting for July and August. There would be a June and August meeting. They will talk about it at the May meeting.