

1. The meeting was called to order at Town Hall. The time was 7:06 PM.
2. **Roll Call:** Present: Dave Spirk, Chair; Sheri Herman, Donna Bristol, members; Jack Cahalan, Township Manager. Bill Ross arrived at 7:14 PM.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Sheri moved for approval of the March 9, 2009 minutes; second by Bill. All in favor.
4. **Citizen Non-Agenda Items** - None
5. **Projects**
 1. **Town Hall Park** – Jack said we are getting the restrooms opened up there. The port-a-johns have been delivered. Mulch will be put down soon in the playground. The pavilion is being used by people on weekends.
 2. **Southeastern Park** – Jack said the bathrooms will be opened shortly. The pavilion is reserved out there. It's really an undiscovered gem, and a beautiful place. People have starting to discover this park, so we are reserving it. Someone asked if the wildflowers have come up. Jack said they are in their third or fourth year, so they should still start coming up. Assuming what Larry Weaner told us, it's a nine year length of time before you get full growth of the meadows.
 3. **Steel City Park** – Jack put up a sketch plan of the park. He said this was discussed at the April 1st Council meeting. Council is okay with the plan. They liked all of the different features. They talked about the parking area and they felt to leave it as green space. They were talking about making parking on Schwab Avenue. We said that was a complaint the residents of Schwab brought up at the meeting that people were parking there. Council asked about Matthew's, so they are looking at different parking areas. Dave said can you put the parking parallel? Jack said they are going to look into that. The only thing the Planners talked about was they were concerned about the balls at the ballfield. They will think about that. Looking at the plan, Dave said he was thinking, he would make the park on heading over here so you back up over here. The kids will be here, and not to mention, if it was raining and I was waiting for my son at practice, I'd want to be facing and watching the action. His first thought was it's less safe backing up this way than it would be this way. Jack said they will be looking at that. The only other comment was with the tot lot being where it was because of balls being hit there and hitting a child. We are going to look into some fencing and some trees of some kind. The other thing was the fencing. We had recommended the green. The planner said she would suggest a black link fence. P&R said that will be fine and black sounds good. There was a question about the volleyball court and the sand and the planners thought was there wouldn't be a lot of cats there with so much activity going on. That looked okay. The only other suggestion was a priority issue and we would probably not do this park this year.
 4. **Heller Homestead** – Jack said there is no update on whether the Society Hill Homeowners Association have approved the swap of lands with the township that would straighten out the property line and provide the township with more property within the park. He showed the outline of the property. We want to put a gazebo in, but it would be on Society Hill's property. There is an issue with the residents in Society Hill – it's a fight between the dog owners and the non dog owners. The non dog owners look out their windows and see the dog owners letting their dogs run loose out in this open field and doing their business. Dave said that's what precipitated the whole dog park. Jack said there will be a dog park for them to go to.

Polk Valley Park – Jack said on the dog park, we are waiting to see how the turf is developing in the park, and if it's strong enough to be mowed a couple of times and can withstand some traffic, then we'll think about opening the park at the end of April, beginning of May. We are hearing that people are up there a lot. Some are jumping the fence and trying it out, so we don't want to keep everybody in suspense. It really comes down to whether the turf is strong enough. Someone said the City of Bethlehem's dog park is all dirt and the dogs can roll around in it. Dave said we met Rick, the Planner, and Dave told Rick that his understanding was these things are supposed to be two acres. Rick said he was in dog parks in the city that haven't even been a quarter of an acre. Dave said what we've read up on is that if you don't make it big enough, it becomes dirt. Jack said definitely. Dave said hopefully ours is big enough, especially if so many dogs have been there already. Jack said if it gets to be a problem, we may have to shut it down for a week or two.

Maintenance Policy for Township Parks - We want to get off on a good start. Jack said he did get a letter back from Dave Oatis on the Maintenance Policy for Township Parks and Dave had some comments. Jack sent it to Roger Rasich, Director of Public Works and the Planner to see if we have to make any changes in our maintenance policy because we really focused in on the aeration, the seeding, herbicide, and some of the other fertilizers. He did give us some comments about the Agronomist. They were very helpful comments and if we do have to change it around a little bit, we'll do that. It's good to see that we have a policy that's been reviewed. Dave said that's a good point he makes about an agronomist or like experience. You are going to change the wording to reflect something like that. Jack said he did put this together as he wants to take it to Council and get approval to send it out. It's a request for a proposal and it contains most of the information on the duties. He's going to attach a copy of the maintenance policy and what he put down was what Dave mentioned. It says we're looking for a professional service from the agronomist/turf management specialist with a BS degree in Agronomy or Horticulture or related field with a minimum of five years experience managing turf". Scope of services is to provide us with their proposal and how they would address the items we have up there plus an estimate. Hopefully, someone will send us something and say here's how I would do that. Jack gave them the period of time, from March to November. Somebody could come in and say he could spend a certain amount of hours. Dave said he likes it. When you have this approved, please email it to him. He knows a couple of guys and could get it to them. Something like this, it's just some extra money for them. Jack wants to bring it up at the April 15 Council meeting to get it approved. Hopefully, they'll get four or five people to come in, and we'd like to get it in place by June or July 2009. We can always get the equipment they need, for example, the aeration equipment. Dave said Hellertown has one. Jack said we're moving ahead on that.

Jack said the barn addition has been pushed back. We are trying to set up a meeting with everybody so we can look at how the addition can be taken down. He mentioned about the trail, and we are waiting for approval from DEP for the trail and a foot bridge over Polk valley Run. We have sent out some RFPs for an arborist. We have not received any responses on that as of yet. The additional fencing for the three fields on the north side has been approved and been included in the Phase II landscaping improvements that will be going out with the bid package that is being prepared. Dave said Public Works doesn't do the fencing? Jack said no. Dave said do they provide the fence materials and labor to put it in? Jack said we'd provide the materials. The fields out there have been two wet to play the last two weekends. Sheri said on Friday, the Lacrosse team, was supposed to get their pictures taken up there, or was it too wet? Jack said he didn't even hear about that. He just checked and asked Carol if there were any issues and Carol said no. Jack said they'll be out there shortly finishing up the rest of the trails. That work will be started and one of the things that is going to be delayed this year is _____. Dave said is that due to funding or an overflow of work? Jack said one of the things is he wasn't able to come up with any recommendations on types of structures. The pavilion, we do need one for Kingston Park,

and we should get two of them at the same time, so maybe that will get us in the picture. They wanted to get the other stuff in this year.

5. **Kingston Park** – Jack said one of the Council meetings in May, they will be going over the final design plan and will start putting in some of the trails. They sealed up the building for the winter and the bats went away. When they come back, they won't get back into the school house, there will be bat condos for them to go into.
6. **Grants** - Jack said we did receive word from Northampton County that we were awarded \$10,000 under the TreeVitalize program to defray costs for trees that will be planted this year under Phase II landscaping at Polk Valley Park.
7. **Volunteer/Scout Projects** – Jack said the Scouts are working on some projects – some birdhouses and things like that.

6. **Old Business**

- **Polk Valley Park Phase I Improvements – Update** – Jack said he has nothing new.
- Draft Maintenance Policy for Township Parks** - Was talked about earlier
- **Suggested Duties for Agronomist/Turf Management Specialist** – Was talked about earlier
- **Draft Policy for Use of Township Parks & Athletic Facilities** – Was talked about earlier.
- **Lawn Mowing Bid** – We had very good results and the low bidder was Hillcrest. Dave said is it a new and experienced company? Jack said they had some good references. This person said he was capable of doing it. Dave said you have to take the lowest bidder. Jack said regarding the bids, the company that was in there that we had the last two seasons bid on the job and there were a couple of other good firms.

PVP – SVSD Connector Trail – Update - No update.

SEPTA Rails-to-Trails Project – Update – Jack said we did have a meeting with the four communities. We had the engineers, managers here and we all met. Our solicitor's were working on the draft of the lease agreement and we got a lot of the issues ironed out and we're down to some of the language. Basically, there are some structures, bridges, tunnels, culverts, that date back to 1917, and we don't want to be responsible for those structures. The lease agreement will spell out that. We are only using the surface of the trail bed for walking, hiking, biking, etc. If SEPTA wants to come back during the 30 year lease, they have the right to revert and say we want to put a train from Philadelphia to Bethlehem, they will be responsible to put the tracks back in. Dave said at one time, didn't the police say they may drive on that? Jack said they could. We definitely have spoken about bike patrols. If there's an accident, you probably will see a cruiser or an ambulance, but the patrols, we haven't come up with anything yet. For now, they are using bikes.

Bill said has there been any talk of the missing link going to Bethlehem? Jack said not from Bethlehem. All they talk about is the greenway to Saucon Park. The missing link has a crossing and a rickety wooden bridge that is so short, you are over before you even know it, and it belongs to Northern Southern. They want to take that bridge down and just fill it in with slag. We haven't heard anything more about it. We're trying to get Hellertown, us, and even the City of Bethlehem to say there is a culvert there, put in a trail so people can walk through it. It's a little wooden

bridge. Further up, that's Bachman Street and it goes up to Silvex Road. Norfolk Southern has a piece of property there, and no one has talked about it. For whatever reason, they are not offering it. Dave said all in good time. Jack said once they get going on either end, you will hear from the public. They will have to go out, go around the street or the sidewalk, and then get back on the trail. The track clearing was stopped for awhile. The contractor left and Jack doesn't know if they got a new one. The contractor is back taking out the rails and they are taking out the railroad ties. They are starting to do what we asked them to do and that is to take out the signal boxes and some electrical stuff. There's a lot of stuff that we didn't want to handle because of environmental concern. There has been some vandalism on the track. He took some pictures down by Old Mill Road. They piled all of the ties that they took out on top of the bridge over Saucon Creek, so a bunch of kids came down and started tossing the ties off the bridge into the Saucon Creek. They did that at Old Mill Road and also further up at the Meadows behind Neighbors, the garden center. He told the SEPTA guys they have to get the ties off of the bridges, so they did that and moved them. The kids actually were caught in the act. Bill said as part of the punishment, we should make them go in and take them out of the water. Jack said he thought the contractor would come with a hoist and lift them out, but he sent two guys down and took them out one by one. Dave said the operation they have going here is minimal. Bill said any potential impact with the ties the way they are treated being in the water? Jack said that's why he wanted to get them out. We are looking at a property in the township for a trailhead which has access to the trail where people can drive up and have their bikes in their car, take their bikes off, and get on the trail. We are looking to get an easement to get the access. He spoke to the guy from SEPTA and will have to put up some barriers at Old Mill Road as some people actually drove down and drove right on the tracks with their car. We will have to put something up. We have to do that along Meadows Road. PPL has a spot where they park trucks or they could go to the Meadows banquet hall. We have to post that with signage. Hellertown and Coopersburg have a lot more opportunities for people to park in public spaces. Bill said the location you are looking at, is it close to any sewer lines that we could put bathrooms in there? Jack said he's talking to Gar about that.

Dave Spirk asked if there was a settlement on the Maccaro properties? Does the township own them? Jack said just the three. Dave Spirk said how much were they, he's assuming that's public knowledge. Jack said he thinks they were about \$150,000.00.

Jack said that's where it is with SEPTA. The plan would be to have the final lease agreement done by the end of April, and then have each of the Council's take that and discuss it, and hopefully it will be approved. We're hoping we can get that done some time in May. As soon as we have a lease in hand, we have to go out and take immediate steps to make sure we get signage up, safety railings, etc. He put together a resolution and it was approved back at the March 18 Council meeting to recommend an establishment of a joint advisory committee. Council discussed the make up of the trail committee, and are not at the point yet, of how many should be on the committee yet. They do have Donna Bristol down. They wanted to get it to the municipalities and see how long the members should serve, etc. This is the first step to move ahead. The last thing in Upper Saucon, the trail goes through the Lutron Plant, and we understand there is litigation right now as SEPTA is suing Lutron. What Upper Saucon was thinking was to take the trail from the outside of Lutron, near Tumblebrook, and they feel they can reach an agreement and get an easement. They will work on that. When you see this trail, people are going to be amazed. There does need to be some clean ups because people over the years used it for dumping grounds. People have thrown yard waste there over the years. It cuts through areas and the natural beauty of the trail comes around nice, slow, curves and heads into Hellertown. It's going to be breathtaking. Dave asked if there was a timetable that we could officially be on it? Jack said first thing, if we get this Advisory Committee together, they can be the group that moves ahead with decisions like what the surface is going to be, the name of the trails, what signage you want, that type of thing. There is about three or four feet of stone, and then they could put something on top of that. Someone said she's tried in certain areas of putting ballast stone down and then screens over it and it seems to

work its way up. Dave said the stone will work up. You have to put modified stone down. The modified is three quarter stone. The screenings are everything that falls through the small screens. Someone said over at Lehigh where they run, it's dirt and it has to take impact of running and jogging. Dave said the parking lots around Stabler, they are No. 4 stones, and then modified on top. Someone said that's a parking lot. She said some research needs to be done. Dave said modified on top of dirt will work it's way into the dirt and there will be no drainage. There will be puddles. It would be no good. You need No. 4 stone – a big stone – where the storm water actually goes through it. Otherwise, it'll just work into the dirt. If they are moving the ballast and putting modified down, that's wrong to do. You'd have to constantly put more stone down assuming it's being used. If you put modified on top of the ballast, and roll it over, it would become like a driveway. Someone said she didn't understand why they didn't do that. Dave said it costs a lot of money to do it that right. To do it right, any road that is being built, starts out with ballast. If you don't put the ballast on, you will get puddles and you'll actually get potholes, even though it's not a road. Dave said it's a great foundation, you just have to put a top on it. Jack said the biggest concerns would be the safety things like ATV's, which can be done by simple barriers. At the bridges, they need some wooden railings.

Dave said if there are horses walking on the trail, and they defecate on the trail, what is the procedure? Donna said it's a policy just like the dogs. It has to be picked up. Over in Allentown, they clean up, just like they clean up after the dogs. The hiking clubs maintain a lot of the trails. They go and go clean up trash, clean the trails, pick up sticks, etc. Dave said he had a subdivision he built in Lower Saucon, and the horses would come through, and it was a great selling point for people buying houses. The horses would go by, it was neat, but they would just leave their mess and keep going. He would shovel it into the woods. That part wouldn't be so great on the trail. Donna said you need cooperation from everybody. When people appreciate what they have, they will take care of it, and this trail is just gorgeous. Sheri said at 7:00 AM, she goes through, and the contractor is working on the trail and working in the rain. Donna said all of those metal boxes, they are all cleaned out. A lot of the properties in Upper Saucon, already have the fences up. Jack said people will adjust. Dave said for signage, he would think no motorized vehicles, no ATV's, and clean up after yourself. Are we going to have picnicking on the trail? Jack said on the trailhead sometimes, if there is room, they will put a picnic table there if you want to stop and eat something. Jack said Steve at the bike shop is trying to determine how he is going to market this.

Donna said she went to the Ironton Rail Trail meeting as they meet every month. They have a calendar with calendar events. They are really active. They have people who represent each municipality. There are three different ones in their area. When they meet, they'll meet at a town hall or one of the communities, and the next month, meet at a different municipality so it continually changes. They have a website that you can google, Ironton Rail Trails, and it pops right up. They are so organized. They own their entire trail, so they have complete say on what they are going to do and it's a real community type of project – everybody is involved. At the different sites where you can go onto the trails, they have the maps so you can see where the trail goes and pick which direction you want to go. They have calendar events and on that, every month they have a public meeting. The meeting she went to had about 25 people there – a lot of support and volunteers and groups that help out. You'll notice on the calendar of events, they have certain times that are clean up times, work days, that people in the community come out for. Dave said it looks like once a month. Donna said they are scheduled. There are historical hikes where they have somebody that goes along with them. They had like 75 people who showed up for their historical hike. We can do that also. We have two Grist mills, the bridge by the Meadows, the Heller Homestead. There are a lot of historical things. On their website, they have pictures where they tell the history of it. We will put up a website for our trail. Funding – they get no money. They make their money for whatever improvements are needed on the trail. You can buy a park bench for \$1,000 and they sold a lot of them. You can put a plaque on the bench in memory of. You can buy a tree to be planted along the trail or even a planting of an area like daffodils and a

little plaque goes on there. They have all sorts of money making projects. They run a race, and they sell T-shirts and you pay to get into the race. She showed a picture of all the people who showed up for their race. The trail is for running or bicycling and we are fortunate, in that we have a double track, so we really have a wide area to use. If at some later date we wanted to make a section, wheel chair accessible, we could have part of it be running, hiking, and still have part of it be something else. One of the great things at the meeting was they have Eagle Scouts that have done all of their signs for the whole track. They did a beautiful job and it looks so professional. They have to make drawings and get it approved by the Committee, and they were discussing that the money for the materials they had been providing, but the Eagle Scouts, as part of their project for the badges, they had to solicit for funds for the project too. The Eagle Scouts built a 40' long bridge. One of the scouts designed the bridge and figured out how much the materials would cost. They have to present this to the committee. There are signs for parking. They got everybody involved in it like the Jaycees and the people in the community take pride in it. Bill said two organizations that he belongs to, the Lions and the Rotary would be really happy to become involved and help out in any way they can. Donna said certain sections of the trail, they can have signs like it is paid for and maintained by a certain group. The Ironton Rail Trails has a website and has a counter, and 30,809 have visited that website so far. Sheri said she told many people about the information on the Ironton Trails website. It was put in their packets. Jack said there are a couple of places where they put statues. They do a great job and they said those people would be willing to come down and work with our Advisory Committee. Donna said at the meeting, they bombarded her with all kinds of recommendations. The Scouts really come out and help with the cleanup. The different townships and boroughs, if they need machinery, they loan it to them. They also have community days.

Jack said a woman from the Appalachian Club came to the Council meeting. We are part of the highlands that come down from New York State and New Jersey and we have a lot of important open space and some of our natural resources are in this area, so they are trying to do connecting trails. They are trying to link areas from Delaware River down through southeastern part of Pennsylvania. It's an interesting organization.

Dave said can an access area be Heller Homestead or Polk Valley Park? Jack said the Heller Homestead and Conservancy are thinking about linking themselves to the trail. The Water Street Park is a connector. You can cross over to the Heller Homestead there. Donna said if you are going to do that historical thing like Ironton did, you would have that on the map. The trail goes through Hellertown's park. Dave said can we use Heller Homestead as a parking area? Jack said they have limited parking to begin with. The Heller Homestead uses Water Street for parking. Bill said has anyone thought about building a little spur through the woods and coming up to the Heller Homestead? Jack said you still have to go across the creek. Jack said there's a bridge in at the Grist Mill, a foot bridge. The township has eleven acres near Society Hill. The only thing you can access is the top part of the Heller Homestead. Dave said when those condos were approved, some access was approved. Connecting the Polk Valley Park to this, would be great. Jack said the Borough was looking at the Tumminelo property and that's a piece of property that is adjacent to Neighbors and has access to the rail trail and the Saucon Creek. They are trying to maintain some public access on that. Getting people across 412, there will be a light there at McDonald's, so if we can get people across there, and up Polk Valley Road, and get an easement from the church behind the Springhill Shopping center, we could go up that way. There will be a left turn arrow there. The impact will be on McDonalds.

- **Christ Lutheran Church Property – Update** – Jack said we are just waiting for the entire congregation to sign off on the two baseball fields. Meanwhile, they had some damage to the dugouts up there. Public Works is up there helping out in repairs to that.
- **Heller Homestead/Society Hill Lot Line Change – Update** – Talked about earlier.

7. **New Business:**

- **No Mow Signs in Parks** – Jack said this is in natural areas. Originally, there were some areas on some of the sites that there's a meadow area like in Southeastern Park. We wanted to come up with some signage from "Don't Mow" to "No-Mow Zone". This is something we put together and some of it is educational and it explains why some grass is not mowed. If you have any comments, let him know. Dave said they are going to pick one of these signs? Jack said they are going to come up with a sign. They will use them in the detention basin in the Polk Valley Park, the meadow area at the top, the grass trail. Southeastern Park is going to have these. There's a detention basin out in Lower Saucon that they bought three of these signs. There were two houses built there. The township bought the lots and it's going to be preserved as open space. Dave said he liked the 4a sign. It says what it is and why. The Parks and Recreation board recommended sign 4a. The lawnmower guys want to get in and out so quick they don't mow enough, so he doesn't know that those guys are going to mow places they shouldn't mow. Jack said they will be checking that.
- **Integrated Pest Management Program** – Jack said they are trying to come up with something that has no chemicals. That's a goal of the EAC.
- **Review Site Plans (Giant Fueling Facility Land Development)** – Jack said this is in the Giant parking lot. They brought up a sketch plan about two years ago. They now came back and actually have a plan where they can put an underground wall in a self enclosed vault, and they can be considered above ground.
- Sheri asked what has become of Wydnor, the bed and breakfast. Are they anywhere further? Jack said they just have to go to the Zoning Hearing Board. Sheri said they did a nice job. Jack said her season starts May 1.

8. **Adjournment:** Motion for adjournment. All in favor. The time was 8:40 P.M.