
Lower Saucon Township
Parks & Recreation Board

Meeting Minutes

April 7, 2014

1. **Meeting Called To Order** – The meeting was called to order by Dave Spirk at 7:04 PM.

2. **Roll Call**

Present – Dave Spirk, Tom Butera, Alan Hall, and Gary Gorman, members; Matt Smith, Jr. Council member; Jack Cahalan, Staff Liaison. **Absent:** Priscilla Oren and Bill Ross. Jack introduced Katrina Schreefer who was just appointed to the Board. He said that Katrina is currently working for the Muscular Dystrophy Association. She has a degree in sports management and previously worked for the Harrisburg Senators and Lehigh Valley Iron Pigs.

Absent – Bill Ross, Priscilla Oren

3. **Approval of March 2014 Minutes** – Tom moved for approval of the March 3, 2014 minutes, second by Alan. All in favor.

4. **Citizen Non-Agenda Items** – Council President Ron Horiszny was in attendance and said that he wanted to know if the Parks & Recreation Board had decided on anything for the Dravec Parcells on Apple Street. Dave said that we have talked about it a lot but right now the problem is getting a parking area out there. Ron said he understood that but he was hoping that we could get some volunteers to go in there and clear that main trail and put up flags that would show visitors where to go. He was thinking that we need to do it now before the poison ivy, etc. starts coming up. Tom said that he was there with the people from Wildlands and a gentleman from a biking club and he said that the property is not large enough to be a biking destination but you could put in some bike trails that people would use. His advice was to put in trails that zigzagged to replace the existing trails which all go up the hill vertically and they could lead to washouts and runoff. There was a discussion about the volunteers using a Bobcat, ATVs and chainsaws to cut the new trails in and to close off the other up and down trails. Dave said that we still have to have an area for people to park. Jack said there also isn't any signage or directions telling people where it is, where to go, etc. Ron said that he felt that people would find it through word-of-mouth. Katrina said that the bike trails up at the Lehigh Valley Zoo in Schnecksville don't have any signs and people use them a lot. Jack said that the bike trails on Lehigh University's Mountaintop Campus are not marked either. Jack said that there are residents who would like directions to the site. We need to get them to it and then show them where to park and get on the trails. Dave asked if we own the bridge? Jack said no, he believes that it is on the Columbia Gas portion of the property. Dave said that if we have an easement over the bridge we should see if we could replace the bridge with a pre-cast structure like they did over the Black River just down from the Sanbrook Apartments. Jack said he is not sure who owns the bridge but if it belongs to Columbia Gas or Mr. Dravec, getting approval to replace it would be a long and costly process. Jack explained that the engineer looked at the bridge and recommended that it not be used in the condition it is in for the public to drive over to access the property so we have now moved our parking plan to somewhere along the 50 foot access easement coming down from Apple Street which is outside the 100 foot riparian buffer. Alan asked how many cars would be parked? Jack said 4-5 and in a pinch people could park along the access road. The Board asked about using ATVs for the work group. Jack said that he would have to look into that. The consensus was that the work needed to be done within the next few weeks. Katrina asked how long the trail would be? Tom said it could be several miles long. Dave said the property is 42 acres so it could be pretty long. Ron said we need to set a date when people can show up and get some of it done and they can always come back and do some more. Tom said if we could use an ATV and a Bobcat with a bucket and a couple of guys with chainsaws we could cut those trails in a day. Ron said that most of the cutting would be at the top; the bottom trails are not that bad. Dave said the bottom line is if we own these properties we should be doing something with them. Dave asked Ron what he was thinking about to do

the work? Ron said we could start out with a few people and then expand it. Dave said we should go there with some ribbon and mark the trails. Jack said that he would have to look into the issue of the volunteers using power equipment and vehicles as the Township does not allow this on our other properties. Dave said that if the volunteers couldn't do this work then the only other choice is to have PW do it. Jack said that PW has a long list of projects for this year that keeps getting longer so they are not going to be available to do this. Dave asked Ron if he knew of any volunteers groups that did this type of thing? Ron said Wildlands Conservancy has done some projects but he doesn't know of one where they used power equipment. Jack said that he has a problem because the Township has been strictly prohibiting the use of equipment and vehicles by volunteers on the Saucon Rail Trail and on the other historic properties. Ron suggested that we hold the May 5th Parks & Recreation Board meeting out at the site so that the members can see what we are talking about. It was decided that we would meet here at 6:30 pm and Jack would drive the Township SUV out to the site.

5. **Projects:**

- **Town Hall Park** – Jack said that the repairs to the pavilion have been completed.
- **Southeastern Park** – Jack said there was nothing to report on Southeastern Park
- **Steel City Park** – Jack said that the construction has been postponed until 2016.
- **Heller Homestead** – No update
- **Polk Valley Park** – Jack said that the Director of Public Works and the Township Engineer are reviewing the location and layouts for the tot lot and pavilion that have been approved for installation. They will also be looking for a location for the composting toilet which has to be sited so that the solar power will work effectively as there is no electrical power at that park. Jack said that we are having some issues with bidding and prevailing wage requirements for the equipment.
- **Kingston Park** – Jack said that this park is finished. There were a couple of minor problems with the composting toilet (screeching fan, leak in the bathroom units, and condensation on the interior walls) that will be corrected by the manufacturer. The picnic tables have been ordered for the pavilion and we will be meeting with the Historical Society to coordinate the scheduling of the pavilion because they have first choice on its use for the groups that are coming to visit the schoolhouse.
- **Easton Road Fields** – Jack said that the approved plan for the parking lot and pathways was sent to the HLSLL and he gave a courtesy copy of it to the Christ Lutheran Church. He hasn't gotten any comments back from them. PW has started doing some soil probes out there to install stormwater features that PennDOT is requiring in order to give us a driveway permit.
- **Grants** – Jack said that the Township is submitting grants to DCNR and to Northampton County for funding to help defray the cost of acquiring a property that was previously a golf course.
- **Saucon Rail Trail** – Jack said that he is working with volunteers who want to install a meadow and do some invasive plant removal at the Reading Drive Trailhead.
- **Dravec Parcel** – Took care of in the previous discussion.

- **Volunteer/Scout Projects** – Roger said that a local Boy Scout has been approved to construct a kiosk at the Reading Drive Trailhead. He is assisting him with the plans and a local resident has agreed to contribute the funds to pay for the materials for kiosk.

6. **Old Business:**

- **Friends of Park** – No update on this.

7. **New Business**

- **Civil War Firing Demonstrations at Heller Homestead Park** – Jack handed out the Special Event Application for the Civil War firing demonstrations at the Heller Homestead Park on the week-end of April 26-27th which is when the Saucon Valley Conservancy will be holding their SV History Day events at the Homestead. Jack said that the 153rd PA Volunteer Infantry will be following the guidelines that we established with the Fire Marshall for this event. The Board voted to recommend approval of the event.
- **Saucon Valley Youth Lacrosse LAX Day** – Jack handed out a Special Event Application that was received from the SV Youth Lacrosse for the annual LAX Day that they hold at PVP. They set up tents to sell lacrosse merchandise and have refreshments. They have EMS on hand and they are very good about monitoring the parking and picking up trash. The Board voted to recommend approval of the event.
- **Act 115 of 2013** – Jack handed out information on this act which was adopted and signed into law last year. It would allow municipalities who have a voter approved referendum in place to collect an EIT Open Space Tax to use up to 25% per year of what is collected each year for the development, improvement, design, engineering, and maintenance on the properties that were acquired with the open space funding. Jack reviewed some of the properties, such as the Draveczech Parcels, Easton Road Fields, and the Reading Drive Trailhead, where this money could be used if it was approved by the Council. Jack said that Cathy Gorman would be discussing this tomorrow night with the EAC.

8. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

9. **Next Meeting:** Monday, May 5, 2014 at 6:30 pm.