

Minutes

Lower Saucon Township
Parks & Recreation Board

Business Meeting

April 12, 2010

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

2. **Roll Call:**

Present: Dave Spirk, Chair; Tom Butera, Vice Chair; Sheri Herman, Scott Schanzenbach, Donna Bristol, members; Jack Cahalan, Staff Liaison. Bill Ross arrived at 7:15 PM. **Guests:** Judy Roselle, who is interested in becoming a member of the Parks & Recreation Board. Ron Bracalente was present to talk about the LAX day.

Absent: Jr. Council member, Stephen Prager.

3. **Approval of Minutes:** Motion by Scott, second by Tom to approve and accept the February 1, 2010 minutes. All in favor.

4. **Citizen Non-Agenda Items:**

Jack said Judy sent him her resume which has been circulated. Judy said she was actually a music teacher. Her bachelor's degree is from the University of Colorado. She went and got a Masters degree in Parks and Recreation. She worked for the Army in Germany in the service clubs for a couple of years until she met her husband. She came back and started teaching again. She worked on the Recreation Committee in Bethlehem Township when they first moved to this area years ago. She raised a bunch of kids, and they are gone, so she retired and now she needs something to do again. Dave said how long have you been in Lower Saucon Township? Judy said they've been here for 35 years. She lives in the Cherrywood section by Seidersville Road. They can walk to Stabler. When she was coming tonight, she looked on the Township website. She asked how are we connected to Hellertown as Dimmick wasn't mentioned. Jack said Hellertown Borough has their own website. Judy asked why the Hellertown Pool is listed on the Township website? Jack said that the Hellertown Community pool is a regional recreational asset that is used by a large number of our residents and two-three years ago we reached an agreement with the Borough that allows our Township residents to pay the same as Borough residents for pool memberships. As a side note, he and Dave have been going to meetings with representatives from the Borough and the school district to see if they could set up some sort of commission or authority that would be responsible for all the recreation venues in the Saucon Valley area. Dave said it's all kind of one anyway, so they felt we should pool our resources and at least in some manner come up with a united plan. They've have four or five meetings so far. Jack said they are separate right now, but we all look at it as regional recreation. Judy said Southern Lehigh was mentioned in something she saw. Dave said that Upper Saucon, Lower Saucon, Coopersburg and Hellertown are going to share the rail trail. A portion of the rail trail is in Lower Saucon. It's going to be one big, long trail. The four municipalities are working together on it. The agreement was just signed last November for the rail trail, so it's not officially open yet. Donna is our representative to the rail trail advisory committee. Dave said there are a lot of things going on. We have Town Hall Park which is this park right here. We have Southeastern Park which is on the southeastern side of Lower Saucon Township and has one baseball field, a little pavilion area and kids swing sets. There is Steel City Park which is in Steel City. Heller Homestead does not have any athletic fields. It's on Water Street just up from the creek. Polk Valley Park is our new park which was on the map that Ron was talking about. It's at the S curve by the school. It's a 48-acre park that was acquired actually in part through some condemnation in 2002. That has a lot of passive recreation as well as a dog park.

Kingston Park has the Lutz-Franklin Schoolhouse. There are no athletic fields. There are also the Easton Road fields. It's by the slag plant. There are two baseball fields there. It's by the Lutheran Church. Polk Valley Park only opened two years ago. There are days up at Polk Valley where there will be multiple sports going on at once. The parking has been a problem and they are trying to work those things out. Judy said she remembers SauconFest. It was at this park and it was loads of fun.

5. Projects:

- **Town Hall Park** – No update.
- **Southeastern Park** – Jack said the rubber mulch has been installed in the playground. Go out and check it out, it's pretty neat. It's just a dark color. Looks like a mulch color. It's soft and it's almost like you are walking on the moon.
- **Steel City Park** – Jack said he has the Steel City conceptual plan. This is hopefully what we can recommend to the Council and they will adopt it. We probably won't get into it until 2011. This is up in Steel City. It was made a little bigger as the Township acquired some land from a neighbor. It has a ball field. Right now it has a pavilion. It has a big black top area that has two basketball courts on it which takes up too much space. There's playground equipment at two places. The field is undersized and doesn't have a skin infield. It's pretty rough and bumpy. It needs a lot of work, so they held some meetings with the residents of Steel City at the fire house. They got some info from them, and from that, the planners put together this conceptual plan which makes several improvements. It takes the big black top area and moves it over further and made it like the basketball court at Town Hall. It's a full court and hopefully it will be lighted. There's a volleyball court with sand. There are walking trails around the perimeter. There is an internal area with nine parking spaces. You can pull up and watch your children playing ball. There's a little league field and which will be improved drastically from what's there now. There will be a tot play area with a fence so that area will be protected from any balls coming from the ball field. It incorporates everything that this Parks and Recreation Board recommended. Sheri asked if the community center holds a program there? Jack said yes, it's held at Town Hall, Southeastern, and Steel City, primarily as there are pavilions at those parks. We stopped Heller Homestead because there was no recreation and because they were crossing the street to use Water Street Park. For now at Steel City, there are port-a-johns. There is no sewer in Steel City, only water. Bill asked about the fence at the ball field. It will be a good T-ball field and a good practice field. It's like 200 feet at the minimum. Sheri said now that we have acquired the other fields for our own, could we do something better here? Jack said this is a neighborhood park which will give the neighborhood kids some place to play a pickup game. Dave said there are multiple uses here. He said he likes the volleyball field. This is the only one in the Township. You are going to have very young kids here. The design is very functional.

Dave moved that we recommend the plan, seconded by Sheri. All in favor.

- **Heller Homestead** – No update.
- **Polk Valley Park** – Jack said there's a bulletin board that's been installed. The entrance sign will probably be here tomorrow and will be put up as soon as possible. It will be up before the LAX day event. We're finalizing the design plan for the connector trail and one of the decisions that had to be reached was the bridge going across Polk Valley Run. He showed the basic design. Its 30 feet long, and aluminum. There is no maintenance needed. It's similar to the one in Hellertown behind the Hellertown Authority which goes across Silver Creek. They are working on the final design plan now. There was an issue about where sidewalks would be on Polk Valley Road to the park. The elected officials decided to put a trail on the other side, and they had to take down part of a barn and they have to put a bridge up. We are finally getting all the pieces together. The permit from DEP took about two years to get. We should have the final plan before the elected officials in a

month or two. The construction will be sometime this year. There are stones being put up in the infiltration cutouts at the top of the park. People tend to drive through those there, so they took big stones from another place and put them up there so people don't drive through.

- **Kingston Park** – Jack said at paving and pervious concrete trails will be resumed shortly.
- **Easton Road Fields** – Jack said this is the two ball fields that previously belong to Christ Lutheran Church. They finalized settlement on April 5, 2010. The Township now owns both the fields. There is actually only one usable field. The back one is unusable. Because of access problems it wasn't used and nature was slowly taking it back. We're going to have to clear away some growth that is in there and do some maintenance on it. It will probably not be opened until 2011. The biggest problem with the back field is getting to it. People were using Chapel Lane which is the dirt lane that went up alongside of that. Neighbors complained. One neighbor came out with a shotgun. It was a bad situation when the Little League was using it. We have a plan we're looking into to put in an access road from Mockingbird Hill and a parking lot and then have paved pathways to get access from both fields. We had a port-a-john delivered to the site for the Little League to use. He will get in touch with the residents to inform them of the Township's ownership. They met with several of them and they are very pleased that the Township will be taking over the site and maintaining it. They will be called Easton Road Fields. Bill said we talked about naming the fields after someone if we wanted to. He asked about the entrance sign and parking lot. Jack said there will be a gravel parking lot for this summer where visitors can pull off and park. Bill said if the park sign is on Mockingbird Hill, no one is going to see it. He'd like to have a sign on Easton Road. Jack said that's the logical spot. There is a lane that they are going to make a gravel lane. The other thing that the homeowners mentioned is the upper field when it was being used, there were foul balls flying out so they are going to look into netting. Their yards are right up on that lane.
- **Saucon Rail Trail** – Jack said we had the meeting today at 5:00 PM. We are still an unofficial committee. There are a couple of issues with the rail trail. We did sign the lease with SEPTA. Hellertown and Lower Saucon have been trying to get this advisory committee up and running since last August. We appointed representatives and they have been meeting every month and are talking about various issues, bringing in people from the Ironton Rail Trail and they are doing a great job. Coopersburg and Upper Saucon have been lagging behind. Upper Saucon has an issue about the intergovernmental agreement which we don't feel is that big of a deal. They have their lawyers working on it and they are looking at it with a fine tooth comb. They have not appointed representatives. Coopersburg has Jennifer Wescoe-Schaninger, who is very, very good. She is also unofficial. That's been moving along slowly. The other issue is funding. We started out talking about getting a master plan together which most trails do. They are expensive and could cost about \$40,000 to \$50,000 and it could take two years of planning. They wanted to avoid that and move ahead. They started working on their own plan and contacted DCNR about grant funding. They ran into two problems. DCNR said they would not fund a rail trail if you had less than a 99-year lease. They have a 30-year lease. They said maybe they could work with SEPTA on that issue. The second issue is SEPTA has a right of reversion in our lease and that says they will lease the tract to us and we will use it as a rail trail, but if SEPTA decides they want to restore rail service between Bethlehem and Philadelphia, they can tell us to get off the trail, take it back and put their tracks down and the trains goes back and forth. DCNR will not give us grant money for that. That means we fall back on our own budgets. The Township has its own budget for this year put aside. We put aside \$50,000.00. Hellertown has put some funding aside for rail trail development. Upper Saucon has put \$250,000.00 in their budget. He doesn't know about Coopersburg. We are going back on our own resources. We said we would like to get portions of the trail opened in 2010. That's what we are working on and looking at what kind of railings we need for the bridges, safety features for the road crossings, and finally what surface material we want to put down. We are pulling that all together. Jack said he hopes to have something to the Council and back to the rail trail committee by the end of May, which will be their next meeting.

Hopefully they can move ahead with it. Hellertown will be working with us. He doesn't know what Upper Saucon is doing. We've been trying to deal with some issues with the property owners, mostly all from Lower Saucon who live next to the trail and they have issues about privacy, and we are dealing with that. He has no idea what kinds of issues Coopersburg and Upper Saucon are going to have about issues of privacy. Donna said we have to get the surface of the trail down, the signage, things for safety and the last thing on the list is going to be privacy. Jack said at the meeting, he told everyone that we're leasing a railroad track that's been there since 1870's or so where a train ran in the back yards of the residents. That's been there all along. We're just walking down the center of that trail. Dave said he doesn't think you could provide privacy to people as that would be a can of worms. Donna said what Frank was saying to them was that at other trails, the privacy issue fell back on the landowner. They planted trees or put up fences. Now it will be patrolled by regular police patrols. Bill asked how the speed bump for Meadows went over at the meeting? Donna said the manager from Upper Saucon said the speed humps were much better than bumps. Jack said there is a book on regulations on where you can put things like that. Dave said he would ask the engineers about the speed bumps or humps. Jack said what he said to the group tonight was if the recommendations that he receives, going back to the \$50,000 budget, if there's anything like the crossing signals which are expensive and will use up a lot of that budget, he would suggest we don't open the trail south of Meadows Road and block that off and just go north into Hellertown the first year. We'd have a two mile section open. Dave said your thought is get something now and that's a great idea. That gets interest generated.

Bill said when we get contributions from builders, can we allocate to the trail fund rather than to a specific park? Jack said if it was designated as a Township park, then that's something it would have to meet the criteria of the park. Bill was thinking since we can't get the DCNR grant, that would be a nice way to fund it. Jack said we have to have it included in the Township park plan. Dave said that Jack said there's \$50,000 in our budget for 2010. Maybe in 2011, there will be \$100,000 in the budget, maybe \$25,000. Jack will have all costs together and will let everyone know what it is. Bill said what is the difference between a speed hump and a speed bump? Donna explained the difference between the two of them. Dave said he'd think the hump is the way to go versus a blinking light there. Bill said the site is bad there, and if a hump was there, that would slow everyone down. Dave said we're not bound by any federal or state? Jack said no. If you put in humps, you have to put in certain warnings. Dave said who is regulating that, which is his question. Jack said it all comes down to federal highway safety and they put together all these advisory rules for guidance.

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

6. **Old Business:**

- **Joint Recreation Study Committee – Update** – Jack said the Recreation Study committee is having meetings the fourth Thursday of the month at the school district. At the last meeting, what they are working on is Joe Hoffman, who helps Hellertown with grants, is going to put together a grant application for DCNR to hire a peer consultant which is a park professional who gets paid by the State to come and work with our group. Dave said a peer consultant has done this sort of work already. Jack said he'd probably be someone like a Parks & Recreation Supervisor in another municipality. When they did the joint park & recreation plan with Upper Saucon Township, those consultants were park professionals. One of them was a Supervisor in a big town down south and they came in and helped out. They know how to run these programs.
- **Saucon Valley Lacrosse LAX Day – May 1, 2010** – Ron Bracalente said he has a sheet with all the details on it. He knows you are interested in the location of the setup and the vendors. He explained where the location is. He said it will be a flat area. Most of the parking is right there. He

explained where they were going to arrange the vendors and showed where their tents would be. They are having tents for food and beverage, a cake sale, a raffle, and one to promote their golf outing. There will be a tent for the officials and the EMS. They notified Dewey Fire Company they are having this event. Dewey might even put somebody up there, and if they do, they'll make sure they get something to drink and a hot dog. It's a place for the officials to go and get out of the sun. The scale of this is such that one-eighth is ten feet. He thinks they are going to have about seven vendors. He said they will be getting insurance forms from the vendors. The vendors will be Schuylkill Valley Sports, Rita's Ice, Gonzo, Universal, Sticks & Flicks, Velocity and Premiere.

Ron said he'd like to give some numbers as to see what direction you want to take. There's going to be eight games in total starting at 9:00 AM and running until 4:00 PM. At 11:30 AM, there will actually be two games going on at one time. That's going to be their peak crowd. There are about twenty players per team and with the coaches and officials, there are about 130 people with about two spectators per player. He took 130 plus 130 and added 50% of 130 which is 65 because of the game that is finishing up prior to them and the one that will be going on the field after them. It ends up with a maximum of 325 people. Out of that, with 200 parking spots, he thinks we are covered. The players are not of driving age, so it's only the spectators. Jack said as far as the parking, you are figuring you will have enough spaces in the marked spots? Ron said yes. Jack said if it does run over, are you going to have overflow parking? Ron said yes. Jack said they will have signs available that he gave to Joe Long. They are lawn signs you can put right in the ground. It says "Overflow Parking" with arrows on them. Dave said maybe you should have a couple of guys in colored vests if the parking lots get too crowded, and they could help out when people are leaving and when people are entering. Ron said they have not organized all of their troops yet. Trying to get someone to do that, they are most likely there to see their kids play. He was going to try to beef up the signs. They will have signs for garbage. Jack said make sure no one is parking on the grass as that leads to more people parking on the grass. If no one takes care of that, the Police will come up and have to ticket the offenders. Dave said he would designate someone as a parking person. In wrestling, they have refreshment stands outside the gym. The boys are wrestling all the time, so they just try to manage and make sure when their children are on, the parents can be out there so they don't miss them wrestling. It's going to be pretty important, not only for the success of this event, but how the future events are accepted by the Council. We don't want to have any issues from the police, and the way to prevent that is to have some sort of monitoring. Jack said he will give them some vests. Sheri said even if they only do it an hour that would help. When they are in the snack bar an hour, and then they switch. Ron said they are going to bring a couple of mountain bikes and they can jump on those and go around the parking lot and make sure everything is going smoothly. Dave said for whatever reason, the only issue that Council has had in the past is with the parking. A lot of the times, people don't realize there are open spaces there. Maybe a monitor could point out, there's one space over there kind of thing. He asked how many visiting teams are you going to have? Ron said there are eight visiting teams. Dave said all eight teams be first time visitors to that park? Ron said not necessarily. There were some there already like Southern Lehigh. Jack said he would suggest with the vendors, they are going to unload their things, once they unload, and if they are going to be there the entire day, maybe they can park further away so they don't take up spaces right up front. Ron asked if there would be any issues with a pull up trailer that could be parked on the grass? Jack said you have to let him know and he has to run it by Roger. If it's permitted and they realize there's going to be some damage, then you have to take some responsibility. Ron said the trailer would be bringing some of the stock. They were also kicking it around for the food and beverage as they are going to have about two or three more coolers with ice in them. Ron asked if the vendors could park on top where it's gravel. Jack said if they designate it as that. Ron said they'd like to put the trailers in a close spot if they have to go back and forth with supplies, etc. Jack said they really could take the trailers down to the overflow parking field. Ron said if they don't need to get to it throughout the day, he agrees. They will put the trailers up in the top parking lot. There will be no trailers on the grass.

Ron said there are four port-a-johns. He asked if four were enough? Jack said it should be okay, but you may want to have some extra supplies like toilet paper, etc. It wouldn't hurt if someone took a look at them once in awhile to make sure how much use they are getting. Later on in the meeting, he's going to go over a Special Events policy which will address things like trash, refuse, etc. Ron said they talked to the vendors and they are going to take everything they brought with them. The garbage they will have is going to be from the food and beverage area which will be paper plates and cups. Jack said keep an eye on the port-a-johns. After the event, Public Works will check them on Monday and if they need servicing, they'll get someone in right away. Ron said when are they cleaned out? Jack said he will check on that. It should be clean by Saturday. Dave said its 50 people between cleanings. Ten people a week, five days a week, and it has to be cleaned every week. In essence, they are going to have four and that will give them 200 for just the day. Your point is if we have practices or games during the week, and then something again on Sunday, it may be too much. If there's not much in the week, then it's probably okay. Ron said they have practice there every day of the week except Friday, but it's only one team there. Dave said it's probably not used much for that hour of practice. It's probably fine. We are going to learn a lot from this.

Ron said they are going to be responsible for dealing with the trash cans. Jack said the trash cans are pretty heavy. Ron said they will put the trash cans around so you don't have trash all over the place. They have a maintenance crew who is going to tear down and walk around after the event to make sure there is no garbage lying around. Jack said if you are interested, he can get you some temporary trash containers from the landfill which are the cardboard ones that you put a bag in. Those are good if you want to place them around where people are going to throw their trash into. Ron said he will prepare a list and email it to Jack.

Jack said are they going to be using portable generators? Ron said they will be as they are going to have hot dogs. Jack said he needs that type of information so he can run it by everyone. Ron said it's going to be one of those Honda generators. Jack said the Farmer's Market, they use them also. Let him know how many you are going to have. Ron said they will probably rent a hot dog machine and probably bring a gas grill. They are going to keep it simple and have hot dogs, donuts, candy, and morning coffee. Starbucks is going to donate coffee which will be in cardboard boxes.

Ron said regarding inclement weather, what do they do? They have to respect the fields. Jack said if rains on Friday, it's going to be iffy if it's a heavy rain. Not only will they shut it down for Friday, but they also have to determine what they are going to do on Saturday. Sometimes Roger has to make a decision for the entire weekend. Ron said if it starts to look iffy, they would have to announce this to all the people on Friday. Jack said he agrees. They have to decide by Friday. Ron said the problem with rescheduling this event is virtually every Saturday and Sunday within their regular season they have other games. If it is rained out, it will be done. They can't reproduce this. Jack said on Friday they should agree to something. Dave said if there is inclement weather happening on Friday or a chance of rain in the forecast, you guys have to talk. Ron said they should be able to make that call on Wednesday or Thursday and just be checking the weather forecast.

Ron said the vendors said this is a common practice and they bring credit card machines. He brings this up as they talked about the money part of this. They are giving them money for the tent space and giving them a donation. They are saying you guys aren't here to make money. You are here to support Lacrosse in the valley. You are here to support our program that is in front of us. If we rule out credit cards, people don't walk around with cash today. It's debit or credit cards. Dave said why would you rule it out? Ron said because we talked about it before. Jack said if you control that, and you are doing it by only admitting certain vendors and set the rules for the vendors, then he doesn't see that there is any issue with that. If a stream of people from the public start coming up and do sales for the general public, then we have a problem. Ron said they will be sending an email to the players and families of the Lacrosse members and to maybe some other sports groups. Jack said if you can control it, he doesn't have a problem with it. Dave said he doesn't think you are

going to have a tremendous amount of sales. It's more who we are, what we do. Jack said that sounds good, so just give him all the information.

Ron said parking signs, vest for the people who are going to be doing the monitoring, the trash receptacles, generator specs and weather. Bill asked if there were going to be any local newspapers there covering the day. He's sure they would love to be in on this. Ron said sure. Sheri said Brian Freed is doing photography for the Express Times, so you can put a call into him. Sheri said she was talking to Dave Backenstoe today and he's excited about it. He's excited about having it as an event, but they also said it's going to be an eye opener for all of us for any future events. We're kind of learning through you guys. Ron said we are leaning to do this once a year as a fundraiser. He sits on the LV League meetings, so you have Lower Macungie and Upper Macungie there. They'd like to host the Round Robin tournament at the end of the year. They are trying to go to Lehigh University this year. They could pull it off here as we have two fields. There are probably only four organizations that could do the tournament, so every fourth year you'd have it. That would be something neat and it's a good way to test this out.

- **Cyclocross Event** – Chris Garges was here about a Cyclocross event at Town Hall. Dave said it's like a mountain bike kind of race. Jack said that will be something that if we have the Special Events Policy, we'd have all the pieces.

7. New Business:

- **Draft Special Events Policy** – Jack said this is fourteen pages long. It's the type of policy that townships and boroughs have in place for special events like we were talking about tonight with Ron. He asked the Parks & Recreation Board to look over this and come back. He will email it to them. Go through it and they can make some recommendations. They can come up with a policy and there would be a permit form you fill out. If everything was in place, there would be no problems for a tournament for soccer, for lacrosse as everything would be covered under this. Bill said if we could make this that there it could be interchangeable with the school and borough. For example, if you have an event that's part at Polk Valley and part at the school district, just so we're all on the same page. Dave said someone approached him about a cancer fundraiser, soccer tournament. Scott said he didn't hear anything yet about it. Jack said this would also cover such things as 5K races. At the back of this, we have some draft rules for our historic sites. People want to use them to get married, or have civil war enactments. We are trying to touch all the bases and come up with something. The policy covers temporary lighting, alcohol, trash, clean-up, and so forth. They are trying to cover everything.
- **Recommendation for Hills of Polk Valley Recreation Fee** - Jack said he has a recreation fee that came in from The Hills of Polk Valley subdivision. It's a small development up on Polk Valley Road that paid a recreation fee of \$9,339.00. He needs a recommendation from this body and he would recommend you deposit it in the Polk Valley Park fund as it's adjacent to that park.

Motion by Dave, seconded by Scott to recommend the \$9,339.00 to into the Polk Valley Park fund. All in favor.

- **Review Site Plan (Wassergass Road Land Development; Meadows Grove Land Development; Metro PCS Site Plan)** – Jack said Metro PCS is the tower on Sherry Road. Wassergass is the school which is back again for offices. Abe Atiyeh sold it to a person named Ramzi Haddad. Sheri said this came up at a meeting she was at last week and he wants to fix up the fields behind the school for a soccer speed camp. He is saying he's turning it into a full size field. Jack said there are septic issues there. It's for temporary offices.

8. Adjournment: Motion by Dave, second by Scott to adjourn. All in favor. The time was 8:35 PM.