
Lower Saucon Township
Parks & Recreation Board

Business Meeting

May 5, 2008

1. **Meeting Called To Order:** 7:00 pm

2. **Roll Call:**

Present: Dave Spirk, Chair; Tom Butera, Vice Chair; William Ross, Members; Jack Cahalan, Council Liaison; Mary Beth Paskewicz, Margie Segaline, Guests

Absent: Scott Schanzenbach

3. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from the April 7th meeting were approved.

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

- **Geocaching** - Jack said that Mr. McPeck has been listed on the agenda to discuss the subject of geocaching but apparently is not coming.

5. **Projects:**

- **Town Hall Park** - Jack said that MJ Roche the Boy Scout is going to move ahead with his project on the Nature Trail. He is also going to repair the bridge on the trail by moving the posts over and will also be refurbishing the sign at the entrance.
- **Southeastern Park** - nothing new
- **Steel City** - nothing new
- **Heller Homestead** - we covered the nature trail
- **Polk Valley Park** - Jack said that they had received requests from the Saucon Valley Panthers Youth Football and from the Saucon Valley Lacrosse Club to use the Polk Valley Park fields for summer instructional and conditioning programs. Jack said that they are non-profit groups representing Saucon Valley youth sports so they meet the criteria for use of the fields. As long as we can fit them in schedule-wise, he sees no problem with Park & Recreation approving these requests. The Board members agreed. Tom commented that he noticed that people were driving forward over the stones in the upper parking lot. There was a discussion about whether we need parking bumpers. Bill asked what was the procedure for closing the fields for play in the event of inclement weather? Jack said that they put in place a system similar to the school district. Roger inspects the fields and has an email group of all the sports groups' contacts and send out a broadcast telling everyone that the fields are closed to play. Bill said that Lou Moyer is willing to go and take a look at the fields. Jack said that Lou can call Roger anytime and let him know about field conditions. Jack said that if the fields are closed down it will be for all the fields, we won't close Field #1 and let Field #2 or #3 stay open. Jack said that he did notice that the goal mouths on the lacrosse fields are getting worn down to bare earth and that is something we are going to have to work on. Dave said that it will probably have to be re-sodded.
- **Kingston Park** - no update
- **Grants** - Jack said they submitted the DCNR grant application for the Draveczech parcels. Tom said he did not get a chance to visit the parcels. The Board members expressed concern about the public access to the property past Joe's buildings, etc.

- **Volunteer Scout Projects** - Mary Beth Paskewicz from the Girl Scouts and Margie Segaline, the Girl Scout Troop Leader, were present at the meeting to discuss Mary Beth's proposed Gold Award project for interpretative trail signs to be placed along the Nature Trail Loop at the Heller Homestead Park. Jack said that Mary Beth worked with Bill Sweeney from the DCNR at the Jacobsburg Environmental Education Center to identify the flora and fauna native to the park area. Jack said that she has done a fabulous job from what he has seen. Jack described the signs that will be placed along the trail and showed examples of what we would like to do that are along the Bushkill Creek. We hope to have our Public Works Department produce the signs at very low cost. We will produce a prototype of the sign and then get together and see if we have to make any adjustments. Jack said that Mary Beth has also produced a map showing the Heller Homestead Park and the Nature Trail. Jack said that they will be putting up bulletin boards at all of the township parks and the map she produced will be displayed there. In addition, she also came up with an informative brochure with information on the nature trail and those brochures will be produced and would be available for people to pick up when they come into the park. They will also be located in Hellertown and the Township to indicate this attraction to visitors. The Board felt that the project was a great job. Dave said that the posts for the signs should be made of cedar. Jack said that Mary Beth will be presenting this project to the EAC and now Park & Recreation to obtain your support and then he will take it to Council for final approval. Mary Beth said that her scout troop would also be putting up directional signs along the trail with wood burned arrows and they would also start doing some removal of invasive species along the trail that Bill Sweeney identified. Jack said that people have a problem finding the entrance. Tom made a motion supporting the project seconded by Bill which was unanimously adopted. Jack said he will take the project to the EAC tomorrow night and then on to Council on May 21st for final approval. Bill said that this was one of the best prepared; best researched, best presented scout projects he has seen since he has been on the Park & Recreation Board. Margie said that Mary Beth would need a cost breakdown of the materials for her report.

6. **Old Business:**

- **Polk Valley Park Phase I Improvements** - covered under projects report
- **PVP - SVSD Connector Trail** - Jack said we working with Mr. Herman and his attorney Dennis Benner to resolve this. Mr. Benner has ideas about developing the property so we are listening to his ideas for his own trail. We got an appraisal on the addition to the barn and it will not cost too much to take it down.
- **Skateboarding** - Jack said that Jane Finger is coming to the Council meeting on Wednesday. He did do the Park & Recreation recommendation to the Council. Jack handed out information on the skateboard parks at Nazareth and Quakertown Borough. In Quakertown, the article said they spent over \$100,000 on a park and now they are thinking of shutting it down because the kids are not wearing helmets and were riding bikes on the equipment. Dave said that any skateboard facility has to be in sight of a main road so that it can be monitored. Bill said the park he knows in NJ is right in front of the park and visible from the street. He also thinks that it probably should be lit. Jack said that based on these requirements, the perfect place for the park is Water Street Park in Hellertown. Dave said the skateboarders are all over the Eckard store when he goes home at night. The Board members said that we should work on this as a cooperative project with Hellertown as this facility should not be located in a rural park. Bill said the area along Polk Valley Road on the 10-acre parcel would be a good spot.
- **Dog Park Rules/Canines in Parks** - Jack said that the rules for the Dog Park will be adopted at the Council meeting on Wednesday night. We also changed the ordinance for all of the parks that will allow dogs in the parks on a leash. They will only be allowed off-leash in the Dog Park and owners must clean up after them. We will be providing mutt mitts.

- **Dimmick Park Master Site Plan Committee Update** - Dave asked if he is now a member of this committee? Jack said he was but Bill is still attending the meetings.

7. **New Business:**

- **2008 Contract with SVCC for Summer Youth Program in Parks** - Jack said that we are going to renew the contract again with the Saucon Valley Community Center which includes a program at the Heller Homestead Park this year.
- **Use of Park Facilities by “For Profit” Organizations** - Jack said that they have received requests from two (2) “for profit” organizations who would like to use Polk Valley Park this summer to run fitness camps. One is a “boot camp” type fitness camp. Another group wanted to use it for strength and conditioning camp. These are groups that will be charging participants to join these camps. Jack said that he discussed this with Council and the Council does not want the park facilities utilized by groups like these. They want the fields reserved for local youth recreation providers and local organizations. Jack handed out a draft Facility Use Policy which would establish categories for priority use of the fields (Category 1 - the Township e.g. Park & Recreation and EAC; Category 2 - Local Recreation Providers; Category 3 - Local Civic, Business and /or Educational Groups e.g. Lions Club, Jaycees, Chamber of Commerce, SVSD, Lehigh, etc.; Category 4 - Other Contracted Organizations, e.g. other non-profit or not-for-profit organizations). Jack said that it contains a fee schedule that includes the fees now being charged for the athletic fields and pavilions. We have added potential fees for the use of open space areas and also for concession sales. The Park & Recreation Board felt that the \$750 fee suggested for concession fees is excessive considering that there is no building up at the park that is using electricity, water, etc., and does not require maintenance from Public Works. Once there is a building up there, then we should re-review this type of fee. Dave said that there should something in the agreement stating that the group has to take away its trash. Jack said that it says they have to place trash in the dumpsters and if there is a lot of trash where we have to have a special pick-up, they have to pay for that or they can arrange to have their own dumpster.
- **Review Site Plans** (2200 Wassergass Road Site Plan; Estates of Stonehurst Major Subdivision; Tarantino Minor Subdivision). There were no comments.
- **SEPTA Rail-to-Trails** - Jack said that we may have a break through with SEPTA over the rail line that runs through Upper/Lower Saucon and Hellertown. We are having meetings with them and are optimistic as we are moving forward toward a lease agreement on the rail bed. If we get it we will go in on a grant with all three communities.
- **Other** - Jack said that Sheri Herman has indicated that she is interested in joining the P & R Board again.

8. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

9. **Next Meeting:** The next Park & Recreation Board meeting will be on June 2, 2008 at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

Submitted by Jack Cahalan