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Lower Saucon Township  
Parks & Recreation Board

Meeting Minutes

June 3, 2013

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1. **Meeting Called To Order** – The meeting was called to order by Dave Spirk at 6:05 PM at Southeastern Park.
2. **Roll Call**  
**Present** – Dave Spirk, Bill Ross, Bernadette Fong, Gary Gorman, Priscilla Oren, Alan Hall, members; Jack Cahalan, Staff Liaison.  
**Absent:** Tom Butera
3. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from the May 6, 2013 meeting were approved after a motion by Alan and seconded by Dave.
4. **Citizen Non-Agenda Items:** None
5. **Projects:**
  - **Town Hall Park** – No update.
  - **Southeastern Park** – Jack said we will do a walk around and look at the meadow at the end of the meeting.
  - **Steel City Park** – No update
  - **Heller Homestead** – No update
  - **Polk Valley Park** – Dave said that he wanted to talk about the infields on the two ballfields at Polk Valley Park. Jack said that last year, based on the recommendation of the agronomist we had both infields slit seeded in October. Jack said that he looked at them recently and there was very little growth. He stated that it maybe the poor soil that was used to construct the infields. Dave said that he has been discussing this informally with the HLSLL and they would like us to consider whether we wanted to do the same thing that the Iron Pigs did to the fields in Dimmick Park. Dave said that they won a contest and the Iron Pigs organization brought their own infield dirt and they had volunteers spread in over the infields. They rolled it and watered it and not the infields look beautiful. Jack asked if they are “skin” infields? Dave said they are. Jack said that we were considering doing that to our two infields but we were concerned that it could increase the speed of batted balls and become a safety issue for the kids. We asked the LL and they agreed with us so we opted not to do this. Dave said that this dirt actually slows the ball down and the LL likes it. They would like the Township to informally consider doing this next fall to these fields – if the Township bought the same dirt they would have the volunteers to spread it. Jack asked if it requires and excavation? Dave said no, you just spread it and water it. Does the Township have water up there? Jack said they now have a 500 gallon water trailer they can use. Jack asked Dave to get him the information about this type of dirt and then they will estimate how much is needed and see how much it costs. From a maintenance standard it will be much easier to maintain a skin infield.

Bill Ross said that he wanted to make his annual request that the Township put in some sort of steps up the steep embankments at Fields #3, #4, and #5. He said that the coaches and officials have a lot of difficulty getting up the slopes after practices and games and there may be an accident and someone could get hurt. Dave said that he didn't think that steps would work because they need a certain amount of space, need a landing every few feet, and would have to be cleared of leaves, snow. He said maybe a ramp or zigzag pathway up the slope would work. Jack said that he would speak to the planner and engineer about it. Bill said that parking is also an issue because the gravel lot fills up quickly and the coaches have to lug equipment, etc. from the upper, lower lots up to the fields.

Bernadette said that the pathway down to the fields through the quarry is uneven in several spots and could be a tripping hazard to elderly visitors. Dave said the pervious pathway in some areas is showing signs of cracking & crumbling and need to be repaired.

- **Kingston Park** – Jack said that they have the composting toilet installed and are doing the final grading for it. The electric is installed and will be run to the lamppost and bollards, and also to the pavilion for outlets. We are also preparing the pavilion site for the installation of the concrete pad and then we will order the pavilion structure which will be installed by Public Works. The park sign should also be put in shortly. Jack said he hopes all of this can be done by the end of July so we can officially open this park in the fall.
- **Easton Road Fields** – Jack said they got a request from an adult baseball team to play on the field and they had already cleared it with Mark Smith from the HLSLL, so Carol has them signed up and has all the paperwork we need. Dave said that he was aware of this as it had come up at a recent meeting. He said there was a question whether the LL had to sub-lease to these other organizations if they use the field? Jack said there was no need for that. As long as the LL gives their okay for the use, the Township will approve the organization using the field. If the LL says “no”, we will not approve them. Dave asked about the timeline for the enlargement of the lower field? Jack said that right now he does not have one for that project; he is waiting for the plan to install the parking lot off of Easton Road. He understands from the engineer that to enlarge the field would require the removal of hundreds of truckload of dirt to move the slope back so it would be a pretty big project.
- **Saucon Rail Trail** – Jack said that the Reading Drive Trailhead is completed. We still have to add picnic tables and trash receptacles to the picnic area and put up the park sign. Gary said he was asked by some residents if the trail will ever be paved? Jack said that based on the lease and clause in it that allows SEPTA to take back the trail at any time during the 30-year period, none of the four municipalities wanted to put down any permanent surface because we would have to pay to remove it if SEPTA took it back. Also, due to the fact that we did not have a 99+ year lease we could not get any DCNR funding for the trail so we had to work from limited municipal budgets to get the trail open. The surface is a standard surface that is on most rural trails. Priscilla and Rett said that it is kinder on the knees for walkers and runners.
- **Draveczech Parcels** – Jack handed out copies of the information sheet they are currently working on for these properties. He showed the map of preserved properties which identifies the location of the properties. To supplement this there will be an individual sheet like the one on the Draveczech parcels for each of them that we are trying to figure out how we can link to either from the map or on our website. The sheets will contain information about the parcel, how it was obtained; what the permitted uses are on the property, and it will have a map showing the access to the property and any trails, etc. that can be used. Jack said that they are working with the engineer to figure out where a parking area can be sited on the Draveczech property. Once they have that they will be able to open it up and put signage for the public to come down the access road and park and go onto the trails.
- **Grants** – Jack said he will discuss the Act 13 grant application below.
- **Volunteer/Scout Projects** – No update

6. **Old Business:**

- **Friends of Park** – no update

7. **New Business:**

- **Polk Valley Road/Reservoir Road Properties** - Jack handed out an aerial map showing these properties which we understand are for sale. We will be submitting an application for up to \$250,000 in funding under the Act 13 program which is funds that come from a tax on the Marcellus Share drilling in the state. The remaining funds for their acquisition will come from Open Space funding. We need to do appraisals on the properties for the grant application which must be submitted by July 31<sup>st</sup>. Jack said that the properties comprise about 16 acres and would

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connect with Polk Valley Park and are adjacent to the school district campus. Once we have the appraisals, if the Township wants to pursue acquiring them we will start negotiating with the owners.

- **Reading Drive Trailhead Dedication** – Jack said we will be holding a ribbon cutting ceremony at the trailhead site this Saturday at 9:00 a.m. and he invited the Parks & Recreation Board members to attend if they could.
- **Volunteer Picnic** – Jack said that our annual Volunteer Picnic is this coming Monday night at 6 p.m. at the Town Hall Park pavilion. All of the P & R members are invited to attend.
- **Hellertown Library 5K Race Special Event Request** – Jack handed out copies of the Special Event Request submitted by the Hellertown Library for their “Get Bookin” 5K race that they will be holding on September 28, 2013. The race will be held on Borough and Township roads. No road closures or police presence is required. The runners will run on the side of the road around the race route. Dave made a motion to approve the request and Alan seconded it. All in favor.
- **Inspection of Meadow** – The group walked over to the meadow to look at it. Jack had the Larry Weaner Conceptual Natural Areas Plan which was reviewed. Jack said that several years ago there was some concern expressed that none of the plants that we had paid for were growing and he had the Township Planner review the plans and inspect the meadow and they advised that everything that we had okayed to be planted was evident and was growing. It is not a wildflower meadow so it doesn't show a lot of color. It will be showing more color shortly like the meadow plantings at Polk Valley Park which are using a similar seed mix. The group did observe some invasives like multi-flora rose growing in the meadow. Jack said that the meadow is mowed once every year. He would need to have volunteers like the Saucon Creek Watershed come up and identify the invasives before they could be removed. Jack said that he will contact the boy & girl scout troops to see if they have any scouts who would like to take on the project of installing the trails, blinds, look-outs that are indicated on the plan. Jack said that the Township would install the gazebo once the trails were in place.

9. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.

10. **Next Meeting:** Monday, July 1, 2013, 6:00 p.m. at Heller Homestead Park.