
Lower Saucon Township
Parks & Recreation Board

Business Meeting

November 5, 2007

1. **Meeting Called To Order:** 7:10 pm

2. **Roll Call:**

Present: Bill Ross, Chair; Tom Butera, Scott Schanzenbach, Bernadette Fong, Steve Zaharakis, members; Jack Cahalan, Council Liaison.

Absent: Dave Spirk

3. **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the Parks & Recreation Board meeting of October 1, 2007 were reviewed. On a motion by Tom and a second by Scott the minutes were approved

4. **Citizen Non-Agenda Items:** None

5. **Projects:**

- **Town Hall Park** - no update
- **Southeastern Park** - Jack stated that there is nothing to update on Southeastern Park. They have included funding in the proposed 2008 Budget to work on the trails in the Southeastern Park Meadow.
- **Steel City** - Jack stated that based on the cost considerations for Polk Valley and Kingston Parks which are our priorities for 2008, it has been decided to hold off on the planning for the upgrades to Steel City Park until next year, therefore, we will put off the visioning meeting that we were planning on holding to discuss improvements to the park with sports and community representatives until 2008.
- **Heller Homestead** - Jack advised that in 2008 we will be expanding the Summer Youth Recreation Program to the Heller Homestead Park. The Saucon Valley Community Center will be coordinating a program with the Saucon Valley Conservancy.
- **Polk Valley Park** - Jack handed out a draft of a statement for the dedication of one of the soccer fields at Polk Valley Park to Manny Tavormina and said that this was something that the Council had voted to have done when the park opened. It was felt that rather than naming one of the fields after Manny, we would erect a plaque at one of the soccer fields stating that “this field is dedicated in memory of Manny Tavormina”. Scott indicated that the organizational name should be Saucon Valley Soccer League not Saucon Valley Youth Soccer League. Bill suggested adding the phrase “friend of the game and all who enjoy it”. Jack stated that in the next month or two we will be finalizing the landscape plan and build-out for the park and it will include directional signage for the various fields and there will be a bulletin board at the entrance. Jack stated that we also need to decide what should be the starting date for play out at Polk Valley Park when it opens in 2008? Scott said that they always say April 1st for their leagues. Bill said that they would like to target April 1st. Jack said that he would also have to come up with a “ribbon-cutting day” for the park. Bill said that it would be a nice idea if this could be coordinated with a soccer or lacrosse game. Jack said that he has to set up a meeting with the sports groups to discuss how the fields will be scheduled. Jack said they are looking into purchasing software that could be used for the scheduling. Jack handed out a draft copy of a policy, “Use & Maintenance Policies for Township Athletic Fields”, which incorporates a lot of the issues that the Park & Recreation Board has been discussing such as mowing, fertilization, aeration, weed control, field use restrictions, and the use of an agronomist. Jack said that he would like to have this finished sometime in January so it can be reviewed by the EAC and then passed on to Council for their

consideration. Bill said that under the field use restrictions, on week-ends, the call to cancel the use of the fields due to weather will have to be done early. Scott questioned the restriction on unofficial play. It is a public park and sometimes parents or just kids want to use the park to play. Jack agreed that this was too restrictive and said it would be changed. Jack said that he also has to discuss with the sports groups what type of maintenance they could provide for the playing fields beyond the grass mowing that the Township would do. Jack said that one of the sports groups had asked if they could keep a maintenance shed at the park. Scott said that the soccer league has several sheds at the Reinhard School for their equipment that could be moved up to Polk Valley Park. Jack said that the consultants just provided cost estimates for the build out for the park to Council and it adds up to a \$1.2 million dollars. Jack said that his priority is to get the park open and have people playing on the fields, and have the connector trail between the school district and the park in place in 2008 so the playground, pavilion and some of the landscaping will have to be phased-in in 2009 or later. Jack stated that we have submitted grant applications to the state DCNR and to Northampton County for funding for the park. The Council may also ask the school district to kick in additional funds for the connector trail and pedestrian bridge. Jack said that the Council may want to ask the sports groups to pay a rental fee for the use of the fields. Scott said that the arrangement in Hellertown is that they maintain the fields in lieu of paying any fees.

- **Kingston Park** - Jack stated that he also just got the cost estimate for the improvements to Kingston Park which is also pretty high. The priority items for Kingston Park are the parking areas, trails and landscaping so the pavilion at Kingston will also be delayed until 2009.
- **Grants** - covered under Polk Valley Park
- **Volunteer Scout Projects** - Jack stated that they have three (3) scouts from Troop 319 under Scoutmaster Roy Young who are interested in doing projects at Polk Valley Park. We have discussed the construction and placement of bird and bat houses. A Girl Scout is working on a project at the Heller Homestead to erect interpretive signs along the Nature Loop at the park. Jack said that there will be bulletin boards erected at each of the parks that can be used to display schedules, maps, bulletins, etc. about the Park & Recreation facilities.

6. **Old Business:**

- **Polk Valley Park Update** - covered under projects report
- **Steel City Park Visioning Meeting** - will be put off until 2008
- **Update on Dimmick Park Master Site Plan Study Committee** - Jack said that Bill is a member of this committee which has its next meeting scheduled for November 7th. Related to the Dimmick Park Study is the Hellertown Community Pool. Jack stated that one of the discussion points that they raised with Council at the budget hearings this year was to consider making the pool a joint regional recreational facility which would mean that the Borough & Township would share the operation and maintenance responsibilities for the pool. Jack said that there were newspaper articles this summer about community pools in nearby municipalities that were "orphan pools" (i.e. several communities used them but no one wanted to step up and assume the responsibility for their long-term maintenance and financing). If both municipalities are interested in looking further into this arrangement, we would like to secure a state grant to study the feasibility of consolidating the operation of the facility. In the 2008 Budget we recommended that the pool fees that were paid on a resident/non-resident basis be equalized so that Hellertown and Lower Saucon Township residents would pay the same fee. This will save the administrative work that the Township was doing to reimburse residents the difference between the resident/non-resident fees.
- **Draft Parks Maintenance Plan** - covered under Polk Valley Park
- **Scheduling Use of Township's Fields** - covered under Polk Valley Park

7. **New Business:**

- **Discussion of Joint Operation of Hellertown Pool** - covered under Dimmick Park Master Site Plan Study Committee discussion

- **2008 Budget Issues** - Jack stated that they recommended that the Council consider imposing a nominal fee of \$20 per session on the families who are registering their children into the Summer Recreation Programs that the Township is offering to residents. This would not impact the senior programs. Jack said that the programs are enlarging to four (4) parks in 2008 and enrollment is increasing which is driving up the cost of these programs which the Township has been paying 100%. In Hellertown Borough, residents pay the entire fee for the same program directly to the Saucon Valley Community Center. On a motion by Bill, seconded by Bernadette, the Board unanimously supported this concept but requested that a scholarship program be put in place for families that could not afford the fee. The Saucon Valley Community Center did submit information on the Pre-Teen After School Program which has been provided to the Council for their consideration in the budget discussions. Jack said that he spoke to Walt Morrissey, who is the President of the SVCC Board, who advised him that the Community Center is negotiating with Hellertown Borough over the use of the Reinhard School and when that is completed they hope to consolidate and expand a lot of their programs at that site. Bill said that the After School Program should focus on the week-end when the teens are home from school. Jack stated that right now the proposal is for week nights.
- **Hulett Minor Subdivision Recreation Fee** - On a motion by Bill, seconded by Tom, the Board unanimously voted to recommend to the Council that the \$3,113 fee received from this developer be deposited in the Southeastern Park fund.
- **Manny Tavormina Field Dedication** - covered under Polk Valley Park
- **Review Site Plans** (Hills of Polk Valley Minor; Estates at Stonehurst; Mortagua Site Plan; Repyneck Minor). No comments from the Board.

8. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

9. **Next Meeting:** The next Park & Recreation Board meeting will be on December 3, 2007 at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

Submitted by Jack Cahalan