

SAUCON VALLEY PARTNERSHIP MEETING

Date: Wednesday, March 10, 2010
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: Saucon Valley School District

- A. **Call to Order:** The Saucon Valley Partnership meeting was called to order by John Bate on March 10, 2010 at 7:02 PM at the Saucon Valley School District.
- B. **Roll Call: Present:** John Bate, Glenn Kern, Priscilla deLeon, Mayor Fluck, Ed Inghrim, Jack Cahalan, Charlie Luthar. Guests: Tom Harp, Ross Marcus from the County and Dave Bausch from the Lehigh Valley Board of Health, Stephanie Brown.
- C. **Council of Governments**
1. **Minutes of the January 2010 meeting** – Jack said the February meeting was cancelled due to the snow. Ed moved for approval of the January 2010 minutes, second by Priscilla. All in favor.
 2. **Treasurer’s Report** – Jack said he has copies of the January report. The Checking Account balance as of January 31, 2010 was \$3,872.42. On the Treasurer’s Account, the balance as of January 31, 2010 was \$11,720.26. That showed a receipt of the annual dues payments from Lower Saucon Township and Hellertown Borough, which is \$1,000 a year. He has to ask Dave Bonenberger for the school district’s portion. Jack said there was one bill paid to the Valley Voice for \$204 for the annual advertisement of the meeting schedule.

Jack said for the Checking Account, the balance as of February 28, 2010 was the same as the end of January, \$3,827.42. There were no receipts or expenses paid from that account during the month of February. The Treasurer’s Account balance as of February 28, 2010 was \$11,720.26. Motion by Priscilla and a second by Glenn for approval of the January and February Treasurer’s reports. All in favor.
 3. **Approval to pay bills (if any)** – Jack advised that we have been paying the PA Association of Councils of Governments (PACOG) an annual \$200 membership fee. Motion by Glenn and a second by Priscilla to pay the PA COG dues. All in favor.
- D. **Lehigh Valley Board of Health – Bob Black** – Tom Harp introduced Dave Bausch from the Lehigh Valley Board of Health. Dave said he wasn’t supposed to be the speaker tonight, but he will do his best. He said Bob Black can tell you more about the initial start-up efforts which were funded by the Twin Rivers Foundation and the Dorothy Rider Poole Foundation to establish a Lehigh Valley Board of Health. They’ve been trying to come up with a reasonable program for the general population. He feels we’ve become so urbanized within the two counties that it really has created some real problems for health care. The Cities of Allentown and Bethlehem have their own health boards and they work very well. They are trying to establish a bi-county health program. . They will be the first multi-county department in the State and will be absorbing the Allentown and Bethlehem Health Departments. It has to have the approval of both County Councils in Lehigh and Northampton County. They were moving along pretty well and are finally getting close to a program they are going to submit. They have to coordinate the two health boards that already exist in Bethlehem and Allentown when it’s approved as they are established and approved by the State. The whole program has to be approved by the State. The intent tonight was to just let you know they are working on this program and that they will be coming back to you with a full plan in the future. The funding is always the question for most of us politicians – what will this cost? Act 315, authorizes \$6.00 per capita and that money would be used to maintain the program. The additional cost would probably come from the counties who are going to be a hard sell in these days as we are all short of dollars. In the long run, he thinks it will be awhile before this gets off the ground. They had a meeting the other

evening and the Northampton County Executive was there and he is very supportive of the program. Dave said he feels the timing is very critical. His background has been in health care and he's been through the trials and turmoil of taxes. We also know there are needs right now. The State is not supporting the local health boards which we think is necessary. They have cut back on a lot of staff and we are really concerned that that puts a lot of our people in jeopardy. Ross Marcus, Director of Human Services for Northampton County, can probably give you more of the basics as he was around when it was first started and he is very supportive. He's sorry Bob Black isn't here. He wants you to know they are working on this and they will come back with a real plan. There are some problems out there in our communities, and you may see it with some of your students. We see it in Lehigh Valley with the youngsters with their home care. Glenn said what role would the Board of Health have for Lower Saucon and Hellertown? Dave said we'd be buying into the program. Some of the things we are talking about are cancer prevention, diabetes prevention, obesity prevention, child and adolescent home visitations, childhood lead poisoning prevention, dental health, teen pregnancy preventions, child death review (suicides), TB control, rabies, nutrition promotion, osteoporosis, physical activity programs, it's a whole gamut of health care concerns that we have for the residents.

Ed said what about drugs? They have a big problem at school with drugs. Dave said that would be addressed too. Ed said in what way would you address it? Ross Marcus said as a part of public health, they would deal with education and prevention from the county treatment side. Their funding has been significantly cut on the prevention side, so what the public health department might be able to do, due to the size and the diversity of the Lehigh Valley population, is to attract grants that none of us could attract on an individual or city level. In the area of drugs and alcohol prevention, we could be much more competitive for regional or national grants than any of the individual departments, so that's where the bi-county public health agency would come in. Ed said they have a lot of people come up here from the Penn Foundation from Quakertown and they have put on seminars for the students and talked to them about drug abuse and what that could lead to. In some cases, it's been very effective. Could we expect that kind of thing from this program? Ross said yes, they could work on an intensive program and they can focus in on a specific area. In this area the needs may be very different those in another part of the Lehigh Valley, so there are certain things where you can treat the region the same and other areas where there are more specific problems you can focus in on. Ed said what concerns him is that it's being pushed down into lower and lower grades and that's a real problem. They have middle school kids that the police now know. The more we can do to expose them to the long term effects, the better. Ed said you can show these kids what the ultimate impact could be from drug abuse and bring in a few people sitting in jail because of doing drugs from Allentown and Easton. Ross said when Mr. Stoffa took office a little over four years ago, one of their first meetings they went to was with all the school superintendents. The director of one of the Intermediate Units called the meeting and she was shocked when she came to the Lehigh Valley and found out there wasn't a regional health department. She was asking what happens if there is a health emergency. Health emergencies do not know boundaries so they don't know the difference between your school district and the Bethlehem Area School District. A regional health department would be able to help with the coordination issues among school districts. A specific example would be H1N1. John Reinhard, the Superintendent of the Bangor Area School District, told a funny story about the preparation for H1N1. As you know, the target population for H1N1 was very different from the traditional flu attacks which usually affect the elderly and those in frail health and the H1N1 virus focused more on children. Letters went out to all the school superintendents asking them if they wanted the vaccine and how many doses they wanted. He did the best he could, filled it out and sent it back and he got a fraction of what he had asked for and that was more than enough because he really didn't know what to order. What happened in the case of H1N1, it fell on Bob Mateff, the County Director of Emergency Management, to do a lot of the coordination among the school districts. Because Pennsylvania doesn't have public health departments on the local level, it fell to Emergency Management agencies across the State. That's one very, very specific example. If you remember the virus that was around a few years ago, MRSA, that was another one that scared schools, especially where kids were congregating and had close contact with one another. As soon as we get past the scare of one virus, there's a new virus to take its place. There certainly will not be a lack of things for a public health department to do. There will be some sort of a central administration. One of the things the Board of Health has been careful to promise is that it will also be localized so it isn't like the whole Lehigh Valley will be served from one central office. It will have a local feel to it.

Priscilla said when she attended the December County COG meeting, the health group that was there, where were they from? Tom said they were there from the Lehigh Valley Board of Health. Bob Black who is a member of the board of health was also there. That was an initial outreach effort as they are getting out to all of the municipalities. Dave said they want to keep you informed and not make you feel that this is sprung on you at the last minute, so with your permission, they are going to keep coming back and will keep you informed so you feel you have a voice in it. If you have any concerns or questions, send them to Tom Harp and Tom will forward them on and they will get you answers. They want you to be comfortable with the concept and comfortable that it will benefit all of the municipalities that you represent.

Jack said what about inspection of the food establishments, how would that work? Ross said he used to be an administrator in the City of Allentown and he oversaw the city's health department. In Allentown, every eating establishment is inspected at least once a year. In Bethlehem, he thinks they try to do it at least twice a year. If there are restaurants with problem track records, they get inspected even more often. In PA, if you aren't in an area covered by a city health department, your restaurants are inspected by the PA Department of Agriculture. Their goal is to try to inspect every restaurant once every two years. Recently with all the state budget cuts, his understanding is that the restaurant inspections have been impacted very hard. That's another area where you will see a very big difference. We all take for granted that the restaurants we eat in are clean and safe and are following good public health practices, but we don't know that for sure. Charlie said Hellertown does have a Health Board and we did do inspections of food establishments through the Codes Enforcement Office and it was rather poorly done without the thermometers, etc., so they relinquished it to the State. The Department of Agriculture has gone through some changes because the Supervisor that dealt with us is no longer with this district. That individual, who has since been displaced, did a food safety training seminar at Dewey Fire Company for the non-profits. It was a fantastic training course.

Jack said will this board also do septic inspections? Ross said yes. They are going to sub-hire those companies and individuals that are already in the area doing that work. They would come on board as a contractor to continue the work that they have been doing in the past if they are satisfactory. They feel the local people know the local issues better than someone new coming in. Priscilla said Hanover Engineering is our SEO, so then instead of answering to Hanover, they would answer to you? Ross said no, you would still have your relationship with Hanover, but as the public health department, they would have to sign off on their work. The relationship would still be as much as possible with you. Priscilla said we don't have issues with our SEOs. Ross said that's why they don't want to mess with them. Ed said do you maintain a database for these sewer inspections? Ross said yes. They did many, many meetings and municipalities did not want to give up their SEOs. They heard everyone loud and clear, so they will try to maintain it as close as possible to the status quo. Priscilla said she's out of the medical profession, and she was shocked that being in the health field for 20 years, and she had an illness, and people weren't there for her. When meeting other people, they started a support group and have been meeting at St. Luke's Hospital for over 14 years once a month, same story, over and over again. The people that did not live in the cities did not have anywhere to go. There are very limited resources for people to go to. Back then, the internet wasn't what it is today. There's a means for this. Ross said thank you, that's nice to hear.

E. Saucon Valley Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan

- 1. DCED LUPTAP Grant Application** – Jack he hasn't heard anything from DCED on our LUPTAP grant application. They haven't had any responses on the fundraising appeals that he and Charlie have been making to the local banks.

F. Brief Reports and Discussion Items

- 1. Casino Impacts Funding/County Gaming Authority – update** – Priscilla said the County Gaming Authority meets on the 4th Monday each month. They had their reorganization meeting in January. They approved the bylaws and the grant criteria. That's all on line if you go on the

Northampton County website at: <http://www.northamptoncounty.org/northampton/cwp/view.asp?a=1542&q=623647> it will tell you all the pertinent information. She did ask their new Solicitor questions, but his contract needs to be signed before he will put his comments in writing. When she has them she will forward them to everyone. They asked him six questions. When they were meeting from September to December, there was a sub-committee formed to develop the language for the grant application and the criteria, and they basically followed the Erie County information. She kept saying we are doing this without the guidance of a solicitor, and maybe when we get a solicitor, there's a better way of doing it. Basically, the answers to her questions are that the gaming law does not require it, but it doesn't prohibit it either. Basically she asked does the gaming act require our authority to establish specific criteria? Does the gaming act require our authority to require the priority municipalities to demonstrate an impact from the casino? The solicitor responded that he recommends that we do ask for it. She asked if the gaming act required the municipality to put up matching funds? The response was no, but it could be a factor to consider. She asked does the act prohibit our authority from implementing a grant program whereby a 50% share the municipal grants within the county would be allocated to the contiguous municipalities, which if you all recall, is kind of what we wanted. It does not, and he doesn't recommend it. Does the act allow the authority to allocate uncommitted funds paid to Northampton County to the authority to the contiguous municipalities on an equal pro-rated basis? She'll wait for a more written answer on that question. The last question was does the act prohibit the authority from determining the exact dollar amount of the gross terminal revenue available for distribution under the grant program before awarding specific dollar amounts to the contiguous municipalities. She tried to get the authority to incorporate all these questions into the criteria but it didn't get changed. It was approved. Jack said they went on the County DCED website that has the Gaming Authority documents and minutes on it and there's no grant application or any information about the grants process being open for submission. John said what happened to all of that information we sent to the County? Jack said that went to Mr. Stoffa's Gaming Impacts Committee which was disbanded. The Gaming Authority is a whole new organization. John said at some time we are going to have to do this all over again. Jack said he thinks we need to think about starting this now. The big problem is going to be showing how our projects are connected to the casino. We're all geographically contiguous; the hard part is going to be showing that connection to the casino. If Hellertown submits something and the Township submits something and we put in for fire, police and whatever, how are we going to demonstrate to this authority that we meet the impacts criteria? John said we are already ahead of the group with the grading. Priscilla said if you click on that website you can see what the grading is. Jack said the only thing we have for the connection to the casino is the roads that go back and forth from the casino. That's what concerns him. We need to get together and work on this. He will check with Freemansburg, Hanover Township and Bethlehem Township to see if we want to agree on something. There should be a deadline when we have to submit the application. It does talk about doing oral presentations on our projects. Priscilla said she knows Hellertown runs their Council meetings different than Lower Saucon, but she tried to get it so people can comment under the agenda items. At the bottom of the agenda, they indicate that there would be another citizen comment period. One of the members said when they come to present their application, and then they will open it up to the audience. There will be some back and forth. Jack said it would help to have the application and get together to see what we are going to send in with it. Priscilla said she didn't see any language that you can't apply for both or are you restricted to one time. There's two open application periods. A period from now until June and then another one from June on. Right now there's like \$800,000 in casino funds and some was from last year. At the last meeting we didn't get our money for 2010 yet, so she can't tell you that amount yet. It is on the State's website though. That will go to the County and then right now they are cutting the checks for us. Jack said is it the authority's intention to wait until the end of 2010 to see what is received from the host fees for that year and then award the grant in 2011? Priscilla said her understanding is the deadline is June 12th, so they will review all the applications that come in until that deadline and go through the presentation and then make those awards. It would make sense that after June 12th, there's going to be another round. Jack said the way he was reading it, there would be an application submitted, then oral presentations would be in the fall, and then the decision would be towards the

end of the year. Priscilla said we'd be working on that first group of applications, then after June 12th it would be other people could submit until the next deadline. We wouldn't be considering people who submit after June 12th. The door closes in June and it is heard in September.

Ed said they just had a presentation last night about grant writing, from a professional company who would come in and write the grants. What he got from these companies was you had to have some specific target in terms of impact that you would have or how you would use this money on a going forward way to introduce new programs, so on and so forth. Did any of that discussion go on like if you give us a grant are you going to improve the traffic flow in Hellertown or we're going to set up a rehab program for alcoholics. Jack said we have to convince the Gaming Authority that our projects are going to do that. John said our job is to convince them of the impacts. We have to go in and tell them the casino created this problem. John said is it possible for a contiguous community to not receive any money? Priscilla said yes. Jack said if the project does not meet the criteria we do not get the money. Bethlehem and Northampton County will have no problem demonstrating impacts to this authority. Charlie said he doesn't think they have to demonstrate impacts at all. Jack said maybe not. Priscilla said the City of Bethlehem is eligible for funding twice as they are the host community. John said if Bethlehem Township had gone in when we all went in, would it have made any impact? Jack said this new Gaming Authority superseded anything that was discussed previously by the Gaming Impacts Committee. Priscilla said the day they passed the gaming law we were on the phone with Boscola's office. She drafted the language about the contiguous municipalities being considered priority, and we called them up and asked them did they realize how hard this is going to be. You're not just giving us money; you are making us go through hoops. Then John Stoffa said get together, come up with a plan, so they met, came up with a plan, and all agreed except Bethlehem Township who wanted to go by per capita. Then the person from the City of Bethlehem somehow got appointed to be on this subcommittee. Jack said that was John Stoffa's gaming impacts committee. Priscilla said meanwhile, there were people lobbying County Council on how to interpret this act. The act said you had to form a redevelopment authority, and then they were going to go with the one that was existing, then they said no, they will create a new one. They created the Gaming Authority and the document that created it said you have to prove that you were impacted by the casino. If you read the gaming law, it said you can only spend the money on what they tell you. Jack said that list of eligible projects that the funding can be used for came from the Erie County case where the Judge said the money has to be spent on human services, fire, and emergency services, etc. Priscilla said Bob Pfenning's committee folded and then they were appointed to this new authority and asked us to meet in September to get a head start, but they didn't really have guidance as they weren't really a committee. They did the best they could, so then they were officially a committee in January and came up with this criteria, the application process, and bylaws. They want to see if this process is working. Jack said there are two things about these impacts. In Dauphin County out near Hershey their gaming authority uses a criteria called the "nexus" to the casino. If the township contiguous to the casino wants a new fire truck or a new police car or they want to build a new fire house, all they have to do on their grant applications was say that if there was a fire at the casino, this fire truck would run on that call. If there's an emergency at the casino, our ambulance goes there. If they need police, our police car goes there. That's all they had to prove. We don't have that. We don't respond to the casino on a fire, police, emergency calls, so we can't show that. We only have traffic going to and from the casino, so it's going to be a little bit more difficult. Ed said but if there's some kind of emergency on the I-78, you guys are going to respond. Priscilla said 50% of the money goes back to the County and they get to spend it however. 30% goes to us, the authority, and then 20% goes back to the City of Bethlehem. In order to get some of the 50% or the 20% money if you are a non-contiguous municipality, you have to piggyback with the city or the county to try to divvy into some of their money. Jack said if you are a human services agency like the woman's shelter, they could also piggyback. Priscilla said that municipality has to agree. Twin Rivers COG sent us a letter which we are waiting for the solicitor to issue an opinion on that. John said so there's no application and it's closed June 12th and it's still not telling him how he's supposed to go about requesting the money. Priscilla said you are right and that's why we have public discussion. Ed said change the date and just resubmit

it. Jack said he thought the other non-contiguous municipalities had no standing. Priscilla said right, they'd have to piggyback with someone else. We have to decide also if we are going to keep the county as our administrator or go with an independent firm. The county is charging us 2.5% which comes out of the money we get.

2. **Joint COG Projects (Rail-to-Trail; Joint Recreation Study Committee) – update –**

Rails-to-Trails – Jack said Hellertown and Lower Saucon Township are moving ahead. In Upper Saucon and Coopersburg, there is nothing happening. The Manager for Upper Saucon came to the last meeting and said they have some issues with the intergovernmental agreement and they weren't ready to move ahead with appointing representatives to the Rail Trail Advisory Committee. They haven't heard anything from Coopersburg. The Manager did send a resident to the meeting. We have representatives from Hellertown, Lower Saucon and a woman from Coopersburg. They started working on some issues, but we are up against a stone wall because we can't really do anything officially unless we have all four signatures on the intergovernmental agreement. We can't submit a grant application until we have the whole group on board. We are moving ahead with our sections and would like to see if we can open portions of it this year. They started working on fundraising proposals which are on hold as well as logos. A lot of the things we got started on back in August have been basically brought to a stop. Charlie said for the grant, Lorne from DCNR said we needed the intergovernmental agreement and a 99-year lease. He also indicated that we will need a master site plan which is where you really lay out what you want as a plan. They talked about some implementation funding, but he doesn't think the real big money comes until you put the master plan together. They can put a surface down. John asked if you can get reimbursed for that. Charlie said you cannot get reimbursed. Jack said we are looking into a temporary surface we can put down. The biggest thing is the safety features for the road crossings and the bridges. That's what we are looking at right now and getting cost estimates. The big cost item for Lower Saucon looks like it will be the Meadows Road crossing. When people travel down that hill, you come around a little jog to the left, and you are right on top of the trail. We're getting recommendations for blinking lights and that will be costly. The other expense will be for safety railings for the long bridge over the Saucon Creek that has railings that were put up in 1917. That will need fencing to keep people in the center of the trail. Charlie said they have a crossing on Water Street and PennDOT just sent back the shared use agreement. They have a design from their engineer for the crossing and will have to get a cost estimate to install it. There's a little jog around the Grist Mill also, but they think they can resolve it. Jack said he thinks it's possible that they can get a section of the trail in Hellertown and Lower Saucon open to the public sometime this year. In Lower Saucon, they may not be able to get it open all the way down to Old Mill Road this year. It would be from Meadows Road all the way up to Thomas Iron Works, which is a pretty long trail. People can get out and walk on it. We are going to use a material that is pretty inexpensive. The material is a modified type of mix that can be put down, just enough so there's a surface. Glenn said what do we do about the 99 year lease? Jack said Joe Hoffman works with the Borough and he works with DCNR and he doesn't think he was familiar with the 99 year lease. Charlie said the Lehigh County Conservation District is taking a lead to put a grant together and he mentioned it there. There might be ways to say something in the language that it will be renewable in 30 years. Ed said that is very common with land you lease on the Jersey shore; they'll have a 30 year lease which is renewable. Mayor Fluck asked if there was a timeframe to put the surface down? Jack said his timeline is to get recommendations to his Council to approve it. At the end of this month, he and Charlie should have some cost estimates and then they have to work out what is doable with their budgets and then go to the Councils and say here is what we are recommending. His recommendation might be to stop it at Meadows Road this year. Then the surface is a matter of figuring out the cost. We can get the Public Works Departments from the Township and Boroughs to install most of this as they have the equipment and can put the stone down, roll it, compact it, and that can be done in about three or four days.

Joint Recreation Study Committee - update – John said they didn't have a meeting as it got snowed out. They had a low turnout the first time. The next meeting is March 25th at 7:00 PM.

Charlie said they are going to work on replacing the culvert underneath the railroad right-of-way at the Grist Mill for water flow. They have the pipe and are going to start next week with Mark Walters the excavator.

Charlie said regarding the High Street Bridge, they had a meeting with the City on February 18th with himself, Mike Corriere, Dave Backenstoe, and Joe Kelly from the City of Bethlehem. Norfolk Southern is willing to contribute, \$255,000 to fill in the gap at the High Street cut and have the city, borough and county build a road surface across that. The estimated cost to install a culvert so the rail trail can eventually go through there is about \$500,000. To replace it with a two-lane bridge would cost about \$1 million. The city is going after Norfolk Southern for more money. They are going to apply to the County for some of the green funds or DCNR for monies as well. That is in progress. There will be a PUC hearing later this year. Jack said the state is not in favor of it being close for recreation use. Priscilla said if you read the gaming law where it says tourism, she wonders if this could fit in there. That might be an easier angle. She's talking about the Rails to Trails in general, maybe the money to pave it could come from that instead of waiting and the 99 year thing shouldn't come up. If you read the act, tourism is one of the things. Jack said that could be possible. Right now if you are talking about paving the rail trail, we'd need to get an agreement with all four communities. The consensus was more towards a gravel surface.

3. Roads & Traffic – (Polk Valley Road/412 Intersection HOP Application) –

Polk Valley Road & 412 – Jack said we sent in what we hope is the last update to PennDOT for this traffic signal. We had reported in January that we have reached the point where we said enough is enough and they keep coming back asking for more information on the HOP. They spoke to the Township Engineer after the last meeting and he told us that this submission should be the last we have to do. If we do get anything further, we need to start making some phone calls. This is being delayed and we need to move forward for safety reasons as it is a dangerous intersection and people are getting struck by cars crossing the street. John said he's for the improvements at that intersection, but what happens to the three businesses there with their driveways being in the intersection? Jack said regarding the auto body shop, they are going to deal with them. They may have to take a couple of feet of property from them and the lawyers will have to deal with that. Jack said there will be some restrictions on how he goes in and out of his place of business, but the owner is okay with that. Charlie is working with the shopping center owners on what's needed on the shopping side of Polk Valley Road. McDonalds and American Family Services on the other side of the intersection are not players anymore in this. They dropped out of our meetings sometime ago. John said there was an impact study that McDonalds was going to look at. It's going to be a negative impact on their business. Jack said the McDonald's corporate attorney asked us recently for copies of all the plans for this intersection which we provided to them. We were never able to agree on anything with McDonalds and American Family Services regarding the use of the McAdoo paper street. The property belongs to American Family and they were not interested in making any changes. Jack said they had some ideas for driveway realignments which they thought would work with McDonalds but it would have required them to change their internal traffic flow and they were not interested in that as they wanted to use the area in front for a play area and that would have taken up the front aisle. John said that's his biggest concern as the driveway will be right there. Ed said once they recognize this is going to be a big impact, there's no reason they can't come back to us and say let's fix this. John said we may hurt one of our businesses. Ed said he's looking at it from the point of school bus safety. John said he understands that. He's looking at a business that is going to be affected big time and it's going to be impacted. That driveway is not going to be allowed. Mayor Fluck said he agrees with John, but McDonalds had all the opportunities to come and work with us. They just didn't want any part of it. American Family Services didn't want to give us the piece between there. He feels bad also, but they had an opportunity here, and they refused it. Ed said from a perspective for traffic flow, the community should have a right to condemn that piece of land using eminent domain. Jack said they were actually waiting for both of the property owners to step up to the plate and say this is a

good thing; we'll develop it and pay for the costs. McDonalds is going to have the same entrance and exits they have now. The only problem they are going to have is that people are not going to be able to turn left. John said how do they go back to the highway? Jack said they will have to go south on 412 and turn around at the shopping center. When they were reviewing this, he went through the files and located a zoning hearing board decision from Hellertown that said no left turns were permitted out of McDonalds. That was the decision by the Hellertown Zoning Hearing Board. Therefore, a left turn out of McDonalds it's not permitted currently. John said most of their traffic comes from the highway.

Charlie said the shopping center is going through the process of due diligence for the sale of the property to a new owner. Hopefully a new owner is going to be a little more cooperative.

Jack said if you remember the Friedensville Road traffic study where we asked PennDOT to reduce the speed limit coming out of Hellertown, which was turned down. There were questions that you wanted to ask Joe Rauscher about the traffic study. In response to these questions, Joe Rauscher said they conducted the traffic study on December 17th and December 18th and the time it was conducted was from noon time to 3:00 PM. John had asked if the study encompassed the accidents for the Creek Road crash zone and Joe Rauscher said yes, it did.

4. **Joint Enterprise Zone with City of Bethlehem – update** – Charlie said he called the City of Bethlehem about this and did not get a phone call back. He's hoping they are putting packages together for the RFP. Priscilla said when they were there for the meeting Tony Hanna mentioned that they may go after casino gaming funds to pay for this study. We don't have control over the money and the cost of the consultant.
5. **Saucon Valley Compost Center – update** – Charlie said they have a meeting on March 29th at 5:00 pm with the Compost Steering Committee. The Compost Center would open April 16th and would be open every Friday and Saturday for the entire year except for the day after Thanksgiving. Performance was good again last year and he thinks it will be good again this year. They have a lot more fence in place. It's pretty close to being totally enclosed, and it's worked out very well. He calculated a number for the mulch based on bulk density and they got numbers that were half of what they got last year. We had about 350 tons of material last year and the year before we had about 700 tons. He's not sure why there was a difference.
6. **Act 32 EIT Tax Collection Districts – update** – Ed said they got snowed out. They have a meeting tomorrow in Bethlehem and at that meeting he thinks they are going to start putting together the team to write the RFP. Charlie said there were a lot of votes taken to select an insurance consultant? Ed said they have come up with the weighted average based on two factors; one is the amount of taxes you collect and the number of people who live at the district. Not everybody shows up so you have to recalculate as you can't assume 100% of the people are going to be there. You recalculate the number of the people that actually attend the meeting. Because of state laws, you still have to have at least 50% of majority of people that are attending. Depending on the vote, you might actually have 50% of the total. It is painful. What happens is you have kind of a division between the school districts and the municipalities. Apparently, they deal with different insurance groups so there's a lot of interplay there. What's interesting is you can have a school district that has the same footprint of the municipality and they don't agree with each other. Fortunately, our school district and municipalities agree 100% of the time.
7. **Fire Services - update** – Jack said the four fire departments and Dewey have been holding meetings to discuss exploring opportunities for a partnership, merger or consolidation and they had some issues with the business side of the departments such as the social clubs, liquor licenses and those types of things. They wanted to go out to Spring Township in Berks County to visit a consolidated fire group out there and are trying to set up another meeting so we can meet those folks.

8. **Library Services – update** – Jack said they have been in touch with Robin from the Hellertown Area Library and they have a Library Committee meeting coming up on March 24 to discuss library services and the issue about the use of the computers in the library at the high school. The township reached out to the Southern Lehigh Library and got a letter back saying we are not in their library district and if we are interested in joining them it has to go to the state librarian for clearance. We thought it would be a simple thing to discuss the possibility of our residents using their library but it sounds pretty complicated.
9. **Leithsville Act 537 Plan – update** – Charlie said the LSA has been given the okay to go ahead with the test borings. Chris Taylor, the geologist from Hanover Engineering, is going to get in touch with a couple of Hellertown’s people and find out more about the Grist Mill ponds.
10. **Other Issues** – Priscilla said the Township is trying to set up a meeting with the County Executive about the Meadows Road Bridge. Jack said he saw John Stoffa at the County COG meeting at Bushkill Township and he said they will get a date for the meeting set up. Priscilla said the Conservancy is working on a letter to the County in support of the bridge. Lee Weidner wrote a letter to the Express Times about saving the bridge and two days later she went by the bridge and the County was there working on it.

F. County Report – Tom Harp

1. **Approve Tom Maxfield as COG Representative to County Solid Waste Advisory Committee -** Jack said on our agenda there is an item about approving Tom Maxfield as our COG representative to the County Solid Waste Advisory Committee that Tom Dittmar has restarted. The problem is that Tom Dittmar is planning on holding the meetings at 10 AM during the day and there is no way Tom Maxfield can make these meetings. Tom Dittmar indicated they will hold the meetings and send the minutes to Tom Maxfield.

Tom said he brought along a nice bag from the Census Bureau. He has the latest edition of our County Directory with updates. He passed around several brochures on different events that are going to happen for 2010.

Tom said our new administrator for County Department of Community and Economic Development is Alicia Karner, and she’s going to do a real sharp job. She made an open offer to all municipalities that her office is there to help develop jobs, businesses in the area and help as much as she can. She does want to start attending these meetings. She really wants to get a sense of what’s going on in the communities.

Tom said they had their joint COG meeting at Bushkill Township and it was very nice up there. Their new manager up there, Brian Harris, hosted it very nicely. It sounds like Brian will be a shoe-in as the new Nazareth COG Director to replace Bill Brackbill. He’s a young guy from Hazelton and he’s sure he’ll do a great job. There was a nice turnout of people who attended. They talked about the PPL deregulation issues. Jack said the Township has already moved ahead and selected Constellation New Energy. We signed a contract for three years with a fixed price. We moved beyond the shopping around phase. He did pass along the information.

Tom has the information about picking up the refrigerators. Jack said they want to put light sensors in some of the rooms in the Township that are used a lot. There’s a rebate under this program of \$45.00 for each of the sensors. Tom said there is a \$25.00 rebate for an old refrigerator that’s sitting in the garage, you can call them up and they will pick the refrigerator up and give you \$25.00. There was good talk about electric deregulation.

Tom said Emergency Management talked about the snow and the Federal Assistance for snow storms, it doesn’t look like we qualified because of our snowfall levels.

Jack said he needs to tell Tony Nauroth from the Express-Times that the Saucon Valley Partnership is a COG. He wrote an article that listed all of the COGs who were there and wrote all about what Tom talked about, but he never mentioned Saucon Valley Partnership. Tom said the next meeting is June 8th and is being hosted by Lower Saucon Township. The census, to the extent that the County can support a full count in 2010, a census worker will come to your Town Hall and answer questions. You already mentioned that you are doing that. They are doing it in the Courthouse on the 23rd for a full day. Yesterday, in the letter from the Census Bureau, it says in another week you are going to get your questionnaire.

Tom said he mentioned the Household Hazardous Waste event.

Tom did talk about the Solid Waste Advisory Committee and their first meeting was on Monday as they have been postponed due to the snow. There was a good turnout. There were committee members and haulers. Jack said that Tom Dittmar mentioned at the meeting yesterday that he had some drafts of the Solid Waste Agreement. He asked if he could get a copy to Charlie and him so they can look at it. Tom said Tom Dittmar did talk about the tipping fees and trying to get new landfills to voluntarily collect that so that can be used for recycling efforts and the County could be paid for some of these initiatives.

Tom said regarding Gracedale – you probably read about that being an issue with the County. For the last couple of years there have been issues with the facility operating in a deficit and costs keep going up, reimbursements are going down. They are making changes up there to try to fill the beds they have and there's been major construction being done with the window projects. They've replaced all the windows in the main tower because they've been leaking for 20 years. The County is going to be doing a study. RFP's have been sent out to some prequalified consulting groups to take a look at Gracedale. Whether it should be turned over to private management or whether it should be sold, or changes be made with the existing structure, it should be interesting. Lehigh County's Cedar Brook, the County owns it but there's a private firm that operates it. They pretty much privatized all of the services within the facility. Gracedale has County workers in the cafeteria, but the cafeteria is run by Aramark. A lot of the nursing homes sub that out. They are looking at ways to make sure it's not a big drain to the taxpayers and the County.

Tom said live video streaming of the County Council meetings is up and running. It's a big improvement. They are trying to open government up and make it more transparent. It's hard to find. We've told them to get something on the main page like a direct link. Jack said they did a very good job. The sound is excellent and you can move it fast forward. Tom said they show you the agenda as part of the screen, so you can go down if you are interested in an agenda item, and see it. It's working out pretty well.

G. Citizens Commenting on Non-Agenda Items – None

H. Events Calendar

<http://sauconvalleycalendar.blogspot.com>

Priscilla said the Hellertown – Lower Saucon Chamber is holding their annual banquet on Saturday night, March 13th. The Matey-Medei Agency is being honored. Stephen Prager will be the student who will be awarded the scholarship that the Chamber gives, and it's \$1,000.00. Stephen was one of our Jr. Council members. He was on our Council last year and now he's serving on the Parks and Recreation Board. He's very active and the Chamber Committee that met to review the applications were very impressed with his credentials, and it's all blacked out so no one knows whose resume they are reading. He was chosen and will be given the scholarship on Saturday night. The Mayor will be giving a proclamation. Tickets are still available. They are \$50 a person. Bob Freeman is going to be speaking. She passed out the brochures on the 3rd Annual Saucon Valley History Day. She would like to get it on the County website for the events calendar. Jack has a password and he can put it on. She will leave some brochures for the school district and she asked Ed to put it on the school website. Ed said he's looking at the Lutz-Franklin schoolhouse

and in the back, PennDOT is making what looks like a corn maze. What is that? Jack said that's the Township doing excavation and construction for the parking lot and the walking trails in the adjacent Kingston Park.

I. Adjournment:

Glenn made a motion to adjourn with a second by Priscilla. All in favor The time was 8:56 PM.

J. Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 14th @ Hellertown Borough @ 7:00 PM; Wednesday, May 12 @ 7:00 PM @ LST; Wednesday, June 9 @ 7:00 PM at SVSD.