

## SAUCON VALLEY PARTNERSHIP MEETING

Date: Wednesday, April 14, 2010  
Time: 7:00 PM  
Location: Hellertown Borough

- A. **Call to Order:** The Saucon Valley Partnership meeting was called to order by John Bate on April 14, 2010 at 7:02 PM at Hellertown Borough.
- B. **Roll Call: Present:** John Bate, Glenn Kern, Lanita Lum, Priscilla deLeon, Mayor Fluck, Jack Cahalan, and Charlie Luthar. **Absent:** Ed Inghrim. **Guests:** Phil Weber, Jim McIntyre, Rocky Iatarola, Bill Terwilliger, Tim Lichman
- C. **Council of Governments**
1. **Minutes of the March 2010 meeting** – Motion by Lanita, second by Mayor Fluck for approval of the March 10, 2010 minutes. All in favor.
  2. **Treasurer’s Report** – Jack said in the checking account balance as of March 31, 2010 is \$3,872.42. There were no receipts or expenses paid from that account during the month of March. The Treasurer’s account balance as of March 31, 2010 is \$11,520.26. There were no receipts into that account during the month of March. There was an expense of \$200.00 paid to the PA COG organization for annual dues. Motion by Lanita, second by Mayor Fluck to accept the Treasurer’s report.
  3. **Approval to pay bills (if any)** – Jack said there are no bills.
- D. **Saucon Valley Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan**
1. **DCED LUPTAP Grant Application** – Update – Jack said there is no update from DCED on our application for funding that we put in several months ago. That was for funding to do a zoning audit. We have not heard anything from them.
- E. **Brief Reports and Discussion Items**
1. **Casino Impacts Funding/County Gaming Authority** – Update – Priscilla said the meeting is coming up April 26<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM if anyone is interested in attending. At the last meeting they talked about an application process, so they put a committee together to formulate the application and it will be presented to them on Monday, April 26th. Then we can announce that the application is ready and it will be based on the criteria already established. There will be actually three documents in the physical application. Jack said he sent something around to the organizations in the Township about getting together to talk about putting together each element of our application which would be the fire, the emergency services, police, and the roads projects. We’re probably going to have a meeting in the beginning of May and he will send something out on that. John will be giving us something on the EMS. The Fire Chief’s are getting together on selecting a project that they want to submit. The police will be submitting something and we’re thinking about a joint road project for the Borough and the Township. We’ll get that all together and should have it ready to go when the application period opens up.

John said he started to look over what they asked for in the past. Basically their same impact is what you all approved at the ALS meeting. He’ll be coming back to you almost as the same as he did last time. He and Charlie are going to take a look at it and see how they are going to do it as they are now doing both communities as one entity.

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

**Saucon Rail Trail** – Charlie said they had another steering committee meeting on Monday, April 12<sup>th</sup> and they are working along slowly. Upper Saucon still has issues. They asked about the intermunicipal intergovernmental agreement and Tom Beil said they should have something by the end of the month. He doesn't expect to see anything too quickly. Charlie and Jack and the Public Works Directors inspected the trail from Lower Saucon up to Hellertown. It didn't look that bad. They expected to see more rubbish and debris, but they didn't. They looked at the safety railings, and Jack has numbers on that. It was a good trip. Jack said the big issue with the Saucon Rail Trail is there are no official representatives from Upper Saucon Township or Coopersburg. There's a woman who has been coming from Coopersburg who is very, very good. He doesn't know if she's been officially appointed. Hellertown and Lower Saucon Township have their representatives and have been meeting since last September. They want to move ahead on certain issues like fundraising, publicity, doing brochures, website, but they can't do anything official. The other problem they ran into was they started talking about getting a grant application submitted to DCNR for funding for the development of the trail. The ladies from the Lehigh County Conservation District, Rebecca and Erin, stepped up and said they would help us. They had a meeting with the DCNR representative at their office and we ran into a problem about the lease term. DCNR wants a 99-year lease minimum on any project they fund. Ours is a 30-year lease. We thought we could overcome that. We were ready to talk to the SEPTA folks. They seemed to be receptive as it would just extend the term. Then they hit another snag because in that lease is a right of reversion that SEPTA has that they can take back the track anytime they want to put a train there. DCNR said that's a deal killer. Apparently, if that's in there, they will not fund anything. There is no way that is going to come out of the lease. At their last meeting, they had a short discussion on whether they should go back to SEPTA and ask them if they had plans to resume rail travel, could they put one track in and leave us room for a trail next to it. We thought maybe that's a good idea, but since it took us probably 2-1/2 years to get the lease, it might take us another 2-1/2 years to see if they'd agree to that, and he doesn't know if they would. If they do put trains back on that right of way, they might have to install a whole new infrastructure, bridges and whatever. So they didn't pursue it. That's what they are up against. What they are basically doing is the Borough and the Township are each looking at their stretch of the trail as their own municipal projects and looking to see if we can get something going this year with the funding we have. As Charlie said, they are getting information on railings and on the crossings, and the surface. His big issue is the Meadows Road crossing in the Township. That's a problem area. John said they developed another problem last night. The communications poles are falling down. Jack said Public Works can take them down anytime. John said last night they lost one from the wind. We need to take a look at it. He's surprised they were not all twisted and bent. Jack said all the other hazardous material has been removed. The actual hardware is still there. John said there were a couple of transformers still spread out in the woods. Jack said the trail is pretty clean. The Saucon Creek Watershed Association took a group of about 40 students from Penn State – Lehigh Valley and did a litter cleanup. Most of the spots that were bad are cleaned up and it looks really good. We just have to clean up some pieces of wood and random metal pieces. John said he drove part of the trail with their SUV to take a look and it's cleaner than he thought it was and it's really in nice shape. Charlie said Jack has an estimate also on how much material has to be spread out for the surface. John said with the new pipe down at the Grist Mill, there are waves down at the pool. If you go down and look the water is actually moving and the raceway is actually clean. That job is done. It's just in time for the kids to have their fishing tournament. Go down and look at the creek, it actually moves the creek as there is so much force. That's a project they really wanted to get done and it came out nice.

Priscilla said if they decided to put train tracks back in, there's modern technology today and they would have had to take that old stuff out anyway. Are there other areas that have these rail trails that have combined tracks and trails? Jack said there are systems that have it, but not SEPTA. There are shared use trails. There's a barrier down the middle and people are biking or walking on

the trail. Priscilla said this morning she was at the Chamber breakfast and she talked to the Coopersburg Manager, Dawn Kresge. She was really talking about the trail and how it was a neat thing. After the lecture was over, she did talk about tourism and how we're anticipating this rail to trail thing to help the community. Dawn seemed excited about it. Jack said Upper Saucon's attorney is still looking over the intergovernmental agreement that he and Charlie put together six months ago. The Borough and the Township agreed to it five months ago. They had some issues with it, but we don't know what they are. Priscilla said what about Coopersburg? Jack said they don't know anything about Coopersburg either. Dawn was out for awhile recuperating from surgery. She comes to some meetings, but she has this woman, Jennifer, who has been attending meetings who is very helpful. As far as any official commitment, no, there's nothing from Upper Saucon or Coopersburg.

**Joint Recreation Study Committee** - update – Glenn said they've ask the different youth sports groups to appear and they are getting a sluggish return. They are looking for their input on field usage and scheduling which is a major issue. This is to just make sure they are addressing all of the scheduling issues from Hellertown, Lower Saucon and Saucon Valley School District. Next fall, there's going to be a stress on the fields as girls soccer is converting to the fall which means there will be one more group needing soccer fields which will be interesting to see how that schedule shakes out. The school is going to have to scramble for fields. Dimmick Park's football field is not big enough for a soccer field, it's not wide enough. Those are the kinds of things we want to get everyone together to discuss. We had a few more folks show up at the last meeting, but not as many as we'd like. We're going to keep asking and hope they show up at the next one. They will also be applying for a grant for a consultant to work with us. John said a lot of things are going to happen and we'll see where our needs are. He still thinks one of our biggest needs is going to be for an indoor facility. Glenn said that's a scary one as it's an expensive one with a big price tag. Jack said Bob Frey wants representatives from our committee to come to a school board meeting and talk about what we're working on. Lanita said they are studying and moving very quickly with the whole redo of how our fields are laid out and the stadium. Lanita said they are shifting things around. It's being brought up by one person, not by the group. There has been no direction to explore it. A lot of the drainage issues on the presentations they've seen so far will be addressed. Now is the appropriate time as we haven't put anything out to bid yet. John said you will also have the problems when they lay those fields out; they are not going to be playable for a couple of years. She knows some questions were raised. One that drives her crazy is they keep saying we have the baseball field over at Dimmick Park and we should be using it. There's too many things going on, there's no way we could use it. John said you are talking about the eastern field; Council just approved Lehigh playing some baseball games there and doing some practices. Youth sports uses that field along with the Royals. John said the availability still comes down to the kids first whatever their schedule is, then the Royals, now Lehigh. The biggest problem with the high school field is that field is gorgeous, but once it rains, it's done for a week on end. They built it with no drainage and everything dumps into it. Jack said the thing that Bob pointed out is that he's not just looking for a pick-up field; he's looking to utilize a field for an entire season where they have to move their equipment and a lot of their stuff up to the field. Lanita said it will definitely bring us into compliance and she's in support of doing what needs to be done. Charlie said the other thing that came up with the Recreation Committee is that Bob is looking a couple of different scheduling programs. Lanita said that will be left up to Bob Frey. If you want to set something up, contact Sandra Fellin. Glenn said is the Easton Road field the same dimension for high school or not? John said yes, the lower field is a 90 foot regulation baseball field that could be used for high school. The problem is parking. Jack said they are working on that. Once the Township puts in access from Mockingbird Hill Road, the problem should be solved.

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

**Polk Valley Road/412 Intersection HOP Application** – Jack said they have heard nothing from PennDOT. They said at a previous meeting that they hoped that they received the last request from PennDOT for additional information. Then they got another request from them. It was answered

and was sent back. It wasn't major, so they think they supplied them with all the information requested. Lanita said how long will it be before we get answers from them? Charlie said it takes at least a month for them to get back to us. Jack said it's been at least a month. Lanita said who are you dealing with? Jack said an engineer at PennDOT who prepares and signs the review letters. Lanita said who is that? Jack said her name is Melissa Maupin. Lanita said what she would like to do, unless someone has a problem with it - she works with Ron Young's wife from PennDOT. She knows her very well. She would like to talk to the two of them about what is the proper protocol to get this moving along. She doesn't necessarily have to call Melissa at this point, but she'd like to know what the best way to move on this is. If they say you have to go to Melissa, then she will do that. She can do this in confidence with them that it won't ruffle any feathers, but we've got to get moving on this. She and Ed talked about this tonight and the school needs to have an active voice behind the municipalities on this. It's important for our school district to come up with some kind of solution. If that's okay, she'll at least check and see what the proper protocol is as this has been going on for two years. She will check into it and send an email as to an update of what she found out and maybe we can talk further what we want to do at the next meeting. Ed wanted her to ask about the signage that's supposed to be going up around the school, the speed limits, when is that going to happen? Charlie said the signs are purchased and they are here. It's just a matter of getting Tom Henshaw and Roger Rasich out to do the work. Lanita said the signs are for 15 MPH. Charlie said there about six (6) signs for the Borough and about fourteen (14) for the Township. They have to all be installed. Lanita asked to report back to them when they will be put up. Jack said Wally Zimpfer will be involved in that also.

Glenn said at our last Lower Saucon Council meeting, Mr. McIntyre who is here tonight, and who is the owner of McDonald's spoke to Council. Mr. McIntyre was in opposition to the light being placed at Polk Valley Road. Glenn's comment to Mr. McIntyre was that, in the two or three years we've been discussing this, he was the first person that he ever heard oppose the light being put there. Mr. McIntyre explained he had reasons and he's here tonight to discuss those reasons. Mr. McIntyre said what is the purpose of the light? Is it for the school district or is it for a safety concern? Jack said he said this at the Council meeting, and he'll repeat it again here and that is that these people here tonight don't have any of the engineering data in front of them. There were meetings with the engineers from the Township and the Borough. There were meetings with the school district people two or three years ago. We discussed, in general, about the light and the engineers came up with all of the data that was needed to justify the warrants for the traffic signal and that all went into the packet for PennDOT. Glenn said there are some things that are self-evident and if you are living in a community, some things are just obvious, and this is one of the things that if you were to poll Hellertown and Lower Saucon, this would be one of the highest priority items on the list as far as common sense and safety. Mr. McIntyre said he knows you are saying safety, but what are the facts? You obviously don't have them. How many accidents have been there in the last five years? Lanita said the police department has records of that and that has been requested in the past. Jack said that information is in the package that was submitted to PennDOT. Glenn said we just can't put a light in there because we think it's a good place to put a light. That's why we did the study that was involved with PennDOT. PennDOT has to review the information and say, yes, a light is justified there or no, there is no justification. Mr. McIntyre said has anyone looked at Meadows Road? Glenn said yes, it was looked at. Jack said the Township Engineer did a study of the Meadows Road vicinity and looked at Meadows Road, Springtown Hill Road, the shopping center, Polk Valley Road and the Borough's Walnut Street and factored in all of the data from those intersections which are all inter-related. Glenn said as part of Council, they relied on information from Hanover Engineering as that is a critical intersection as well, and there's a series of critical intersections in a row. Meadows Road in particular, is critical because of Springtown Hill Road. He would have preferred to have a light there, but the engineer said you can't have a bunch of lights in a row and Polk Valley goes above that intersection as far as priority. Priscilla said when Charlie and Jack were meeting with you; you were at those meetings over the years. Jack said at those meetings, they had representatives there from McDonald's, the American Family Services, from the school, from the shopping center, and Mr. McCullough who owned the property across the street on the southeastern side. The purpose of the meeting was to explain what

they were looking at and to listen to what their concerns were. Out of that meeting came some recommendations about the entrances and exits. There were three proposals given to you as suggestions and Mr. McIntyre didn't think those were workable. Mr. McIntyre said they weren't workable for the business. Those were three proposals to exit at the light. Later on, the idea came up about opening the paper street and having McDonalds and American Family Services use that as an exit. That was discussed for a couple of meetings, and then Mr. McIntyre went off with American Family Services and had some discussions on that. We understood that you concluded that it was not going to work. Therefore, that idea was dropped. There was an attempt to address some of your concerns, but also to move forward with our information gathering that we needed to submit to PennDOT. Mr. McIntyre said Polk Valley Road is a low volume road. It has some traffic on it while school is open, but all other times it's a low volume road. He spends a lot of time at his store and it doesn't have a high volume of traffic. Lanita said do you have any other solutions that you would propose? Mr. McIntyre said he would put a police officer there in the morning when the kids are arriving and one there when the busses and kids are leaving when school lets out. Lanita said that's not the only times there are problems. She can tell you on weekends, she has serious problems pulling out there. It can be anytime during the day. From 7:00 PM on, it's like a ghost town here, but during the day, absolutely not. She travels that road all the time and has to pull out there. There's a lot of traffic coming out there. Mr. McIntyre said are you going left or right? Lanita said either way. Sometimes you hit it lucky, other times you hold your breath and hope the heck you get out. Mr. Rocky Iatharola said the problem with that road is the speed limit and nobody goes 35 MPH on that road. Lanita said she does not think we decide the times when the volume would be there to put police there and she doesn't represent the municipalities, but represents the school district. She doesn't think that is feasible. She's lived here for twelve years. She uses that road all the time. She's seen 16 year olds who are learning to drive and have to pull out there. She watched school busses pulling out there and lines of traffic having to pull out there waiting if they are making a left hand turn. There needs to be some safety solution before we have a death before somebody says "oh my gosh, we should have done something". She's not the type of person that wants to be reactive. She wants to be proactive in her community. She's your biggest fan, and you are a great friend to this community. She's seen him support the kids, so she would love for us to come together and through PennDOT's cooperation, find a solution. She knows the community is glad you are here. We want to work together. Mr. McIntyre said he appreciates that. He asked what was the speed limit? Charlie said it's 35 MPH. Mr. McIntyre said is there a way to get the community to do 35 MPH? The trucks are doing almost 50 MPH on that road. Lanita said what municipality is that there? Jack said it is both of them. Lanita said do you see the speeding going more on north bound or south bound? Mr. McIntyre said from the light at Giant when it turns green, it's like a race. Lanita said there is an issue there then for the Lower Saucon Police Department to take knowledge of that and start to work that area a little more. Yes, we need to slow the traffic down, but as traffic continues to grow, we need to find a solution. She'd like to see it be amicable between our business owners and the community. Your input is important, but we can't get anywhere until we get PennDOT to recognize there is an issue. Maybe there's grant money out there that we can obtain to help offset cost to business owners or anything like that. She doesn't sit on the Councils, so she's not an expert in this area. Can we try? Mr. McIntyre said what about if you had a right turn only off of Polk Valley Road? It's difficult to go left there. Priscilla said what would they do is cut through the parking lot. Mr. McIntyre said there's Walnut Street. John said he knows we're looking at school traffic and he's thinking there are buses are involved there? How many busses really run the Leithsville area? You can't go over the Meadows Road and that area has to come out of Walnut Street. Lanita said she's going to guess maybe four or five busses. John said could they not use Walnut Street? Lanita said her point really just isn't busses; this is for the community in general. John said then you can take the student drivers going up and down that road and have them use Walnut. Lanita said you also have a lot of the residents who use that road as well. Mr. McIntyre said it's typically one or two at a time, not five cars in a row. Glenn said he's heard that people avoid that intersection when they want to go south. That in itself is a statement to how bad the intersection is. He avoids that intersection. Lanita said there are times when she pulls out of McDonalds and makes a right and goes left on Polk Valley Road and then goes back in the parking

lot so she can go north on 412 as there's no way she can pull it off. John said making a right out of the parking lot at McDonalds and then going down to the mall and going through their parking lot is not a solution at all. If we can't make a left off of Polk Valley Road as that's an inconvenience for the public, it's also an inconvenience for a customer to go right to the mall and then back to the highway. That evens out. Glenn said you can't go left out of McDonalds? John said there was a comment about no left hand turns being permitted out of McDonalds. You have to go down to the mall and come back to the highway. Lanita said has anyone seen the intersection down towards Quakertown at California Road? They put a three-way stop there and also did it at Mill and 212. Initially, people got ticked off about it, but it was the smartest thing they ever did. They didn't have to put traffic lights in. It keeps traffic flowing. Is that a viable option or does PennDOT rule that? Would it be easier to do that? Jack said stop signs on 412? Lanita said there are stop signs at 212 and 412. It works, it's amazing. Everybody who travels it now says it works. When there is light traffic and no one pulling out at Polk Valley Road it's just stop and go traffic.

Priscilla said she is going to a Landfill Meeting tomorrow and she will mention it at the meeting that the garbage trucks should be going 35 MPH in that area. Mr. Iatarola said as you were saying about the stop signs, there was a similar problem at his other shop in NJ, and they actually put up speed bumps, just to slow people down. Lanita said what do you think about the stop sign idea? Someone said he doesn't know how it will work when you are going 35 MPH and then have to come to a complete stop. Glenn said with stop signs there, it's going to be worse than a light as the traffic when it's there is intense and you'll be stacking the traffic up. Charlie said he didn't think the stop signs will work because of the volume of traffic. There were 12,000 to 17,000 cars a day on 412 recorded in the 2008 study. Charlie said one day they counted 19,000 cars. John said from this committee, he would see if we could come up with a solution. Mr. McIntyre said what if PennDOT comes back and has a permit for the light, then what is the next step? Jack said the first step is we have to talk to the property owners. For Polk Valley Road, the turn of the radius will have to be changed and there are some entrances and exits that are totally open. After that, it comes back to the elected officials to make the decision. Charlie said if he remembers the traffic studies, that's an F intersection coming in from Polk Valley Road which means it's a failed intersection. PennDOT will look strongly at that. If you ask for a warrant and they determine it is needed, you have to install it. That could be forced. If we ask for a traffic signal and they find out you do need a traffic signal, you have to do it. Mr. McIntyre said after the permit, who makes the decision? Jack said it's a joint decision of the municipalities, so the Lower Saucon and Hellertown Councils will make the decision as there will have to be an expenditure of funds.

Priscilla said tell them what happened with the school speed signs. Charlie said there were concerns about the speed of the traffic up by the campus building and even though it's not a state highway, Joe Rauscher and the safety crew from PennDOT came in and did a study. If they do a study, you have to do what they tell you. You have to sign an intermunicipal agreement which they did. They ended up with six Borough signs that have to be installed and sixteen in the Township. They all had to be purchased and our Public Works has to install them. Priscilla said that's a lot of signs for that area. The Polk Valley Road/412 signal topic would be a topic at one of our public meetings and it would be an agenda item. Jack said they have contact information and will notify all four property owners. Charlie said what will happen with the permit is PennDOT will require agreements with the property owners for the taking. They will approach you for an agreement at fair market value. Jack said Council put funding away for the last several years for traffic signals. There are other legal costs that are going to be involved with that, but there's no cost as of right now. Mayor Fluck said when you come out of McDonalds, if there is a light there, you can't make a left there, you have to make a right, is that what he is hearing? Jack said you have to see what PennDOT says. Mr. McIntyre said the light is going to be signaled off of Polk Valley Road and it will be signaled at different times. He doesn't want anyone to get hurt. He thinks there are cheaper solutions. When that light turns red, two cars will block his exit and five cars will block his whole site, so there's a financial impact on him. There's a serious issue there and safety comes first, but no one seems to have the facts. Jack said we have the facts but they don't have that information before them right now. This wasn't done on a whim. Priscilla said the

Manager prepares a detailed agenda for us and he sends it to Council and it has all the facts. Glenn said we identified a need for a light there. We can't say a lights going there. PennDOT has to do a study and say you're right, a light has to go there. He wants the light because he's lived here for sixteen years and he knows that a light is needed there. He doesn't need data to tell him that. He has experienced it. Lanita said is there a way they can make the intersection longer and your exit be the light so your people could still get out and traffic wouldn't block it. Could they do something like that so when Polk Valley can go, your people can go? Jack said that type of option was in the three proposals they gave McDonald's during the discussions. Lanita said you didn't like that? Mr. McIntyre said it wouldn't work. Glenn said because this is kind of informal, but as much as Lanita is a fan of yours, there's 2,200 kids who go to school up there that are fans of yours along with moms that are fans of you. There are several issues since he's been on Council that are going to bring the people out. One was trying to put a burn ban on the Township. One was when they tried to do an ATV ordinance. The third one is going to be this traffic light and you're going to get the Saucon Valley moms in the audience and they are going to be sitting there and they are the people who are going to patronize you. As emotional as he is about this issue, wait until you see the Saucon Valley moms in the audience.

4. **Joint Enterprise Zone with City of Bethlehem** – Update – Charlie said there is no additional information.
5. **Saucon Valley Compost Center** – Update – Charlie said it is opened Friday from 9 AM to 1:00 PM and will be open the rest of the season until Thanksgiving.
6. **Act 32 EIT Tax Collection Districts** – Update – Jack said Ed usually gives a report on this. Charlie said at their last meeting they appointed a Solicitor. They have an insurance consultant. It took eight votes at the last meeting to pick an insurance company. Priscilla said they are going through that also at the Gaming Authority with their liability insurance. She's not knowledgeable with insurance, but fortunately they have Ann McHale who is in the insurance business. Charlie said we have good representation there.
7. **Fire Services** - Update – John said Phil is here to answer some questions that Lower Saucon may have. Phil said let him start as far as Hellertown Council was concerned. It was two Monday's ago. After the training meeting at the fire house, Rick had come to him and asked him if he could start a committee to look at a paid force. At that time, Phil said he needed to take that back to Council and ask how they felt. That was the very first time Rick had come to us and asked about doing a committee for paid fire personnel, so Council has not yet seen this as there was not a meeting yet, and he hasn't asked Council about it. That next Wednesday, that was when Rick decided he was going with a paid force idea at the Fire Chief's meeting and that was how he was going to go. There are all kinds of rumors on what happened in there. At that meeting, he pitched the idea about going to a part time day force. Glenn said the paid force was suggested jointly for Lower Saucon and Hellertown? Phil said from what Rick was telling him the paid force would be a covered day shift to go to both communities. At that meeting, the Lower Saucon Chief's said absolutely not, they don't want to go that route; we want to go with the merger. Then that meeting ended abruptly and they said you can go and do your own thing and we'll do our own thing. As far as his Council, he is fairly sure that there's no real support for a paid force at this time as there is no money and if there was going to be paid force he would think it would have to be a joint venture between the both of us. Rick did step a little bit out of bounds here and took it upon himself to push for this, so this was not recommended by the Borough Council in any way, shape or form. He will say he did ask Rick prior to that meeting to ask Council for a committee. It was on his mind, but he had no idea what he was going to do on Wednesday. Right now, Hellertown is not a part of the Joint Fire Chief's meetings. We are pretty much on our own now. He will tell you, and he is not speaking for Council, that the Council does not really want to see that happen. Council really wants us to be back where we were working on the issues of the merger. Do we have to pull strings as Council to work together? We may have to say this is the way we are going to be. John said it was unprecedented a few years ago when the Fire Chief's sat down and told us there was a

staffing issue. The Fire Chiefs up until this last week have been unbelievable in trying to work together on a solution. They do know down the road some day there are going to be some choices that have to be made, but as a Councilmember, he's looking at their Fire Chiefs and your Fire Chiefs saying we need to continue this communication and continue this venture. We need to do this together as a group. He's a great believer in this Partnership and we can't separate at this point. They can't stand alone and pay for a fire service. They need to get all the Chiefs back in the same room. They want to be able to come to us and say to us they tried every avenue possible to do their job. Priscilla said that day is coming soon. John said our Chiefs need to be truthful and looking and seeing every avenue where they can pick up more volunteers or where they can move together into one entity. We need to support this. He's been a great proponent of putting the Fire Chiefs' meeting together and coming up with a solution. They are all doing joint dispatching and this is a horrible thing that happened and we need to make correct it. He had mentioned to a couple of Chiefs that they give us an opportunity to talk. Phil said the way Rick tells him, he is out of that meeting as of last Wednesday. The others don't want to get a career staff in. Jack said he got a call about the meeting, and most of it is not anger but frustration. It's just that they have worked on this for a long time and Rick has been very strong in his opinion about the paid firefighters and he's voiced that opinion several times and they just said that's it, we're not going to go any further on that. We need to move ahead on the merger or consolidation. They think there will be some issues they will have to resolve with the social halls, the liquor licenses and things like that as they move further ahead. There is a lot of work to do to move forward. They probably just realized that they were just going to go at it in a different direction. He was committed to the paid fire service and they said we just can't go that way. We need to move ahead with the merger or consolidation and if you're not going to be with us, then go ahead. Phil said as Council, we need to come together on this. Jack said he and Charlie have talked about this and we were trying to figure out how we could get a meeting together of the group where this frustration wouldn't boil over and divide them any further. John said they can't divide now; they were going in such a wonderful direction. They need to continue it. Jack said they were trying to figure out if it would be a Council member meeting or the Fire Chiefs meeting and when they thought about that, they thought if they just got the Fire Chiefs together, are they going to talk. Priscilla said they talk better when she and Glenn aren't there. Jack said he's glad this was brought up tonight. They are still working together. When a fire signal goes off, they are all there. They are training together and are doing everything to protect our citizens. It's just this was an issue and he's glad to hear that is Council's position. Glenn said what does Rick perceive as the value for going separate ways? Phil said there's no secret they do miss calls from time to time between the hours of 5:30 AM even until tonight. There was a fire and didn't get a truck out of the garage. John said we didn't need to as it was cancelled. Phil said the call was cancelled, but there was no one at the station. Hellertown wasn't able to get a truck out, but Lower Saucon was able to. There is an issue with getting people to the station. If you look at Saucon Valley, even if we merge, we still have the same staffing issues because the same people are doing it. Rick's position is that the only way to really fix that is to bring in paid part-time firefighters to fill in those gaps when there is no one there. John said he thought that way. If you bring five big problems, it becomes one big problem, it really doesn't matter if you have one person going here and two people going here, you can direct everyone to go to one place to get the first piece of apparatus. That's where your benefit is. That's what their Chiefs are working on. There are some benefits to it. Trust him, as a person who has 42 people on staff and payroll, fire has no billable source. It's going to fall back on the taxpayers, big time. Jack said he heard at one of the Chiefs meeting where they said if you go paid, forget the rest of your volunteer staff. John said he's adamantly opposed to any career staff at this point. He thinks we need to give our Fire Chiefs that opportunity. He also told Rick that if he wants a career staff, he needs to give a five year staffing plan and that five year plan includes 24 hours, seven days a week, career staff. Now you have a problem. You are telling him you need three people. If you go career staff and you lose your volunteers, you can't fight fires with three people, so now your staff is going to go from 3 to 10 or 20. A city's normal shift is 30 people. Start doing the math. He has about \$300,000.00 this year to staff 24/7. That's two people 24/7 and two people for a 12 hour shift every day, seven days a week. His medics are all paid \$17.50 to \$21.00 an hour. He doesn't see any way we are going to make money because out of all the calls they have had, there's only been

maybe three calls that you can recoup anything on. So once again, it's going to fall back onto the taxpayers, big time. They had nine calls last month. When you start doing the math and figuring out how much nine calls are, he has to have at least four to five calls a day to pay his overhead, and that's what they are doing on a slow day. There's some numbers here that we just can't jump into. He really would like all the Fire Chiefs come up to us and tell him they have tried everything and Rick knows that. Phil said he thinks that is Council's opinion. John said we need to continue to support our Fire Chiefs and their committee and hope they are going to come up with a solution. Priscilla said when Se-Wy-Co Ambulance was having issues with their staffing several years ago, they hired someone and their volunteers suffered. John said they didn't have enough calls. The two of them sat down and made two better systems. Because of that, they are a better system today as they don't have to worry about EMS and we don't have to worry about what they do on the firefighting side. It gave the opportunity for Tom to focus and for him to focus. That's what he is hoping the Fire Chiefs do. Jack said we are hoping to submit a project for the casino grant funding that will benefit regional fire services. They would also like to submit the Polk Valley Road and Route 412 traffic signal as a joint Township and Borough project. John said at some point they are going to have to get some kind of grant and see what their needs are. We need to push that person from outside to come in and do that. Charlie said they have asked that before, but there is staff reduction. This is an example of where Council can't really let the Chiefs go. The two Councils need to insist that our Fire Chiefs stay together. Phil said on Monday, at the Council meeting, they are going to tell Council everything that happened, and he's going to ask Council to pretty much tell Rick that he has to stay with the other fire companies. The other part of this is he's always supported the idea that the people who are doing the job should be the ones who decide how the job is going to be done, but what he sees that is not happening here is that they are accountable to really nobody. They have their group of five Chiefs. They talk among themselves. They go home. He really thinks there needs to be a structure in place where they need to report back to a committee of two or three Councils. Priscilla said that's what they have in Lower Saucon, but they haven't had a joint meeting in awhile. Jack said the person from DCED proposed the idea of a steering committee which what Phil is saying. Phil said they shot that down. He can see it as a steering committee as a community having a steering committee, but this is different. This is more about accountability. They want to know every six weeks or two months what was done, what was achieved, etc. They are talking about a new firehouse on Polk Valley Road. It would be called the Saucon Valley Fire Company. It would be one central location. John said our goal right now is to steer them and tell them they need to learn to bond. They can't just walk in one garage with one Fire Chief and say you are the boss. Phil said they have talked about the new fire station, and putting it on Polk Valley Road and he doesn't know where, but he's sitting here listening to how do you get out. Then you would have to go down through Main Street to get there or cut through Saucon Valley High School and cut down Constitution. Based on both of these things in his opinion, that is not the best place for it. He's saying it's time that they should fix their problems and work on their problems as the five Fire Chiefs. Lanita said do they realize they can't have five Chief's? Phil said yes, he thinks so. Jack said eventually there will be one Chief when it is combined. Phil said it is time for us to say we need some feedback from this group. John said this is a major expense for both of us. Phil said its part of our job because we have to make sure the services are available for our residents. Priscilla asked Jack if he was going to update Council next week? John said we need to get the minutes from them to get some monthly reports. Jack said he can update them about what happened here. You need to meet with them and tell them that. Priscilla said you need to get Council's backing. Phil said he's going to do that at the Hellertown Borough Council meeting on Monday and go into Executive Session and talk about it. It does involve employees and all that kind of stuff. He will have to check to see if this can be done. Phil said he's also going to talk to them about that we think they should report back to us. John said we just want to be able to tell them we are in support of you five guys. They need to stay as a group for the community. Whatever you have to do to get Ricky back on board, has to happen there. We need it as a group. Jack said he thinks there should be a meeting with them and tell them that. John said that's something that will have to be brought up at the next meeting. Glenn said just schedule one of those Fire Chiefs meeting and we go to it. Jack said we need to keep working on this. Phil said this way they have another opportunity to air it. Priscilla said that's

been the consensus of Council. John said we have some very intelligent Fire Chiefs. Phil said sometimes there has to be a boss. There has to be one person or one group that says nicely they are in charge. Jack said they can do that and set up a meeting. Priscilla said we aren't going to bring it up publicly then. Phil said he might have to bring it up publicly if he can't talk about it in Executive Session. John said they have to really force their Chief to go back to the group with the other four Chiefs. They have to work together.

8. **Library Services** – Update – Jack said this is good news as far as working together. The Township Library Committee had a meeting with the Hellertown Library. Currently, Lower Saucon Township is under agreement with Bethlehem Area Public Library (BAPL). The cost is going up and will be going up higher next year and the following year because of the census. This was discussed and Council said look for other options. They contacted Southern Lehigh and got a letter back from the Director that was so entangled in bureaucracy and it would take years to arrange anything with them. Glenn said it's a nice big library, it's close to us, why can't we join with them. Jack sent a letter to the Director asking that and she sent a letter back saying in order for you to do that, you are in the Bethlehem area district, we are in the Allentown district. You need to get approval from the Bethlehem director and the Allentown director to meet and agree that you can do this plus you have to go to the State Library and get state librarian approval in order to do it. Jack said it was odd that they didn't just say come on down and talk about it. The message seemed to be that this is never going to happen. They did meet with Robin and two of the Trustees from the Hellertown Library. They were two very good board members and Robin is excellent also. It was a very good meeting and they said this is all exploratory. He asked Robin what if we were to say to you we were going to join you next year, what would you have to do, what would we have to do in order to accomplish that? Let's just start thinking about that. We did have a very productive meeting. He has minutes that he will share with the Council about that. We went over a lot of issues –space, the parking, the resources, etc. In terms of resources, she is closer there in terms of what the State would require with books and things like that. There are not enough computers, but as far as books, she's okay. There would need to be additional staffing. Space, all of those things would have to be looked at. They are going to go back to their board and start doing some homework and we are going to talk to our Committee and talk to our Council sometime in the summer and he thinks we are going to say, "hey, we think this is doable". It may not be January 1, 2011. It might be January 1, 2012 because we need to be prepared do this or have this set up. He thinks it's doable if we can lay out a plan to do that. The big concern is going to be the financial end of it and that is, what we all contribute. We have to talk about how that's all going to be worked out. Lower Saucon Township is contributing a lot of money to the City of Bethlehem. Glenn asked if Hellertown contributes to the Bethlehem Library? Jack said no. Priscilla said that was the big thing years ago, they used to, but broke away. Lanita said it's now about \$168,000 that Lower Saucon Township contributes to Bethlehem Area Public Library. Jack said that is per capita. If you break it down per capita, we are paying \$17.05. Hellertown's per capita contribution to their library is about \$10 per resident. We have to work out how we can do that. Priscilla said the expenses to enlarge the library, who is going to pay for that? Jack said we have to talk about that. Priscilla said will it be more than we are already paying? John said how many kids do you think honestly go to Bethlehem Area Public Library when they leave the school. Jack said that's one of the problems we have is identifying numbers. We have to identify numbers that go to Bethlehem and identify the number who go to Hellertown. A good majority of the Township residents go to the Hellertown Library. Phil said once they get that ACCESS card, they can go wherever they want to. Jack said 50% of their patrons are from the Township. Priscilla said how many go to the Bethlehem Library? Jack said we've asked for that. All we know is the number of materials checked out. The other number they have is membership cards. We can tell that 43% of our residents have a card and can tell there are 800,000 some items checked out in 2009. The big thing is how many Township bodies actually go in the door. They don't have any count of that. Priscilla said remember what Glenn said about burning and the ATV's; she's been on Council for 23 years. During the first part of that, Council had considered breaking away from the BAPL back in 1991. You want to talk about a packed house. Lanita said why was it a packed house? Priscilla said because they did not want to lose the BAPL. Jack said was there a

Hellertown Library then? Charlie said he thinks they were just opening the Hellertown Library then. Lanita said wasn't the library in this little building? Priscilla said Hellertown broke away from the city and then all the municipalities had to absorb their share as they didn't have the income, just like if we break away, then all the other ones will have to make up our cost. She can't imagine not having a library in someone's community. Jack said the residents could still go to the Bethlehem Library if they have their ACCESS cards or to the Southern Lehigh Library. John said they can go anywhere they want to go. Phil said all you can do is make the Hellertown Library so much better.

9. **Leithsville Act 537 Plan** – Update – Charlie said they have the temporary easement. Gar Davidson dropped it off yesterday. Mike is okay with the easement agreement. They need to get an exhibit to attach to it and they need to sign it. Priscilla said there are no issues with Hellertown? Charlie said no, it's all done.
10. **Other Issues** – John said he works for Four Winds Concrete. They are doing a class on pervious concrete like you have at Polk Valley Park. They are going to be holding it at Dewey on Friday, May 7<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM. The first part of the class is going to be at Dewey from 8:00 am to noon and the second half will be at their plant to see how you put down pervious cover. There is no cost. You are free to send anyone there. You can see how it's put down and done. There is a cost if you want to get someone like Roger Rasich or Tom Henshaw in order to get certified and we have that here. With the Rails to Trails and the other things we are doing and looking at this, it might be interesting to have someone from the Council's attend and see how it is actually done and understand about it. It's really and neat to see how it's done. They just did sidewalks over at the Trexler Zoo. He would ask if you have someone to just let him know so he can put you on the roster. Bethlehem Township is also being invited. There are a couple of other communities being invited. If someone has the need to get certified in it, they will be able to give the testing program, but anyone who just wants to come and listen to it and go to see the demonstration, it is free.

Charlie provided an article about the public employee's pension funding and said he doesn't necessarily agree with everything in the article. He's curious to know what's going to happen in 2013 with the funding problem. It's an important issue for all of us to look at because we're all going to be paying for this. There have been other articles and it's a horror story of what this is going to cost us in the future. Lanita said it will cost us a lot.

Priscilla said last Tuesday, they went to Harrisburg and attended a meeting and the State Historic Preservation Board met. There were 15 people there and the Heller Homestead was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. There was an article in the Morning Call yesterday with a picture. The State will be sending to the National Park Service forms with all the nominations that were approved that day. The Park Service will have forty-five days once they receive the nomination, and then they have to advertise it in the Federal Register for thirty days and then they have forty-five days to get that to the State with their decision. They should know by the end of June or July. They are very excited about that. That's going to be up along the rail trail as a historic site.

- F. **County Report – Tom Harp** – Absent
- G. **Citizens Commenting on Non-Agenda Items** – None
- H. **Events Calendar**  
<http://sauconvalleycalendar.blogspot.com>

Priscilla said the annual Saucon Valley History Day is on Saturday, April 24, 2010. Also that day is the electronics computer recycling event from 9 AM to noon at the Township.

Priscilla said they are having an annual plant/community yard sale on Saturday, May 1, 2010 and the annual Young Artists Reception is on May 1, 2010.

Mayor Fluck said on Sunday, May 2, 2010 the Farmer's Market opens.

**I. Adjournment:**

Lanita made a motion to adjourn with a second by Priscilla. All in favor. The time was 9:46 PM.

**J. Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 12 @ 7:00 PM @ LST; Wednesday, June 9 @ 7:00 PM at SVSD;  
NO MEETING IN JULY.**