

**I. OPENING**

- A. Call to Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Pledge of Allegiance
- D. Announcement of Executive Session (if applicable)
- E. Public Comment Procedure

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS ONLY – RESIDENT/TAXPAYERS ONLY – 3-MINUTE TIME LIMIT**

**III. PRESENTATIONS/HEARINGS**

**IV. DEVELOPER ITEMS**

**V. TOWNSHIP BUSINESS ITEMS**

- A. Discussion Regarding Library Services

**VI. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS ITEMS**

- A. Approval of December 2021 Financial Reports

**VII. COUNCIL & STAFF REPORTS**

- A. Township Manager
- B. Council/Jr. Council Member
- C. Solicitor
- D. Engineer

**VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT - NON-AGENDA ITEMS – RESIDENTS/TAXPAYERS ONLY – 3-MINUTE TIME LIMIT**

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

Saucon Rail Trail Oversight Commission: January 24, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m. @ LST  
Zoning Hearing Board: February 28, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m.  
Planning Commission: January 27, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m.  
Parks & Recreation: February 7, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m. @ LST  
Township Council: February 16, 2022 @ 6:30 p.m.  
Environmental Advisory Council: February 8, 2022 @ 6:30 p.m.  
Saucon Valley Partnership: February 9, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m. @ HB

**I. OPENING**

**CALL TO ORDER:** The General Business & Developer meeting of Lower Saucon Township Council was called to order on Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. with Mr. Jason Banonis, presiding.

**ROLL CALL: Present:** Jason Banonis, President; Jennifer Zavacky, Vice President; Priscilla deLeon, Sandra Yerger and Thomas Carocci, Council Members; Leslie Huhn, Township Manager; Linc Treadwell, Township Solicitor; Thomas Barndt, Chief of Police and Allie Leayman, Administrative Assistant.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF ANY EXECUTIVE SESSION (IF APPLICABLE)** – Mr. Banonis said that Council did meet in executive session to discuss potential property acquisition.

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT – TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS ONLY – 3 MINUTE TIME LIMIT – AGENDA ITEMS ONLY**

Mr. Banonis said the public comment procedure remains in effect. We welcome any input from individuals who are here tonight. We ask that you keep your comments to a three-minute maximum per item. If you want to speak, please sign the sign in sheet that was available outside the doors. He will plan to call your name in the order that you're signed in. A copy of resolution 31-2022, which is the Township agenda policy and code of conduct for Township Council meetings, is available at the sign in desk as well. Ms. deLeon said with your permission, since we just got an update on the library at 2:55 this afternoon, and she hasn't had a chance to really look at everything and to her, the purpose of public comment is for the residents to give them feedback on what's going on. She knows we have our policy that you guys voted for, but can they make an exception tonight? And for those speaking on just the library, can we allow that to happen after we hear what's going on from the solicitor and the administration. Mrs. Zavacky said actually she was going to make a motion tonight because there's so many people here and she's very happy that people are here. She wanted to give everyone an opportunity to hear what Council needs to discuss and share amongst the Council as well as with the public.

**MOTION BY:** Mrs. Zavacky moved to have the public comment period within the agenda item for tonight's meeting when we talk about library services.

**SECOND BY:** Ms. deLeon

**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

Mr. Banonis said so it's clear for the public as to what just happened there. They would ordinarily take public comment at the beginning of the meeting, however in this situation, what we're going to do is because there's only item on the agenda tonight, we're actually going to take public comment as that agenda item is up. So, again, if there's anybody that wants to speak, we have a sign-in sheet that's outside on the table. Please sign in and they will call you in the order that you signed in.

**III. PRESENTATIONS/HEARINGS – None**

**IV. DEVELOPER ITEMS – None**

**V. TOWNSHIP BUSINESS ITEMS**

**A. Discussion Regarding Library Services**

Mr. Banonis said the library is of importance to the Township. There has been quite a bit of feedback that we've received as Council. There is a lot of misinformation that's out there as well. He spent some time going through the details that we have as Council. He'd like to share some of that information with you, and it's going to take a little while, but he thinks it's important to inform you, and to try to clear the air on some topics that may, you may not, be aware of. He's sure that each of you would agree that history is important and that facts matter. And he would also hope that our residents and taxpayers would be in favor of informed decision making when it comes to local library services. Let's take some time here to go over what the facts are and what the history is here. First of all, the Hellertown Library is Hellertown Area Library it is its own entity. It is a 501c3 organization. It exists under the laws of Pennsylvania. It is not a department of Lower Saucon Township. It is not owned or operated by the Township. It was not created by the Township. It was

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organized in the Borough of Hellertown for the benefit of the Borough and its citizens. And it continues to exist that way. The library itself has almost \$200,000 of its own money, Lower Saucon does not control how the library handles its finances or its affairs. The library is controlled by its own board, to which Hellertown and Lower Saucon made appointments pursuant to a written library services agreement. That agreement is now expired. It expired on December 31st, and this Council agreed this to extend it by one month to allow us to do further investigation as to what the best options are for the Township and its residents. Seven months ago, almost eight now, Lower Saucon Township sought to negotiate and reach a new agreement with the library and with Hellertown Borough. It was extended by one month to allow this Council to investigate and try to come up with some solutions. And that's what we're here to discuss tonight. As he said earlier, the library has its own board. The board's required by law to make decisions in the best interest of the library. For a period of seven months in 2021, from May through December, the library board apparently chose to exclude Lower Saucon Township from negotiations on a new agreement. The board instead negotiated a new agreement with only the Hellertown Borough and its board decided to exclude Lower Saucon Township from those discussions. Some may find it's strange that the Hellertown Area Library made a decision to exclude Lower Saucon Township, he certainly does. And when you hear the facts, he expects you may have more questions and more concern. The library receives its funding mainly from three sources, the Borough of Hellertown, the state and Lower Saucon Township. One would expect that it would be in the best interest of the library to include one of its three main funding sources in those discussions. The Township paid \$100,000 of taxpayer money to the library every year. Over the course of the eight years that we've been aligned with the Hellertown Area Library, we have paid nearly \$1 million of Lower Saucon Township taxpayer money to support that library. Despite that the Hellertown Area Library chose not to include the Township in those discussions. He finds that to be strange. Others may as well. How did Lower Saucon Township ever get associated with the Hellertown Area Library? It is important to understand the history. Nine years ago, in 2013 Lower Saucon Township agreed to pay a fee to the Hellertown Area Library for Lower Saucon Township residents to have access to the library. Lower Saucon Township then and now does not have a municipal library. Prior to that, Lower Saucon Township had always used the City of Bethlehem library, for its municipal library services. Bethlehem charged Lower Saucon Township a per capita fee for access to its library. The City wanted the library to cover added pension and utility expenses, which had raised the rate for participating municipalities. The other municipalities besides Lower Saucon Township voted against that increase. They requested the increase to be withdrawn and at the same time, a task force was formed for Lower Saucon Township library usage. It found that the library usage was split between Bethlehem and Hellertown libraries. The force proposed exploring splitting payments between Bethlehem and Hellertown. Bethlehem library received 25% of its funding from the participating municipalities. One of four of which was Lower Saucon Township. Not surprising, Bethlehem Area Library did not want Lower Saucon Township splitting its money. Bethlehem wanted all of the money, and they felt that splitting the fees would hurt its finances. It's hardly shocking. Interestingly, the director of the Bethlehem library back then nine years ago, noted that consolidation of libraries in the Lehigh valley was needed to have all libraries working together. There was a library person advocating for consolidation of libraries, Robin Rotherham, from the Hellertown Area Library, lobbied Lower Saucon Township to leave the Bethlehem Area Library and align with the Hellertown Area Library, her basis was community and fairness. She envisioned libraries in 10 years as a community space, no longer focused on books, but instead on media. She also advocated nine years ago for the consolidation of library services due to financial pressures. Priscilla deLeon, also on Lower Saucon Township Council nine years ago, advocated for a side by side comparison. She apparently recognized then just as the majority of this Council does now, the need for due diligence to support informed decision making. There really is no difference between what was done then and what we're doing now and what we have done yet, some choose to misinform you that Council wants to close the Hellertown Area Library. In reality, all that we want is to be involved and informed about a resource that we pay almost a \$100,000 of Township taxpayer money for. That's it, nothing more despite what you may have been told or what you have seen. Back in 2013, the library task force proceeded survey around 300 Lower Saucon Township households. The task force received a response rate of about 20%. 50% of the 20% of the respondents said that they used the Hellertown Area Library. That was

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about 30 out of the 300 households surveyed. The 30 households that responded in favor of going with the Hellertown Area Library, represents less than 1% of the 3,700 plus total households in Lower Saucon Township. Nonetheless, the 30 households were considered statistically representative of Lower Saucon Township usage of the library service and the preference for Hellertown Area Library. The other municipalities that were used in the Bethlehem Area Library at that time and the Bethlehem Area Library rejected the idea of splitting Lower Saucon Township's fee with Hellertown Area Library. Lower Saucon Township then decided in 2013 to leave the Bethlehem Area Library and join the Hellertown Area Library. I looked at the meeting minutes, these are publicly available meeting minutes, and I reviewed them. Many urged Council then to reject going with Hellertown Area Library. Reasons included concerns that the consolidation committee was stacked with non-Lower Saucon Township residents, the Hellertown Area Library could not compare to Bethlehem offerings, the lack of cost effectiveness of joining with a small struggling library in Hellertown and giving up access to millions of library, materials. Others opposed going with the Hellertown Area Library with concerns of you get what you pay for. Those questions remain valid today despite what you've been hearing about Council's intentions. After hearing from the task force back in 2013, Lower Saucon Township's very own Priscilla deLeon voted no to joining the Hellertown Area Library. She rejected the idea to align Lower Saucon Township tax dollars with the Hellertown Area Library. But despite that opposition, the agreement to go with Hellertown was voted yes, four to one. Approved by a majority of this Council in 2013, the move to the Hellertown Area Library was done, at least in some part as a cost cutting measure. This change made a drastic cut to library services funding over \$180,000 paid to Bethlehem. The fee paid thereafter was more than a 50% reduction in the pre-move library funding in exchange for the Hellertown Area Library granting Lower Saucon Township residents access to its library. The Township paid a large capital infusion. That infusion was \$170,000 of taxpayer money. He is not aware of Hellertown ever paying a similar capital fee to match or come close to Lower Saucon's generosity. Lower Saucon Township thereafter paid a negotiated per capita fee annually to gain access for its citizens, tens of thousands of dollars. Every single year. This annual fee is double what the Hellertown Borough pays for its library physically located within its borders and within walking distance of virtually all of its households. All of this is public record. It's available in meeting minutes and other documents. He suspects that many of you may not know those details, and he shares them again because history and context are important here. It's especially necessary for us to make informed decisions in the interest of the Township. Back to current times, 2021, Lower Saucon Township sought to maintain its relationship with the Hellertown Area Library, it really did. Despite what many may say otherwise, in conjunction with a desire to engage in discussions for a new agreement with the library, Lower Saucon Township has repeatedly asked for library usage data, anything that reflects usage by Lower Saucon Township residents. Ask yourself this, please, would you want to know what you're paying for? Or do you just write checks without determining if what you're paying for is something of value and actually being used? Despite the Township's request for usage data, the library has not shared that. Not until Monday, did we get any figures and those figures with just some numbers on a piece of paper without any data runs? That is also despite receiving close to \$1 million of Lower Saucon Township money in the past eight years. It remains very questionable, at least to me, maybe others, what information has not been forthcoming? One may wonder why the library representatives have not shared that important data. Some may ask what they've been spending their time on rather than investigating, providing the information that we requested months ago. Nonetheless, even without this information, it seems logical that Lower Saucon Township usage may not be double that of Hellertown. The library is located in the middle of the Borough. It's within a walking distance of all Borough residents. By contrast virtually all Lower Saucon Township residents who use the Hellertown Library must drive to it. Many live several miles away. It could take some 10 or 15 minutes or more to get to the library. Further, today's technology renders much of what a traditional library provided, from the comfort of home, especially during a pandemic. As he said earlier, the library also receives state funding. State funding is based on municipal population, not actual users. That funding also is inflated to the benefit of the library by Lower Saucon Township's larger population. The population of Lower Saucon Township is roughly double that of the number of Hellertown residents. Yet we still don't know how many actually use the library. Despite the financial windfalls that come from Lower Saucon Township

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from both the Township directly and state indirectly, the library and Borough apparently feel that Lower Saucon Township is unimportant except for its money. Lower Saucon Township began in May of 2021 making requests to participate in this process. We offered the services of our lawyer at no charge to the Borough or the library, a free lawyer to get squared away. Yet we were ignored and rejected the exclusion of Lower Saucon Township in contract and, and organization discussions says that we should not have a voice in the organization and operation of the library going forward. They have deliberately excluded Lower Saucon Township from the discussions. They instead reached a new agreement, negotiated and agreed upon only by them, not us. That again is despite Lower Saucon Township's long history of greater funding and disproportionately low representation on the library board. There are some who make baseless accusations about us playing politics. Yet the Hellertown Area Library has organizational flaws. It's inconsistent with a typical 501c3 organizational structure and operation. Its own lawyer hired and paid for at least in part by Lower Saucon Township tax dollars, seems to agree. Again, Lower Saucon Township offered the services of its solicitor at no charge to provide recommendations free of charge. And the library rejected. We have seen clear examples of the Hellertown Area Library, lacking transparency and accountability, and apparently wants no part of them. This raises concerns about this Council's use of taxpayer dollars, especially when the amount approaches six figures. The library still demands Lower Saucon Township tax dollars keep flowing unquestioned, but refuses our input and oversight. For example, just in the past year, it had one non board member voting at its meeting. That individual voted on topics of financial importance, all of while getting six figures from Lower Saucon Township. A non-board member voting on library activities. When called out by this Council, the library ultimately acknowledged it was improper, but that was only after this Council caught this and pointed out the impropriety. Another example, those supporting the Hellertown Area Library, opposed Lower Saucon Township's efforts to appoint a board member as provided under the prior agreement in effect at that time. A representative of the Hellertown Area Library, opposed Lower Saucon Township advertising a vacancy to the library board to be filled by an appointee of Lower Saucon Township pursuant to the library agreement. The library agreement expressly provided for that, but yet the library still tried to stop it. Perhaps even more revealing, the board member that was nominated by Lower Saucon Township was a former Bethlehem librarian. She was also a registered Democrat and her family was politically involved. Her husband was running, albeit now unsuccessfully, for the Saucon Valley School Board. This Council sought to appoint that person and he personally voted for her. This Council had been, has been accused of being political in its treatment of the library. Nothing is further from the truth. Lower Saucon Township sought to appoint in accordance with the library agreement, a Democrat with library credentials, whose husband was a political candidate. Yet he and others on this Council are labeled as being political. Please ask yourselves, who's playing politics? Who sought to ignore the appointee provisions, the existing library agreement who wanted to exclude someone, someone with library experience from involvement in the library? Wouldn't you, as a Lower Saucon Township resident, want someone with library experience on the board of the library that we're funding? Let's talk about the contract. The library in Hellertown rejected every effort, every single effort by our Township Manager and Solicitor over a period of eight months. Lower Saucon Township staff sought to participate in contract renewal negotiations. Yet we were shut out by the library and the Hellertown Borough. On August 18, 2021, Hellertown Borough Council President, Tom Rieger was at one of our Council meetings. He was not here to talk about the library. He instead just happened to be checking our agenda and saw a topic of interest to him. He came here, he offered his views on the topic and he said nothing about the library or the contract. On October 6, 2021, Hellertown Borough Council President Tom Rieger came back here again. This time he was accompanied by Hellertown Borough Mayor Heintzelman. Mr. Rieger said, he is reading this directly from the minutes, he would like nothing more than to direct his manager with, as he would hope you would direct your manager and attorney if need be to sit down and talk a about the library agreement and negotiate, it's a direct quote from him. He also said, he'll quote again, that's why we are here tonight. We want to sit down and figure it out" sit down and figure it out. Let that sink in. Mr. Rieger also said, another direct quote, "typically in the past, those negotiations have included the Township management, someone from the Council, both attorneys sat down and that's how they got the old agreement." Typically included the Township management, Council and both attorneys. Those are his words, not mine. Mr. Rieger also went on to say, quote, "he'd like nothing

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more than to commit to you guys that he will direct Cathy” This is Cathy Hartranft, the Hellertown Borough Manager, “tomorrow morning meeting, October 7, 2021 to set up a meeting with the Hellertown Area Library and us. And we'll begin that negotiation and be able to wrap it up in a couple of weeks”. The Borough committed, then that he would have the Borough manager, the following day set up a meeting, negotiate it and wrap it up with us. All of this can be found in the Lower Saucon Township Council minutes on October 6, 2021 at page eight, its right there on black and white. So how did they sit down and figure this out with us? They didn't, they ignored us. They never contacted us. Our Township Manager contacted them repeatedly and they ignored our requests. Instead, only six weeks later and a month before the expiration of the contract, the library dumped on us or dropped on us a one-sided agreement to reach with the Borough in secret, without Lower Saucon's awareness or input. Then on the Eve of the expiring contract representative, the library showed up at this Council meeting, demanding that we signed the Hellertown deal immediately because the contract extension would expire in only one month. This was a crisis born of the library in Hellertown designed to benefit the library in Hellertown. He'll say it again, a crisis born of the library in Hellertown designed to benefit them. Our Solicitor, whose obligations flow to this Council just as our Council's duties flow to the residents of this Township, recommended against entering into the lopsided contract. Our lawyer said, don't sign it. He explained exactly what the problems were with this agreement problems that Lower Saucon sought to avoid, or at least have an opportunity to address for more than seven months. This attempt was negotiated and agreed upon by in between Hellertown and the library it was made in secret while flat out rejecting Lower Saucon's efforts to participate and be heard. And our lawyer said, it's wrong. Don't do it. Even then, this Council graciously agreed to extend and fund the expiring contract for another month until January 31<sup>st</sup>. We did not defund the library. We funded it at exactly the same monthly level as was done last year. The goal was to allow all three sides to talk about this and to allow for due diligence, to see what we get from the Hellertown Area Library and to compare other options. What happened next is probably the most telling in this whole process. Even then the Borough of Hellertown still refused to respond and continues to ignore us. There's been no meeting that has occurred until two days ago when representatives of this Council and solicitor met with individuals from the library. Representatives of Lower Saucon Township thought the meeting went well, but communication since then suggests perhaps not. Let's go back to October 20, 2021 again. The Hellertown Borough president promised at that meeting that they would meet with us and they never did. Despite request, Hellertown blew us off. This is the same person who unilaterally canceled a SV Partnership meeting on October 13, 2021. You may not be familiar with the SV Partnership, but that is a joint organization with Lower Saucon Township, the Borough and the school district to discuss issues of commonality among us and try to reach solutions. On November 1, 2021, Hellertown Borough Council included the library as an agenda item at its Borough Council meeting, and never told or notified Lower Saucon Township and never invited our attendance. We had no idea. On November 15, 2021 Hellertown Borough Council, again, included an agenda item and it was titled approval of Hellertown Area Library agreement effective January 1, 2022 Council action. Yet again, it never notified Lower Saucon Township or invited our attendance. It never sought our input, met with us or negotiated any terms with us as its president, Tom Rieger expressly promised to us. Oddly, the Hellertown Borough website includes no minutes from the November 1 or 15 2021 meetings. There are minutes though, from the December 2021 meeting, but there are no minutes published on the library topic from November. Check it out for yourself. It's right there on their website. You can look it up right now from your phone if you want. So why are they trying to hide from the public, who were not in attendance at that meeting or the Lower Saucon Township residents or anyone else what was going on at that meeting? More than two months later, there's still no minutes that have been posted. Apparently, tens of thousands of dollars of Borough tax payer money was committed to be spent. But yet there's no publicly posted minutes on that. There are publicly posted minutes from December 6th, 2021. Has anyone here asked the elected officials in Hellertown why they've acted this way toward Lower Saucon Township or to the detriment of Lower Saucon Township residents or to the Township relationship to the library. They're a supposed partner in this library. Or why they say one thing and do something else. Have you gone to a Hellertown Borough Council meeting like you show up here? Have you called or emailed anyone from the Borough, the mayor or the library board, like you've contacted us? Has anyone asked the Mayor or the Borough Council why

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they would not respond to our manager or contact anybody on Council or come to one of our Council meetings to discuss this? Or meet with us like promised or why they came to our meetings and say one thing and do the opposite thing to our detriment? Or why they apparently vote on matters of financial importance and don't even post the minutes? He suspects not. He would like answers to that and he doesn't think we're going to get those answers. Since then, individuals on behalf of the library have made baseless claims about this Council. They made statements to cause some to believe that the Township is closing the library. Do you really believe that? Do you really believe that this Council is looking to close the library? Go back and look at all of the Lower Saucon Township Council meeting minutes from 2021. He can assure you that you will not find any instance where there is ever any discussion about closing the Hellertown Library. Even if we wanted to close the Hellertown Library, which he personally does not want to do, Lower Saucon Township has no legal authority to do so. We do not own the library. It does not exist within our municipality. It's not under our jurisdiction. It is its own organization with its own board and its own money. It alone, and apparently, with the blessing of the politicians in Hellertown, chooses whether to open or close, who to contract with and what it does with its money. It does not however choose who gets to use its library services. The state makes that determination and the state requirements are very clear despite what some may have told you. For anyone who thinks that the Hellertown Library is the end all and be all of libraries, he is very glad that you enjoy the library. Reading is important, so is knowledge. He's hoping that what he shared with you tonight provides you with some comfort and understanding the history of this. The good news is that whatever this Council decides tonight, you can still use the library, if you choose, with a Pennsylvania state access card. Your state taxes and the Township's contributions support library services. The state access card guarantees you access for free at no cost to you. And you still get to use the Hellertown Area Library and every other library that receives state funding. More good news, Lower Saucon Township has already provided funding toward its state obligations for its residents to have access to the Hellertown Area Library for 2021-2022. He fully expects that a majority of this Council may vote to authorize additional funding to meet and exceed the state requirements. In the end Lower Saucon Township, when compared to Hellertown Borough, may again be the largest single municipal contributor to the library services. So now you know, and he hopes it gives you comfort. But he also wants to be perfectly clear that he does have deep concerns with continuing to align Lower Saucon Township and sending more of our money to so-called partners. Partners do not ignore each other. They do not shut each other out. They do not refuse to freely share information. They do not reach side deals to benefit themselves and harm the other. They do not spread misinformation and craft public ironed pressure and manipulate us. There are some who feel that Hellertown and Lower Saucon are so intertwined. He used to think so, too. He honestly did, but there have been some recent developments, including those that make me question this. He first wants to point your attention to State Representative Freeman. His 136 district covers a large part of Lower Saucon and all of Hellertown. If you want to reach out to him, he'll give you his phone number. And that is 717-783-3815. And if you want talk with anybody at the Borough, you can give them a call at 610-838-7041. State representative Freeman was cited in local media just a week or two ago as wanting to keep Hellertown as part of the 136th district along with Freemansburg Borough. He claimed that those communities are so aligned and he apparently wants no part of Lower Saucon Township so he can get reelected. He'll also direct your attention to an open letter that was authored by the Borough on official Hellertown Borough letterhead. It was authored by the Borough Council and the Mayor. He'll direct your attention further to a January 3, 2022 resolution that was passed by the Hellertown Council at its monthly meeting. That letter and resolution advocated exactly the same position that Representative Freeman was making against aligning Hellertown and Lower Saucon Township. The Borough of Hellertown specifically said so. Lower Saucon Township is not the same community, at least in Hellertown's eyes. They said so. It's printed in black and white on their letterhead. It was voted upon by them and passed in a municipal resolution. Then, just yesterday, Mayor Heintzelman penned a letter speaking quote "from his heart" in the first paragraph. He speaks out against redistricting Hellertown into a state representative district with Lower Saucon Township. Again, he's against aligning Hellertown and Lower Saucon as having quote "positively no benefit to Hellertown at all" end quote. He said, no benefit to Hellertown at all. He says nothing about the consequences to Lower Saucon Township or the broader Saucon Valley community. In the second paragraph, he accuses quote "another community", which

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he guesses he means is Lower Saucon Township, but Mayor Heintzelman didn't have the gumption to say so, of not banding together to create and enjoy the values of the area the public library, that both communities worked hard to build” end quote. Mayor Heintzelman then boldly claims that Hellertown Borough listens, shares and places their values over power Hellertown listens, shares, and places values their values over power. Then it concludes with saying, “I am, Hellertown proud”. Hellertown proud, not Saucon Valley proud. Some may question why he's proud of only Hellertown and not the entire of Saucon Valley. When some claim that Hellertown and Lower Saucon Township are one community and should be aligned for library reasons, your own state representative Freeman, and the politicians in Hellertown say otherwise. Representative Freeman says, no, they're not. When his house district is redrawn, the elected officials in Hellertown say the same thing. Nobody on this Council has ever said anything like that. He begs you to find a time when we ever did. This proves to me that Hellertown only wants to be aligned with Lower Saucon Township when it suits them only for Lower Saucon money and nothing else and that's disheartening to me. Unfortunately, it's something that we cannot control and it's their choices, but apparently made without considering the interest of the community. Knowing this history, he hopes that some try really hard to understand what's going on. It's not necessarily your fault that you've been misled. Social media and local media are filled with misinformation. It's those of you who thought that you could trust, but are really just being manipulated to reach others goals. They want to take your money and malign this Council and insert politics into yet another fundamental, such as reading and learning. He also hopes that some now recognize and appreciate that treating Lower Saucon like an ATM is done, especially when we're treated so underhandedly at every turn. Taxation without representation just does not work. It never has and it never will be as long as he's on this Council. He's hoping that folks pay attention to the facts and inform themselves. He hopes you go back. And the reason why he went on for so long is because these facts are important. He hopes people read the minutes and reread them for good measure. History and facts matter. He personally still wants Lower Saucon to receive the best library services that are available. His family and he live here. They value education. He doesn't take any pay for this job. He does so because he cares about our community and he remains committed to making the best decisions for that community. Thank you.

Mrs. Zavacky said she'd like to share a little bit. She's the acting or newly appointed library liaison coming into this, learning the history, kind of taking this on with a really open mind, an opportunity to try to find a path forward for our residents. So what she wants to make sure you all understand, this is not about the question of the library itself in terms of its services. The collection, the books, the materials, the programs, and the value that provides both Hellertown and Lower Saucon Township residents of all of ages in this community. She's read every one of your emails and she's responded to most of them. She also finds value in the Hellertown Library's charm, the location and benefits. She took her kids there. She visited there. She also has received emails from residents who are not pleased with the offerings that the Hellertown Area Library offers and have asked us to explore options. They're in favor of that. She just learned from the Lehigh Valley Live article that there are 3,320 card holding members of the Hellertown Area Library that are Lower Saucon Township residents. That represents about 30% of our population. It's not a majority, so 30% of you belong to the library and that's great. But it isn't a majority. We do need to think about the majority of our residents, which is 11,000 and change, right? So what is important here? This is all about ensuring that we are upholding fiscal responsibility, appointment of a functioning board to oversee the organization and confidence in its leadership. When it comes to the agreement that we sign, it has language in there in terms of how a board is structured, how people are appointed to that board and how that organization is run. To not have that kind of eye on an agreement, how it's structured, and the money that we pay over six figures a year. She doesn't think you elected me to just sign a check or authorize a check for that kind of money. It's the behind the scene behind the curtain practices and behavior that has me challenged with how to move forward. She kept a super open mind when she was appointed this library liaison position. She was encouraged to get a conversation happening sooner rather than later. Before she was even sworn in, she knew something was going on. So how can we get a meeting on the books, get a meeting on the calendar to discuss what it's going on and how do we figure things out? She's been listening to the residents and hearing the concerns. She was ready to step in, get things to a better place, and simply move the process forward.

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But to do that, you can't resolve an issue if you're not talking right, you can't, you can't solve anything. So she, along with the Township Manager, Leslie, and Linc, our Township Solicitor, had an opportunity to finally speak directly with the library leadership team just this past Monday. This is why there was no discussion on this topic on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, because we never had the meeting. We couldn't share with you a revised agreement. We couldn't share with you feedback. We couldn't share with you anything because we haven't talked and we've had repeated requests to talk. That didn't happen until Martin Luther King Day on Monday. She noticed in some of the emails that were shared with her, historically from last month, there were several attempts by Leslie several attempts by Linc following up several times on the Township's behalf to get this on the calendar and gain confirmation of a meeting. Here we are today to discuss the topic because it just happened. What she thinks about when she's evaluating how do we move forward is this is a partnership, right? We're a donor and this should be a partnership and it's a three-way partnership so it probably gets a little more complicated because there's three parties here. Per the Hellertown Library website, the vision states of the organization, that the Hellertown Area Library engages the community by developing resources and promoting partnership opportunities. We are more than just books, which is awesome. When she thinks of partnerships, how to start one, how to build one and how to strengthen one, she thinks about five key things. She thinks about communication, transparency, collaboration, some persistence and trust. Uniquely, nonprofits have to do all this, especially find trust in their partners, as these are likely your donors, which ultimately fund you and keep you afloat. She can appreciate that it may not always be easy. You may not always agree. You may not always like what everyone's doing, but you have to find a way to trust. You have to get there. Over the past week and a half, she's discovered that there's little to none of these foundational partner elements to speak with. From the history as far as coming up to the time when we had our first meeting on Monday, the liaison function to and from the library, Hellertown Borough and Lower Saucon Township had completely broken down in the second half of 2021. There was no liaising happening whatsoever. There was not concern from the library flowing back to the Council. There was not concern from the Council, flowing back to the library. That is the job of this liaison role. You are supposed to broker and communicate whether things are uncomfortable and things are topic of concern. Whatever it is you need to be communicating. Given all this, a request and seemingly a demand and she's read the words, demand and pressure to sign an agreement for \$107,000 has been set forth by the library. That makes me uncomfortable. Because of the lack of the communication of the past seven months in the agreement shared with Council in December that needed to be revised before signing. We had to get advice from our Solicitor on how to proceed. And if the conversations were provided in a timely fashion back in July, that when we requested them, we probably wouldn't be in this position today. If the communication was flowing over the past six to seven months, we wouldn't be here like this today. We probably would've just said, yep, put it in the budget moving forward but here we are. We had to get Linc to advise us so that unfortunately is costing taxpayers money because we pay him hourly to help us navigate things like this. Again, if we would've been communicating back in July, we wouldn't be at this point. She's witnessed everyone in this Council, as well as every one of you in the audience over the past several months as she has been a citizen in this audience, but now here that you raise concerns when something isn't right. Especially budget line items, especially ones that are over \$100,000 as Council was elected to do we make sure it's right. It's sound and everyone feels comfortable. We can't have concerns over the content and structure of an agreement when, especially when the Township Solicitor needs to review before signing, that's a process that we always will take when we just expect to execute on it. We should not be doing something like that. She would hope everyone here trusts that we will review those things and make sure they're accurate. She knows every single one of you have made sure that there's things that many of you have an eagle eye she values that. In terms of communication, she knows Leslie you made outbound requests and things went dark. You've made requests Linc, and those have gone dark. We had that opportunity on Monday to have the meeting. She wanted to have it the first week of January, but she understands that the library wanted to hire its attorney to help them navigate and she appreciate that. He was very helpful. We discussed many of the changes that were made to the library's bylaws and the funding agreement. Most of those concerns were soundly addressed by the legal counsel with the exception of how the board would be structured and governed. In terms of transparency another item that she feels is important for a partnership to really work, we haven't

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really been given a place to be transparent. We haven't had a meeting to really start making movement here. Over the past week she felt like that meeting that we had on Monday was very transparent. We all shared our points of views and concerns. She knows she did, she knows Linc did and she knows the library folks did as well. She valued their perspective. She felt it was a needed step in the right direction. We may not have agreed with one another, but we all shared our point of view and feelings on raised concerns in the discussion. That's the first step to resolving conflict, right? It's to understand everyone's points of view to be able to move forward. You may not agree with it, but you understand and you listen and everybody she thought listened. In terms of what is fundamentally in the agreement that this Council will read. The concern around governance and operations is probably the root of what is most concerning of where our money is going from Lower Saucon Township. You've heard many examples in Jason's recap and the history. What's concerning to me most is the library board of trustees/directors. They're called Trustees today. They will be called directors in the future. They don't have control of how things are run. It's public relations or its partnership growth. She does not view that they have control of that. It's not an acting board and it's not acting in a board's best interest. Doing some research on the national Council of nonprofits, a nonprofit board of director, and she quotes a few judiciaries who steer the organization towards a sustainable future of adopting sound ethical and legal governance and financial management policies, as well as making sure the nonprofit has adequate resources to advance its mission. Although this can vary in general, the library board of trustees has a role in determining the mission of the library, setting the policy that governs that library, hiring and evaluating a library director and overseeing the general management of the library. And secondly, in terms of an inside of governance and operations upon review, and she's concerned about the finances of the organization, there is annual losses dipping into the endowment with constant fear and there's fear of surviving and budget cuts and running on a shoestring budget when you really look inside of it. There were some concerns there. When it's getting taxpayer money, she's worried about where that money is going. She can give some examples if we get to that, she doesn't want to take too much time from everyone else. She expresses her concerns in terms of trust, she expresses her intentions that we'd like to move forward with solutions and let's keep talking in that meeting on Monday. Although we were not able to ideate on solutions, given the need that we need to do this in a public forum. She couldn't offer solutions and ideas because we do that here. We have to do it in public forum. She couldn't do that. Ultimately it would need to be discussed here and put to a vote. We left the meeting with the agreement that we continue talking. What brings her pause is that she read on Facebook the following day from a citizen here in the audience that says update on the library. Negotiations are not looking good, Lower Saucon Township Council will most likely choose not to fund the library. That person was not in our meeting. And what concerns me is how did that person get that information? Was this person in the meeting? They weren't. And did we say that? No, she didn't say that. So sadly, these meetings sentiments went straight out to social media channels. She'd like to remove emotion here. She'd like to act logically and be thoughtful in our approach for the future of what's best for our collective community. Ms. deLeon said may she speak? First of all, she would like to apologize to everybody for not having Zoom access because of the tightness of this room, but it does bring back memories of when we were with the Bethlehem Library and the Hellertown Library. This room was again packed. She is sure you're here, not because of her being on social media, you guys are here because in your heart you want to save the Hellertown Library. She wants to thank you for that and thank Jason for the history lesson. She did vote no to the library back then and it wasn't because she didn't like the Hellertown Library. It was because she liked the City of Bethlehem Library. She liked the book mobile, and she also liked their online access to do research, which at that time, the Hellertown library didn't and it would be a while before they got caught up and now they do. After the vote, her support went to the library because that's how the vote went and that's what you're supposed to do when your vote fails. She really appreciate the history lesson and that you went way back and reminded her of all this stuff. Because as you know, you people either like her or hate her because of her votes in the past on different subjects. She has a long history here with the Township. This issue, she really feels that when going back, when Hellertown withdrew from the Bethlehem Library, and they didn't have a library and a small group of women went built the library. She was just so impressed that they were able to collect books and open up a storefront on Main Street in Hellertown and start a library. And here we sit today with this wonderful library because of that. S he just

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wanted to go back in history to that because it was amazing what those people did. Yes, we do pay more money because we do have more people that live in Lower Saucon Township as compared to Hellertown. We get library reports every now and then, and she's pretty sure she saw somewhere in those reports of the statistics on who uses the library, forgive her if she's wrong, she really thinks there was. She appreciates the time for you to come out and listen to us and we'll move on. Mrs. Zavacky said in terms of a recommendation, she doesn't feel that a per capita approach is the way to do this. She thinks that's dated at this point. The fact that there's only 30% of our residents that use it, it doesn't make sense to her that it's a per capita which is the proposed \$9.66 per resident, 11,000 residents. We also can't determine it through usage statistics. You can't do a per user type of thing because we understand that that is not done when people come in which is fair that that's not asked when people come in and use the program. It's not tracked, so you can't really do it that way. What that does, though, it'll fall in line with how other municipalities do it. They simply determine a number on an annual basis, and that's what they fund the library. Not all municipalities do a per capita. She doesn't want to do an agreement. She just wants to be a donor. She wants to say in our annual budget that we're going to donate X for library services, without an agreement. And there is no statutory requirement for libraries to have an agreement with donors. We don't have to have an agreement. As far as the concerns that we have about how it's run and the board and things like that, do what you want. Then we don't have to worry about it. Then we don't have to have it in writing and signing every year and scrutinizing it and using our Solicitor's time to review agreements. Let's just be a donor. Let's provide residents with what they're comfortable today, but perhaps some options. She wants to give those residents that want to continue to use Hellertown library to use it. Those who want to use the access card you can do that too. Those were the ideas that she had as far as contractually and structurally how she thinks we should move forward because she has spent way too much time of her life in the past two and a half weeks trying to unravel all this and she doesn't want to have to do it every year. It shouldn't be this complicated. It's a partnership. She wants to be up here doing good things. And she knows there's going to be challenging things, but this has been too much. She said she was going to make a motion and then open it up to public comment. Ms. deLeon said you don't have to make a motion. Mrs. Zavacky said no, she is going to make a motion. Mr. Banonis said he would like to add something before we have that motion. What he would like to point out is if you look at how Lower Saucon Township has emergency services with fire services we do not necessarily have an agreement. We provide them with lump sum funding. We do not have individuals sitting on the board of any fire company. What you are proposing is akin to how we treat fire services. Ms. deLeon asked if Mrs. Zavacky had a money amount in her head. Mrs. Zavacky said she does.

**MOTION BY:** Mrs. Zavacky moved to provide a donation to the Hellertown area library for \$50,000 for the year of 2022 less the amount that we've already paid in January without an agreement.

**SECOND BY:** Mr. Banonis

**ROLL CALL:** 4-1 (Mrs. deLeon – No)

The only things Mrs. Zavacky wants to address is to have our Solicitor look at in that situation is line item that brings her pause regarding fundraising and fundraising expense. There was in the budget for 2021 in the library budget. It's the 2021 budget proposal. She would just like to make sure that some of the finance questions that she has are on the up and up before we execute on that donation. Mr. Banonis said that if he understands the motion correctly, it is to fund the Hellertown Area Library \$50,000 minus what was already paid January's installment payment, subject to review and approval to the Solicitor's sole satisfaction that the financial questions that may have arisen from your review are to his satisfaction. Mrs. Zavacky said yes. Mr. Banonis said it looks like we have maybe about 25 or 30 people here who are interested in speaking. He is going to call up the names in order that we have here. He thinks that's the fair way to do this. He would ask that you come up and he will remind you that there's a three-minute time limit so that we can keep this meeting moving along. There is a clock up top and hopefully we can wrap up your comments in less than three minutes because of the number of people that we have. The first person that we have here is Jane Weddigen. Mr., Banonis said again, this is public comment for Lower Saucon residents.

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- Jane Weddigen, 3670 Winding Lane, said she has been a Lower Saucon resident since 1958. She came to represent the GFWC Saucon Valley Women's Club, which is a service organization. They are very much interested in the welfare of our community. She was president when they built the library and they very much like what happened there. She sees that we have differences of opinion today, and she came to find out what was going on and wow, did she find out. From the Women's Club of the Saucon Valley, let's get together and resolve our differences and be friends. Thank you. Mr. Banonis said thank you for your efforts to start the library.
- Janie Hecker, 1425 Coleville Road, said she has resided in Lower Saucon Township for 33 years. She is one of the declining number of citizens who started the library. While the Hellertown Women's Club members were early drivers of the effort, they were joined by many other men and women, from both Hellertown and Lower Saucon and beyond. Beginning in a store front on Main Street with donated books, this group began networking and fundraising. Once it became necessary to build a building, they put fundraising kicked in the high gear. Citizens made pledges, several individuals made sizable donations, grants were written and we sold hoagies. Lots of them. Dozens of building tradesmen volunteered their skills or materials, or both. This library was built primarily with private funds on Borough land. Not just to provide library services to the citizens of Hellertown, but to provide those services to everyone in the community. Which is why we named it The Hellertown Area Library. Those of us who did the work always hoped that we would officially serve all of SV. When Lower Saucon decided to partner in the library in 2013, she felt like a dream had come true. Today it feels like the dream is dead. The Hellertown Area Library excels in its functions. It really does provide a lot of things that citizens need. Computer access for people who don't have computers or don't know how to use them. Books, of course, magazines, audio, visual materials that reflect reading interests of the community. One specific thing that she wrote the children's room grant about was that we were going to provide materials that would adjunct the curricula of our SVSD. We did that. Offers programs for both children and adult patrons, and encourages lifelong learning and stirs imaginations. The library does this all while providing a safe place for children who spend time after school, groups like Girl Scouts meet there, Seniors get their taxes completed. Our library is both safely accessible and accommodating to getting materials and virtual programs to patrons. Especially during the early part of the pandemic. It safely opened to the patrons much earlier than other libraries in the area. More than a building with books, it is truly the hub of the community. That's a hard point to get across to people. We're not talking about the stuff in the building. We're talking about the community and what that means to the people in the community. This community, Hellertown and Lower Saucon, has a long history of being very separate and having attitudes on sides. One of the things we hope the library would do is unify the community. That's not happening. That's a shame and shame on us if this destruction continues.
- Jo-Ellen Thomson, 1819 Viola Lane, said she had remarks prepared that were exactly three minutes, but in view of all this information, a lot of what she has prepared does not directly apply. She is going to ask your permission to be able to ask a question, because now she is confused. Mr. Banonis said this is an opportunity for public comment, it is not a debate and it's not back and forth with question and answer. Ms. Thomson said it's just clarification of a comment that was made. She said if your \$50,000 donation to the library, how she hears it, you are expecting then the Hellertown Library to grant Lower Saucon residents continued membership in the library. Mr. Banonis said we already have access to the library and Linc can speak to this, but we have access to the library through the Pennsylvania State Library Association. Linc said he is not sure, ma'am, if membership is the correct word, it's a public library, right? He thinks that's somewhat lost. It's a public library. It's open to the public. Lower Saucon Township, just like every other municipality in the state of Pennsylvania, has the opportunity and the option to donate to public libraries. That's how it works. Public libraries, local public libraries do fundraising. That's what they do. They ask municipalities that are near to them to donate money. The Hellertown Area Library has requested a specific sum of money from Lower Saucon Township. What you heard tonight was a motion that has been made. We'll see what happens to donate a different amount of money to the library. This whole idea of membership in a library, he is not quite sure what it means because it's a public library. You heard people saying here tonight that the Hellertown library has told us that they don't ask for identification when you walk in the door because it's a public library. Right? So in, in any public library, he can

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walk into the City of Bethlehem's public library. Right? If he has a library card, he can walk in the door. Mr. Banonis said ladies and gentlemen, please, the solicitor is trying to answer residents, it is not an argument. This is his opportunity. Attorney Treadwell said he is sorry, obviously there are people here and it's emotional, but my answer is it's a public library. Ms. Thomson said no, she was just trying to, because you talked about getting the facts out and this is where she thinks there is a big misunderstanding of what grants somebody an access card. When she did her research and went online it said that in order to get access privileges, which are good at any library, you must have a home library, your community must contribute. Attorney Treadwell said that's correct. Ms. Thomson said if we don't have that agreement with any library, we won't have the access, but maybe she's incorrect. Attorney Treadwell said did you read further about how you become a home library? How does the Hellertown Area Library become Lower Saucon's home library? Did you read that part? Ms. Thomson said how she understood it, and she may be wrong, was that, that our Township has an agreement. Attorney Treadwell said that's not correct. He will just give a local example of that. The Southern Lehigh Library is supported by three municipalities. There are no written agreements. Mrs. Zavacky said the rest of the Lehigh County libraries, none of them have agreements with their municipalities that fund them throughout the entire Lehigh County. Attorney Treadwell said what the state of Pennsylvania code and regulations say is that if you, as a municipality donate or give a grant to a local library, that's in an amount of 15% or more of the total municipal donations that they get, then that's your home library. Ms. Thomson said thank you very much for clearing up that, because she thinks that information was not the way she had understood it or had seen it. This brings her to her second question. It seemed to her that, as Mrs. Zavacky presented, it looked like there was a problem with oversight in terms of what was going on with the Hellertown Area Library Trustees. You repeatedly said how they didn't get back to you and things like that. Ms. Thomson said she had applied for a position on that board. She understands that Lower Saucon has three positions. If you were having the trouble with the board not responding, why would you not have talked to your three Lower Saucon representatives to that board? Mrs. Zavacky said she did. She had a conversation and it was more getting the background and person didn't want be on the board anymore. She said that's the structure, right? That the concern she has about this board and how it's being run. It is just not functioning board as 501c3 board should function. Mr. Banonis said just to be clear Mrs. Zavacky, what you're proposing here is a donation in which eliminates the need for the Township to make those appointments, correct? Mrs. Zavacky said correct, but she still want be a liaison. She still wants to promote library services for the Township.

- Briana Rich, 3554 Old Philadelphia Pike said she has been a Lower Saucon Township resident since 2001, a registered Republican since 2011 at the age of 18. If she knew in the fall that the intentions of Lower Saucon Township would to be remove funding from our community or lower funding, creating a mistrust in our community and hinging our children's learning, she would have voted Democrat for the first time. When interviewed Council member Carocci was asked why he was running. His response was "I want to promote a Township government that provides an excellent service remaining debt free, having a strategic open space policy and supporting police, fire services and the Hellertown Library. These initiatives will help preserve the future of the Township for our children." This seems odd, wouldn't you say? We are battling for 1.4% of Lower Saucon Township's budget, \$105,000. Please know that the Township Manager makes more than this. There are 3,328 Lower Saucon residents that are library members counting on you, 2,659 Hellertown residents. We are a community as one. Council has that they do not feel Hellertown has provided adequate services in the past. Compared to Bethlehem, we are on a smaller budget significantly Bethlehem Area Library in 2020, received over \$2.7 million in funding. Hellertown receives a total of \$190. While Bethlehem serves a large community, Hellertown serves our community. Taking this funding away to give to a library who already receives 86% more funding would be ridiculous. They say that the library is not meeting with negotiation and they can't come to agreements. Council member Banonis says you can get a state access card. This is wrong. Go to [state.library.pa.gov](http://state.library.pa.gov). Pennsylvania residents living in a municipality that does not support a local state aided library, are not eligible for the program. No funding, no card. Tonight, she asks you, please stop spreading misinformation. Start using your platform to better our community. Stop overseeing things on the agenda because you simply don't want it there. Start giving every resident in this room your undivided attention rather than looking at the ground like you did last meeting. You all owe us that much. Many of us

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voted you in. Start doing your due diligence that you claim to be doing. She hardly believes that there are any taxpayers complaining about paying for the Hellertown Area Library. We will save this library with, or without you. She has over 780 signatures for people who care on change.org. The library in our community should be owed an apology for putting us through this. 2020 through 2022 has been hard enough. Now you have associates worried that they'll be laid off because they won't have enough money to pay them. Mr. Banonis said, Briana, the three minutes have passed, if she could wrap up the comment. Ms. Rich said you have Township members worried that they won't have a library to use and use all their services. You all have kids that have grown up. Some of us are still raising kind, compassionate, educated children, that will make a difference in the world one day. In that journey of life, defunding a public library will not be the intention of any of my children.

- Judy Atherholt, 1855 Mansfield Street, said she has lived in Lower Saucon for 21 years. She doesn't know a lot of your particulars that you spoke about tonight. She is only here to speak from her heart. She will say that you were talking about everybody having to drive to Hellertown and Lower Saucon to go to the library. She only lives a two to three minute drive from Hellertown Area Library. She would have to drive 15 minutes, 20 minutes to go to Bethlehem. She lives in a development. There's a development that abuts her. There's a whole thing of apartments next to her. She would say they compromise probably 1800 residents of Lower Saucon that live within two minutes of Hellertown Area Library. It's definitely a lot closer than going to Bethlehem. Speaking from her heart, Hellertown and Lower Saucon are a community. They share Community Day, Restaurant Week, Little League, Chamber of Commerce and much more. Lower Saucon residents can avail themselves to Hellertown Pool, Water Street Park, and Dimmick Park. Lower Saucon Farmer's Market is held right next to the Library every Sunday. Saucon Valley High school is located in Lower Saucon, but has a Hellertown address. When we watch the Hellertown Halloween parade, the presence is quite large of Lower Saucon emergency vehicles. Hellertown and Lower Saucon are a community. The pairing of Lower Saucon with Hellertown Area Library in 2013 was certainly fitting. She has heard nothing negative about the library. To the contrary, only most positive. Students from the SV Elementary School walk to the library after school. The girl Scouts meet and walk to the library. They certainly could not walk to Bethlehem. She attended a haunted house for the first time this year that was held at the library. It was great. The youth did a wonderful job. It makes no sense for me to pair with Bethlehem. It is much further to go and the cost and per capita taxes would be twice what it is now to the residents of Lower Saucon. The parking is not convenient in Bethlehem. You have to drive around looking for a spot on the street. This is not convenient for our seniors when we have a library that we can just pull right in and park. It is clearly not in the best interest of Lower Saucon Township residents. A gentleman spoke last meeting that there would still be a library. No one here thinks that want to destroy the library. It's that if you reduce the funding, you in a sense, destroy the library without funding. It cannot function to the extent where it's functioning now and offering their services it's offering to children and adults. That is the problem, the reduction of funding. If you were to leave the Hellertown Area Library, yes, there would still be a building, but they wouldn't have the money to have the services, buy books, buy DVDs. It would be a loss. She is an avid reader. She attends the adult programs, offered by the library. She personally would be devastated if she cannot continue to do these things. She feels like this would be a loss for not only Lower Saucon residents, but for Hellertown residents as well. She implores the Council to try and work things out and continue its allegiance and support of the Hellertown Area Library, which she thinks is only fitting and right. Thank you.
- Andrea Wittchen, 1885 Dartford Road, said you are suggesting that we cut the contribution that we make to the Hellertown Area Library by 50%. From over \$100,000 to \$50,000. Yet, your concern is how the library is run. If you have no agreement with the library, you have no possibility of demanding any kind of board positions or demanding any kind of oversight of the library. Your concern is how the library is run and how the board handles it and so you're going to cut your donations. You're not going to sign an agreement and you really don't care about how the library is run, right? As the previous woman pointed out, if you cut the contributions to the library, the library's going to have to cut \$50,000 out of programming for the library. That's going to make a significant difference in the services that can be provided to all of these fine people who are sitting here and are very upset. Secondly, she doesn't really give a rap about how Hellertown behaves. She does give a

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rap about how Lower Saucon behaves. What she is not happy about is why it took until tonight for us to get a formal explanation of what you claim has been going on for the last seven months. She read those minutes. She read them in great detail and you know it. You know that Kristen Stauffer raised a lot of these issues over the last several months. You know that in December there was no clear explanation of what was going on or what the problems were. Her question is, it's your job to communicate with us. Why haven't you been doing it until you turned it into a crisis? Then her third question is, you seem so upset about the fact that Hellertown has no minutes from their November meetings. Well, where the hell are minutes from the January 3rd meeting? They're not up there on the website. Thank you.

Mr. Banonis said they're not on the website because they haven't been approved yet. Ms. Wittchen said they are put in the packets that are put on the website with the agenda. You don't even have them on the agenda for tonight for approval. Why is it taking us so long to get minutes from our own previous meeting? You might as well take the log out of your own eye before you complain about your neighbors.

Mrs. Huhn said she can address the reason the minutes are not on the website because they haven't been completed yet. The person that transcribes them, had a death in the family and was on bereavement leave. Mr. Carocci said if anybody can't see the difference between minutes not being done from November and minutes not being done from two weeks ago it's unbelievable.

- Margaret Segaline, 2075 Leithsville Road, wants to share with you what some people here are missing. That is Northampton Community College has a representative at the library as we speak, helping young teenagers figure out what they're going to do about college. That's something that never changes. It was that way in 2013, it is that way now. That's just one piece of what the library is doing on an ongoing basis, providing that leadership and guidance. The library is a hub, as someone mentioned earlier, for the community of Lower Saucon Township and Hellertown. It's a hub because everyone knows they can go there and they can utilize the services, which are included in the packet that she gave out to each of you tonight. You can see that the number of services are just unbelievable. Young people depend on us to provide that kind of service so that they can grow. The crucial part of our young people's growth and development. It starts when they're preschoolers. They have programming for preschoolers on a regular basis. She doesn't want to speak about Bethlehem's library, but she visited there because she likes to make comparisons. She likes to have an objective opinion and she didn't see that kind of activity going on. She might be wrong. Hellertown is devoted to the children of both Lower Saucon and Hellertown. She is a Lower Saucon resident. She has a library card at Hellertown Area Library. They have things for all ages. That makes her very happy because when somebody doesn't have a computer, they know they can go there. If their printers down, they know they can go there. We would like to continue with the agreement that Linc Treadwell wrote. Despite this library having to continue to serve the needs of our community during this time, they've done a good job and she'd like to applaud them.

Attorney Treadwell said he has heard a couple of comments tonight about going to Bethlehem. If you recall that he and Leslie were tasked with looking into other options of libraries in the area. He doesn't think going back to the City of Bethlehem is an option. He just doesn't think it's a viable option. For anyone that's concerned about that, he doesn't believe it's a viable option. What may be a viable option, is some type of cooperation or partnership with the Southern Lehigh Library and UST. He thinks that's a potential possibility this Council might want to look into. There's a chance that we could have a much bigger community. We could get the Hellertown Area library, Lower Saucon, UST and Southern Lehigh to all come together and try and create a better regionalized library system. As far as Bethlehem is concerned, he doesn't think that's an option. Mr. Carocci asked Linc to clarify something. He said that the previous speaker said that Linc drafted an agreement. Linc said he did not draft it. His memory is not quite as good as it used to be, but he wrote the original agreement in 2013 but not the most recent one.

- Adrienne King, 2456 Alpine Drive, said she is a 9<sup>th</sup> grader at Saucon Valley High School and she has been attending the Hellertown Library since she was seven years old. The impact that the library

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has had on her family, friends and her has been significant. Over the years, she has attended various programs and now help run small events with the teen advisory group with Miss Andrea. Without access to the library, she will lose an important place to her and so will so many of her friends. The library serves their school district, and it makes sense to continue to belong to that library. Less money equals less of everything. Thank you.

- Hunter Gress, 3703 Old Philadelphia Pike, said he would just like to start out with something he is sure you guys probably aren't going to hear a lot of today, which is thank you. You reversed that ignorant policy you guys passed last week for this meeting temporarily. He wishes we could do it permanently, but at least it makes a better public comment experience for all the citizens who decided to come out here because, well, they thought this was important. Onto the actual agenda item itself, the library. He could give you numbers. He can tell you about community. There's a lot of people here that are going to do that. What he can tell you is it's great that he has that resource he can go to. He can go there and he has this little blue card, which has a whole lot of power behind it. He can walk in there, pick out any book, any DVD, anything he wants. Take it home with him and they trust him to take it, use it and bring it back later. Three weeks, he thinks is the borrowing time for books. He went there today and took out a book. Quite ironic, it was titled "Let the People Vote". Maybe you guys should read some of the literature of the Hellertown Area Library and let the people vote. Make the decision they want to make. Thank you.
- Laura Ray said for many, many, many decades she grew up here. She said you mentioned about how Hellertown Library isn't in Lower Saucon and nobody can get there so it's not really our place, which is pretty ridiculous because obviously the school kids can walk right down there. You can hop on your bicycle and get there, it's easy. When she grew up, we did only have the Bethlehem Area Library. Now she knows that's out the window. Thank goodness, because that would've been a terrible option. It was a pain to get there, kids can't get there, you can't walk there. We're really not Bethlehem. Saucon Valley, which is Hellertown and Lower Saucon is our community. The things that you're doing seem to be trying to rip apart what took many, many years to try to bring together. She has lived here all her life, and there always was an us vs. them. That's no way to have a community. The \$50,000 amount that was brought up seems to be pretty random willy-nilly based on who knows what. She thinks you just want to put something on your resume saying, hey, we saved you guys \$50,000. Whopty do. Are you saying the services that they've provided weren't worth \$100,000? That seems like a very reasonable amount to be paying for the library services that they provide. Who knows where you came up with that number, but she knows why you're using it. It goes along with the same crap we hear month after month of how you don't take any pay. Big deal. So what take the \$3,000, whatever, that's no big deal. Stop trying to insult other people for taking a Council pay, that's dumb. The fact that you use the threat to withdraw from the Hellertown Library in general is pretty pathetic and disgusting. You know taking away our money would be crippling to their budget. Yes, okay, look dumbfounded.

Mrs. Zavacky said did we say we were going to withdraw? Mr. Carocci said no. Attorney Treadwell said as a matter of fact, not only did nobody say that Lower Saucon was going to withdraw from the Hellertown Area Library, he thinks you heard Mrs. Zavacky say that we want to continue discussions with the Hellertown Area Library and Hellertown Borough to find a path forward that makes sense for everybody.

- Judy Malitsch, 1505 Willowbrook Drive, said she is here to speak on behalf of the children, although she knows the library services young and old alike. When she takes her grandchildren there, she sees a lot of senior citizens there enjoying their time as she hopes to when she gets just a little older. She finds it very sad that you are putting the needs of children at the bottom of the list like every other person in power has done for the last two years. Children come last. Not first. We need to put their needs first. After all that the children have endured for the last two years. this is the time that you choose to pick a fight with Hellertown and the board and whatnot. You couldn't let it go. After all that our children have endured after the schools that have been closed, the libraries were shut down and so on. This is the time that you pick to deny them opportunities. Let me tell you, Miss Andrea has thought outside the box. She provided programming when no other libraries provided programming. She has been to Emmaus, she has been to Lower Mac, and she has been to Bethlehem

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Library. She has been Southern Lehigh Library. They do not compare to the Hellertown Library. It is small. It is intimate. It is nurturing. You are greeted. When you come in, they actually know who we are. They will go out of their ways to help you. She has been to the libraries that is not the case. You want talk about Southern Lehigh? We can talk about that later. It is not the case at Southern Lehigh. The money that you are going to donate is an arbitrary number. Just like everything in the last two years, that has been arbitrary. Every person in empower, arbitrarily dictates what we are supposed to do or not supposed to do. But when it comes to the needs of our children, this community that she has lived for in over 30 years, she thought we had had more compassion for the people of this community at this time to make better decisions. Could you in your hearts think about the community and what the community has been through, especially our children, her grandchildren? She wants to thank Miss Andrea for providing opportunities way beyond what any other library has done.

- Renee Hillman, 2276 Wassergass Road, said which happens to be on the Eastern side of Lower Saucon Township. Her address though, has a zip code of 18055 Hellertown, Pennsylvania. She considers herself a member of the whole community, not just part of the community. If she has to go to Southern Lehigh now it's just as far because of where she lives. Hellertown Area Library is in the center of this community and we are a community. Somebody else said something that she had in my notes from early on in response to your comments, this is my comment. We are a community and years ago, yes, there was this us versus them. There's no need for that. It shouldn't have been, and it shouldn't be going forward. And sir, your comments were us vs. them for as long as they went on, they were us vs. them. This is not what we're about here. We should be pulling together. And she wants to know, is there anybody in this room here that supports any dollar amount cut to the library? Anybody raise your hand. If there's somebody who does please say so. These are your constituents. Keep that in mind. She understands fiscal responsibility. She lived here since 1985. The Township did not have the amount of services then that we have now. We did not have the amount of employees that we have now. All of that is good that we have. History can grow and improve. This area has improved immensely. And part of that is what the services are of the Hellertown Area Library. Thank you.
- Allison Millevoi, 2558 Kings Mill Road said she wasn't going to speak tonight. She saw outside that we had to check the box if we wanted to speak and she wanted to make sure she had a chance if she was so moved. She doesn't have prepared marks because she didn't think she was going to speak. She doesn't have the years of residency in Lower Saucon as many of the other speakers have. She has been here less than four years. She has lived in five different states. She has always belonged to a library. She has always made excellent use of the libraries and as someone who has used a lot of libraries over a lot of years, she can tell you that the Hellertown Area Library is second to none. The services are outstanding. The programming is outstanding. Her kids are comfortable enough to be naughty there because they know it's a safe space, right? We've all been there when we have kids. She works a stressful job with a lot of hours like she knows some of you up there do. She is eight minutes from the Hellertown Area Library. She can get to Hellertown Area Library on her lunch break, check out the books that they have set aside from me, run out the door and be back at her computer in under an hour. She can't do that at Southern Lehigh or Bethlehem, even though that may not be an option or anywhere else. She doesn't even have to go to the shelves to get a book because she can put it on reserve. The library staff knows her. When she walk in the door, they pull it, they have it waiting for her and they practically have it in their hands before she makes it to the desk. And that's with a mask on. She does not have enough good things to say about this library. She is confident that if we cut our funding, whatever format it takes. If it's we have an agreement, we don't have an agreement. It's a donation. It's part of an agreement, whatever it is, they have to cut their funding. She seriously doubts that as a 501c3 organization in the current economic environment, they are going to make up that money through donations alone. We're going to do our best if it comes to that but she is also confident they're going to have to cut their funding. That affects all of us in this room as constituents. What they are telling you as your constituents is that they want all the programming they are getting today from Hellertown. They don't want to drive to Southern Lehigh. Some of them can't drive to Southern Lehigh. They want this organization here, this Council to support this library. You say you want a partnership and you're not getting it from them. They are not hearing it from you

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guys, either. Having a partnership is working together. They want them to work with them and not put it all on them. Thank you.

- Robin Socha, 3521 Drifting Drive, said she has to thank this young lady because her comments are exactly hers. The library there is definitely for the children. Without the funding, the programs were will not be there. And she is asking you, please work with the library. If you can't, nominate some Borough and some Lower Saucon residents to listen in on the meeting and be mediators. Obviously you guys can't do it. You need some mediators, please.
- Callie Spirk, Waldheim Road, said she heard that you don't really want to pay the library that we have been paying. She wanted to tell you that lots of people don't like that, including her and her friends. She loves the library and her classmates and she have used it as a place to talk. They love going there. Her family and her pretty much live there in the summer. Not because they have to, because they want to. It's super fun. By not paying the money or signing the contract, you take our home library from thousands. Not only that, but you put people out of jobs and take a lot of the money that helps the Hellertown Area Library stay open. The library will lose librarians and possibly be put out of business. The money we provide is a lot of their budget and there are 3,328 people from Lower Saucon that go to the Hellertown Library. And out of that 815 of them are kids. She and her friends are some of them. Think of how many kids will be upset. Think of all of the people you'll put out of jobs, of the people who won't have enough books to read. Think about them, the community.
- Nicole Spirk, Waldheim Road, said Callie wrote that herself. She's going to give a shout out to 3rd grade at Saucon Valley Elementary School. She said it better than probably most of the adults in the room can say. She does have a couple points she would like to make Very good history and data that pulled from all of those meeting minutes. She would like to ask if there's been a recent survey of any of the Township residents, as far as what they're looking for. You pulled all that data and the numbers you said were nine years old. How about a current survey? We're really good at sending out alerts for canceled weather, for potholes or construction. How about an alert for a survey that says what is the actual usage from the community members? Because you're saying that there hasn't been a lot of communication. Well, if there's not a lot of communication, then how about let's start with a good faith step forward? Fine, if you don't want to fund it for five years, make a one year agreement to say we are going fund it at what it's been funded at. We are going to take that year as a honeymoon year and we want our three representatives there and we want to be able to have that conversation or that dialogue that you say is missing. Which she is also a little confused because she thinks some of you are pretty newly elected. She doesn't know how you didn't know about conversations when you weren't on the board. She knows that there's meeting minutes, but she is sure that there's some informal conversation that takes place in politics a little bit, maybe on the side. She would like to leave you with this. You're all up there as a part of politics like it or not. This is truly a legacy making moment. This is the part where people in the outside communities look at Lower Saucon and say, wow, what the heck is going on over there? You have a choice at this moment. You have a choice, you can divide the community and we can be that area. Or you can unite the community, even if it's only for that one year to sort it out. It seems shortsighted to her to just take it and say, okay, we're done. We have 10 days left in the month. We're going to give you \$50,000 when you've been operating under this \$100,000 budget. We're giving you no time to juggle that or to cycle that. She understands the hesitancy to say, okay, five years, because this is what we're looking at. It doesn't have to be this or that. Find another option, take that motion off the floor and make a new one, one year, put the new people in place that you want the oversight for. Continue the conversation in good faith. If it's actually about the community and about the kids and about the school and about the seniors and about all of the people who actually look at the Hellertown Library as a hub. We don't have a community center. We don't have a place where people can gather except the Hellertown Library, and those people do a hell of a job. Thank you.
- Kaitlyn O'Connor-Sommer, 2328 Polk Valley Road, said she is going to do hers first then the kids have a letter that they drafted. They are speaking as homeschool parents. They homeschool their three kids and the library is the bedrock of their sense of community. Their kids are comfortable at the library. Whomever was saying their kids misbehave, theirs super misbehave there and they still like us. It's their community. For them, they see the same kids in the same family at the library, at the pool, at the playground. That's how they have made their friends. They don't have, here's my class

of 50 kids and any of that. They literally make all of their friends at the library. It is where they go to learn. Where Miss Andrea has taught the kids to love their self-driven learning through books. They have access cards because they are homeschoolers so they do as many libraries as they possibly can. They can't get audio books or e-books with the access card. They don't do TV in their house so they do a lot of audio books when they need calm time. You can't get that from Bethlehem because as many as they can have is always a good thing. You can't get that with the access card at other libraries. Their only source for that is being full good members at Hellertown. One personal story from her. One of her now amazingly well spoken kids used to be incredibly shy to the point of tears when it came to talking to non-family members. Pre-pandemic, they were weekly library goers, but she remained the only one who would speak there. It was her and three kids running around but silent. However, when her child first learned to read, she announced that she would like to read her first book to Miss Andrea. They went to the library the next day and found Miss Andrea. She brought us downstairs knowing the need for privacy and her child read her the book and we'll never leave the library because of that. She doesn't know however our money goes, she wishes it will keep going there. It's such an amazing thing. She wishes she were rich enough to pay the other \$50,000 just to get it done because she wishes she could give this to everybody. She wants everyone to be able to have what they have. And she thinks if you take library things away, they won't have it. This is Finn O'Connor-Sommer, Ciaran O'Connor-Sommer and Ruairi O'Connor-Sommer who helped write the letter, but didn't make it. They are six years old, four years old and three years old. And although she did the typing, these are all of their words. "Dear Township Council, please keep us a part of Hellertown library. We know people there, we know Miss Andrea. They have a huge elevator there. We do cooking with Miss Andrea every month. It is fun. We do science at the library. We like getting books before science and getting to be out at night so we can see Christmas lights on the way home. We learned about candy and got to bring our candy to our car to eat. Our favorite part of the library is the books. We get to pick them ourselves and fill our library bag. We asked Miss Andrea for books about Columbia, start to read books and books about electricity, like Nicola Tesla. We like take out our favorite books like Nicola Tesla, Hello Lighthouse, and the one about the astronaut who painted the moon. We do not want to go to Bethlehem Library because it is huge and a long way from here. We don't know people there. When Ruairi was a baby, he almost got sick from the other kids there and was only two weeks old." Then each kid wrote their own favorite thing about going to the library. Finn says she likes recognizing the kids there. Ciaran likes carrying the library bag because she likes practicing being strong and Ruairi, who may have heard Ciaran's, also said he likes carrying the library bag when it is filled with books so that he can carry a 10-pound weight. Please keep us part of Hellertown Library. Thank you.

- Cara LaFlamme, 1433 Manor Drive, said she grew up in Hellertown. Hellertown proud and now she lives in Lower Saucon. Lower Saucon proud. When people ask her where she's from, she doesn't say Hellertown, she doesn't say Lower Saucon, she says SV. We are one community. She moved back here after living in D.C. after she had children because she wanted her children to be a part of this community. It's emotional for her. Her mother was there and she was on the Council when the Hellertown Library built their new library. She was there at the groundbreaking as a child. She remembers it as a child and it is a place that is very special to her. It is an emotional thing for many of us. She doesn't know that all of you see it that way. It seems to her from all of your comments that it's a numbers thing. She hopes that's really not the case and that it was a misconception that you gave to all of us here tonight. She is really hopeful that you are committed to what we as a community want. She think it's very clear tonight that they want to be full, have a Hellertown Library that is fully funded by Lower Saucon. She appreciate you trying to make a compromise. She just doesn't think it's going to cut it. She just doesn't think that it's going to give our children what we have and continue what we have. She told her kids she was coming here tonight. Her daughter really did want to come, but she was worried it would go past her bedtime, which it has. Their response was, well, that's just dumb. They like going to the library. Her daughter said word for word "Why would they do that?" It seems that she doesn't know all of the politics that seem to be going on behind the scenes. Their children are watching us. They're watching our decisions. They're watching our actions and she really hopes that our actions show them that we can be a community and that we need to step up now, especially after the last two years and everything that they've gone through. We need to pull together for not just our kids, but for all of us as well. She loves going to the library myself. She wants to

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leave with a quote that her husband pulled up as she was walking out the door tonight. Thanks to him. Walter Cronkite said, "Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap to that of an ignorant nation." They need our libraries. They need to be a part of them. And she, please, is asking that you completely and fully fund as you have in the past the Hellertown Library. Thank you.

- George Kramer, 2150 Wassergass Road, said everybody speaking here, like there seems to be a decision made and really Mrs. Zavacky already passed a motion or made a motion to reduce the budget. Mr. Banonis seconded it and much like the motion in the last meeting to regulate meetings, which is important we have to be civil, he doesn't think anybody here is going to persuade them to change that motion. Everybody's watching and nobody really feels like the truths being told. That's just what he thinks the emotion and passion in this room is telling you. Thank you.
- Jessica Hartman, 3811 Mockingbird Hill Road, said she came here tonight to represent her family, which is herself, her husband and her three year old, almost four year old son Parker. She just basically wanted to say how appreciative they are of all the services that the library has provided. It has just made them feel like it's their home that they go to and they have just done so much to make it accessible for them during these times and provided a safe place for them. They are just so grateful. They've never been to a library. She's worked with so many kids. She's been to so many libraries and they just do so much for them. She just wanted to come here and ask for whatever support they can get. She will leave with saying that not only are they there several times a week, her in-laws come and are constantly taking out books. She is sure you know the people that take the huge stack of books every three weeks. She supports some of your funding for our late fees. She even went back in time a little bit and got Parker a CD player for Christmas to play all of the CDs that they check out every three weeks, because it's very important to him. She can't tell you how many times she has heard duck on a tractor in the last couple of weeks. Thank you for considering our comments here tonight and thank you all.
- Jim Blaney, 1336 Stonestrow Road, said he just wanted to share one experience and we talked about removing emotion of from it. He grew up in Philly and his neighborhood in Philly had a small area library, as part of the Philadelphia library system. Somewhere in the middle of his childhood, there was never enough money. They started to cut money from the area libraries to funnel it back to the central library. As he grew up, he was learning to read and that library had enough funding to have programs every day of the week, including on weekends. He spent probably every single Saturday morning in that library there with the librarian learning to read so much so that he learned to read before he even went to school. He just loved going to the library, seeing the books, seeing what's going on. A few years later, he is now in his teenage years, he went back to the library because then he could take himself there. The funding had gotten cut so far. They had programs once a week. There was one person in the library and he went back a few weeks in a row and it broke his heart. You've heard a lot of people with anger, angry at you, angry at what? What he felt then was not anger. It was just disappointment. He is assuming that all of you have children. He is assuming all of your children have been extremely angry at one point. He has an 18 month old. He's angry at him about 15 times a day, for reasons he doesn't know, but the worst thing he has ever seen as a new parent is disappointment in his eyes. That's what worries him with what's going on here. We entered years ago. You don't just leave that, you keep working. And yes, it's hard. Yes, it takes a lot of time and effort. And sometimes you just want to give it up and walk away, but you've got 30% of our people here that belong to that library. That's 30% of households. He's assuming that have library card in the whole Township. But the other people, they may not have a library card at any library. They might not even go to libraries. They might not be library people. There's many different reasons. And how many people here have been paying into something that they don't go to. How many people have a Hulu subscription that they never watch, or they've never been to a national park or something like that. This is all stuff that our tax dollars, not Hulu, but our tax dollars go to that not everybody takes advantage of, and that's not the people who do take advantage of its fault. So he just wanted to wrap up with this, that while we do all have to drive there, it's an easy place to get to for pretty much anyone, everyone in our Township. The benefit that it brings to our children, to have a small, safe library that their parents know that they're fully funding and fully supporting. To bring all of those programs to fruition is really what, what can help our children. Thank you very much.

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- Erica Shorb, 2173 Rose Lane, said she also wasn't planning to speak, but thanks to the lengthiness of the meeting, she had time to prepare something. She and her husband are both educators. He is a public school educator while she educates their eighth, fifth, and third graders at home since 2020 in the midst of pandemic. The Hellertown Area Library has been a life raft as we had to drastically adjust our approach to education. They are part of a national curriculum that requires resources they regularly acquire through an inter library loan, which they would not have access to unless an agreement is reached. Material and resources aside, the staff is an incredible asset and support to the public. Their children are safe and comfortable using the Hellertown Library independently and do so each week. Talking about proximity, the library was the first destination her children were allowed to ride their bikes on their own and remains the only place we permit them to go independently. Their family aside, the competent and compassionate staff serve the needs of the greater community more adeptly than most, if not all other local organizations. If their funding is cut, the staff members and programming that make a difference in the lives of successful learning and growth of our community will no longer have the opportunity to serve them in the same capacity. That's really sad. She also happens to have an advanced degree in nonprofit management. She understands the need for best practices. She gets that. She hears you. She understands the need for accountability. However, she also understands how spread thin employees and leaders of nonprofits are. She understands that their dedication to serving the community often doesn't allow time to step into bigger picture process oriented conversations on the timeline that suits the pressure from external agencies and donors. While those big picture conversations are critical, knowing the employees from the library and their absolute passion for their work, she has no doubt that our six figure contribution is spent ethically. She also recognizes and hopes you can to that launching a nonprofit without a huge funding stream is a long term trajectory, and they are still relatively young in their establishment. Especially given the two years we have spent in pandemic. The amount they do with a limited budget is truly remarkable and cannot go understated. She understands as well that the type of reporting you're requesting changes the nature of how the library functions. She understands that the Southern Lehigh Library, which you're considering joining, is required to provide similar statistics and actively turns patrons from their Township away from programs if they are attending with grandchildren from Hellertown or Lower Saucon Township. She knows this because it happened to her mom who lives in Coopersburg and has been a card caring member of that library for decades, but could not attend programs at Southern Lehigh Library with her children or her niece and nephew. She believes Hellertown Area library isn't denying your request in order to be difficult. They are actively maintaining a high quality level of service and care for the community in the form of access to resources and exceptional programming, not dependent upon residency. Your requests and scrutiny are not necessarily unreasonable, but they are shortsighted and self-focused, which is the opposite of how the library has successfully launched and served as an invaluable resource to Lower Saucon Township thus far. Please don't limit your funding and in doing so cut critical services. She would ask that alternatively, you consider rewarding the excellent work and programming at the Hellertown Area Library with more generous financial support in the future. Thank you.
- Michelle Lanning, 3482 Drifting Drive, said as several have already said, thank you for all of you for being here. Listening to all the comments, obviously you can hear passion in the voices and everyone's voices for the library. As far as the comment "you get what you pay for" is right. Businesses are struggling right now to get quality employees and here we have them right here, but will they stay if their job's uncertain? Hellertown Area Library is fantastic and worth every penny that we were paying for it. We do not want a collaboration with another library. When you talk about the majority of Lower Saucon Township tax payers and only 30% from a survey quite a few years ago, pre COVID using the library. How many are using all of your services as someone else suggested that are provided by the Township? Are we figuring that out? Mr. Banonis said the 30% is actually a current figure. That's not an old figure. The old figure was some of the data that he had talked about from the survey that was done. Ms. Lanning said thank you for clarifying. Anyway, if we would do a survey of all of the services provided by the Township, how many would be using all of the services? If we keep talking about that, how many of the people would use a library no matter which library we're talking about? Bethlehem, we're talking about Southern Lehigh. We keep changing the narrative. Which is it? People don't use libraries? They aren't giving the information

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you requested, or maybe we should just go to another library instead. Everyone involved needs to get back to work here and get it done. We want to continue to be fairly contributing. Part of the Hellertown Area Library. Lower Saucon Township residents do not want a donor rate. Are you hearing them? They do not want a donor rate, but rather a joint rate. That's what we're here asking for. Lower Saucon Township not funding the library at the full rate that we have been doing will defund the library and divide this community further. Your community has voted for all of you to make the decisions in our best interest. And they appreciate the due diligence. They do. They just want to have more transparency in this, and they're telling you that they want this library funded at the rate that they have funded in the past and continue this as a partnership. Please make it work. They are asking you. Your taxpayers have spoken and we want to fund the Hellertown Area Library that is fair. 50,000 is not equitable. And frankly, \$100,000 is a bargain. Thank you very much.

- Sue Lucrezi, 1984 West Point Drive said it comes down to two things for her after hearing everybody really great impassioned speakers and she hopes our Council members are really going to think about what they heard tonight. Are you voting tonight? Think before you vote, don't just go vote what you planned on voting before you walked into this room. You've heard your residents speak. You were elected to serve us. Think about that before you take your vote, please. It all comes down to it's always money, but more than money, what she's heard from here is heart and community. When you vote, think about the heart and the community of our Township, and please keep funding the library. Thank you.
- Stacy Cook, Redington Road, said she appreciates the history lesson that you gave at the beginning, because a lot of that information, she didn't have any knowledge of. It was really valuable to her to understand how far back this has gone, but what was really clear, she thinks to everyone in this room was the non-spoken history lesson and the animosity. It seems like the personal issues that you have with Hellertown Borough. You shake your head, but she does have to question if this is going into factoring your governing decisions, because the way in which you spoke for 25 minutes, her three minutes don't interrupt, please. Mr. Banonis said he's not. Ms. Cook said during your 25 minutes, it did seem like you wanted to highlight Hellertown Borough. She doesn't belong to Hellertown Borough, she belongs to Lower Saucon, but she belongs to the SV community. And so in light of the fact that we've heard several other people highlight the need and the understanding that this isn't about getting rid of the library. She honestly doesn't think any of you are up there planning a book burning party after this event. Right? She gets that you feel this is important. Okay. So now she's going to turn to Mrs. Zavacky. Ms. Cook said she really appreciated a lot of Mrs. Zavacky's comments. She appreciated the five stipulations. She actually missed one of them though, because she is not a fast typer. Communication, transparency, collaboration, and trust, right? Some of what she heard from Jason was a lack of trust. And she gets that. She appreciates you having the foresight to think let's implement these moving forward. She loved the one individual who spoke to pulling our data now, right? Being able to incorporate maybe the individuals who are in this room or otherwise into those conversations, that would be really valuable. But if we don't have clear transparency, why are we looking at this point to make a motion of change? It's almost like, well, we didn't get what we needed. Well, no, actually she thinks they did get what they needed because Priscilla said that it was in some of the notes. What she was hearing was that it didn't come in the timely manner that we had. Seven months ago was referenced multiple times. So at this point, why not look at, instead of cutting our budget, as others have recommended, utilize the same standard that we have been. Take an independent, transparent look over the next year and she's sure all of these people will be back to support whatever it is that we look to do moving forward. It just seems foresight to not do your due diligence, as we said before. The other thing is that she wanted to highlight the point that you said, remove emotion and move forward logically. She fully supports that. She thinks we've had a lot of emotion here tonight, as evidenced by that. She hopes that Mrs. Zavacky, you can help your Council and the other individuals who sit next to you to remove their emotion and to be able to think logically about this, because those 25 minutes had a lot of emotion that she doesn't fully understand. She doesn't know this us and them. She actually doesn't care about the us and them. It's like she didn't get to sit at the lunch table. Who cares? She doesn't ask when she goes to the pool if they live in Lower Saucon. Thank you for your time.

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- Victoria Opthof-Cordaro, 1682 Woodfield Drive, said first and foremost, she thinks that it's extremely sad that we all sit here tonight. And over the last three months, the whole community has been very upset over the possibility of things that have been said since November into December into January. She think it's deplorable that we sit here with only three months, no information provided by Council. And then now we sit here with a motion to defund our library by 50% with no rationale. And on top of that, claiming that we don't have the information we need so we're just not going to participate whatsoever, she thinks it's deplorable. The second thing she wants to highlight is that the issue with the library has not been happening, that the library did this in last month or so and wasn't working with you. She sat, she didn't sit, but she listened to a Zoom meeting almost a year ago in which she listened to two members of our Council attack our volunteer library board member for participating in a library meeting during a month where there was no library representative for the Township. That person is a volunteer. All of the people that work for the library are volunteers. She thinks we've heard everybody here discuss tonight how important it was that the library do this and do that. She doesn't see any of you paying for their salary to quit their job, to attend all of these library meetings that you want to attend. She heard you, Miss Zavacky, indicate that you spent the last two weeks trying to work so hard and it was just so much effort for you and you don't want to do it anymore. You've only been on Council for a month, and yet you don't want to invest the time that you are asking the other volunteers of the library to invest in. She thinks that that's really sad. For the last seven months, we have paid Miss Huhn to attend all of the library meetings that discussed the contract that you are now claiming you had no idea about. Every single communication we heard from the library indicate that you received emails along with Hellertown. There were no Hellertown and library emails that went back and forth that did not include Lower Saucon. You want to talk about taxpayer dollars? She wants to know what happened in those last seven months when Miss Huhn was attending meetings with the Hellertown manager and nothing came forward to Council. What was she doing with our taxpayer dollars for the last seven months at those meetings when they came to you in December and you claimed we don't know what's going on. She thinks there's a lot of questions to be had here. She hopes that you rescind your motion. She hopes that you make a motion to find the a hundred and some odd thousand dollars that you put in your budget before the election and continue your due diligence and ask the Township what to do. Thank you.

Mr. Banonis said we've exhausted the list of people who have signed in and asked to speak. He knows that our solicitor wants to share some comments as well very briefly as part of the public comment. Solicitor Treadwell said he received a written correspondence from the attorney for the Hellertown Area Library today asking him to read this into the record. "Mr. Treadwell, I am writing to you in your capacity as solicitor for Lower Saucon Township. As you know, my firm has recently been retained to act as the legal representative of the Hellertown Area Library Association, a Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation, providing library services to the Hellertown area. My client has asked me to communicate the following to you. The revised drafts of the library services agreement among Lower Saucon Township, Hellertown Borough and the library and of the library bylaws that I've forwarded to you by email on Friday, January 14, 2022, represent the library's response to the comments and concerns previously raised by you and the Council regarding the prior drafts of such documents submitted to the Township in November 2021 and discussed at the Township Council meeting on December 2, 2021, the 1/14/2022 drafts also constitute the library's current proposal to resolve those concerns so that the library may continue to provide library services to the citizens of Lower Saucon Township after January 31, 2022. As such, we insist that this letter be publicly read and the 1/14/22 drafts be shared with all members of the Lower Saucon Township Council at the Council meeting on January 19, 2022. And that this letter be entered into the minutes of that meeting. The library is not demanding that the Lower Saucon Council vote on the library's proposal. Leaving the decision, whether to vote on the library's proposal, up to the Council. If our proposal is not approved by Lower Saucon Township Council at its January 19, 2022 meeting the library is open to continued discussion with the Township regarding a path forward being mindful that the end of the month and the end of the one month extension of the current agreement is approaching quickly as expressed during our recent conversation. If the Council wishes any such continuing relationship to be on a temporary or interim basis, rather than a multi-year basis, we respectfully request that the Council commit to fund the library for at least the duration of 2022, so that the library has certainty regarding its funding and the population it will serve for all of 2022. in short, the libraries of the opinion that the 1/14/2022 draft speak for themselves and the ball is in the Township court to take the next step, which

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may include acting upon the library's proposal, providing a counter proposal or allowing the current agreement and library services to Township residents and parentheses (to expire at the end of the month). Please provide any such counter proposal, a reasonable time prior to the next library board meeting on Tuesday, January 25, 2022. Please contact me with any questions or concerns regarding the above. Thank you for your assistance in this matter, and for your anticipated cooperation in sharing this letter and the 1/14/2022 draft with the members of the Council and entering this letter into the formal record of the January 19, 2022 Council Meeting. Regards, Mark D. Aurand, Counsel for Hellertown Area Library Association.”

Mr. Banonis said there's something else he needs to read in as well. This was an email that was, was sent to him by a Lower Saucon resident. She authorized him to identify her and her husband and to share this. And it says, “Dear Mr. Banonis, my name is Dawn Billick. My husband and I have lived in Lower Saucon for over 28 years. I cannot attend the Council meeting on Wednesday, January 19th, due to being immunocompromised from a health issue, unrelated to COVID. I did not see a Zoom option offered. After we moved to Lower Saucon we visited the Hellertown Library twice to apply for a library card, waited over 15 minutes and never saw any staff or patrons. Several years later, we received library cards, but were not impressed with the selection of books or staff knowledge at Hellertown Area Library so we went to the Bethlehem Library. I read approximately 150 books a year, both eBooks and hard cover or paperback books. We enjoyed Bethlehem's vast selection of books, DVD movies, and music CDs. Their reference librarian was also helpful. We visited the Bethlehem Library two to four times a month. We also appreciated that they purchased a wide variety of new books and DVDs on a regular basis. In addition, I use their e-resources. We could no longer use the Bethlehem Library and visited the Hellertown Library again. I had read many of the books available and my husband found their DVD selection limited. Several years ago, I ordered a few books through inner library loan for genealogical research. During each pick and return. No other patrons were there. We have little interest in using the materials at this library. Even their e-resources are limited, which is understandable as they were a small library. On January 17<sup>th</sup> I saw an article on the Morning Call website stating that Lower Saucon Council would be deciding if Lower Saucon should continue to support Hellertown Area Library. I wish Lower Saucon had notified its residents that the contract with the Hellertown Area Library was expiring so we could have gained support for using another library. I wonder how many previous Lower Saucon patrons who used the Bethlehem Library would've stepped forward and requested a change. If there was a public notice in the newspaper or Lower Saucon newsletter then I missed it. The Friends of Hellertown Area Library seem to be a small vocal group, but not everyone in the Township wants to use a small library with limited services. My husband and I ask that you consider supporting the Southern Lehigh Library instead. Personally, there are several reasons for our Southern Lehigh preference. I'm in a wheelchair. Southern Lehigh has a large parking lot as well as curbside pickup. They have 60,000 books and add 400 books each month according to their website. Besides DVDs, CDs, and VHS, they also offer streaming services. They offer extensive e-resources, including pearl trees, academic databases on world culture, food genealogy, one of my hobbies, and so much more. For families with young children, they offer digital classrooms with story time and games. They also offer a variety of children's and youth programs in person or on Zoom. Hellertown Area Library may be closer, but the services offered do not compare. Bethlehem Library parking is normally difficult and they only have two on street handicap parking spots, but we're familiar with and enjoy their library collection, getting books, movies, and music is now difficult for us. They do offer home delivery service, but I do not know their requirements. Please consider supporting Southern Lehigh library. Please consider supporting Southern Lehigh library. If you choose not to, then please consider Bethlehem Library over Hellertown Area Library. Thank you for your considerations. Sincerely, Dawn and Bill Billick, Silver Creek Road, Hellertown PA.”

Ms. deLeon said she would like to make a comment. She would like to ask you to reconsider your motion. She thinks that it's premature at this time. She thinks that back in 2013, when we were doing negotiations with the library and the Borough, we came up with a contract and we committed to X number of dollars to do repairs and to the library. She doesn't have the document in front of her, but she knows it was extensive. And she thinks that to right now say that you are only going to give them \$50,000, she thinks that really is not in the good interest of us showing them the respect that they deserve for doing what they do for our community. She thinks that we should look at this for the next year, pay the \$107,000 for the year, and then work, Jennifer, you have a good relationship so far with the library? Mr. Carocci said no, she just said she didn't. Ms. deLeon said well, you're the liaison. Mrs. Zavacky said she is not feeling that there's a willingness

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to work here. The fact that we had a really nice meeting on Monday. Like everybody shared their point of view. It was a really nice, everybody got it out, which great. And it felt good to get it out there to feel the, understand the point of view. But one of the three individuals on that call told somebody else not on that call and put it on social media that breaks her trust. That breaks the transparency she thought we were getting and the motion we were getting to go to. So why would that happen? They are trying to work it out. Everybody cares. Ms. Rich said can I comment on that? Mrs. Zavacky said sure, that'd be great. Ms. Rich said she actually went into library and she asked, did you guys meet an agreement? And they said, we have not yet. So in her mind, that means no agreement. Well, if you haven't come up with an agreement yet, you're probably not going to fund us. That's why she posted that. She needed to get people here. We got people here. She started the change.org over 700 signatures. She has been a voice for this community and the library as many others have. So there's not a distrust. The library didn't tell her what was going on in the meeting. She asked a question, which they could give me, did you meet an agreement? If she emailed you and said, did you meet an agreement? You would've said no too. Mrs. Zavacky said you can't do that. Ms. deLeon said she is learning a lot for the first time. Mrs. Zavacky said we have to discuss so here. You have to do that here. She is really glad that Ms. Rich clarified that. She's very glad because when you hear that, that gets concerning. Then the email from the lawyer, it's almost like a demand, right? We are a donor and the agreement is a demand. The library leadership is quoted in the paper as we need to put pressure. She wants a partnership here. She's trying to work this out. Mr. Banonis said we're not having an argument back and forth. That's not how this meeting operates. Our rules are here. It's been fairly civil to this point. He realizes it's getting late. Frustrations are probably high. People are getting tired. The public has had their chance to comment. This is now the opportunity during the meeting for Council to have their dialogue among themselves. They're not on back and forth here and having further discussion about it. This is the point where they are going to have their deliberations and they're going to perhaps have a motion. He thinks they have a motion and he thinks it's been seconded and then they are going to have a vote on it. Ms. deLeon said she would like to have be a partnership too and when she reads an email that the Solicitor sent an email to the town or something was dated, she doesn't have a printout with her, on Friday the 14th in ample time to get in our packet so that the residents and Council would've had access to that letter. Attorney Treadwell said he doesn't think that's factually correct. The documents came in, draft documents came in for Mrs. Zavacky and himself and Leslie to review before our meeting on Monday afternoon. They were not ready to go into a Council packet by 5:00 PM on Friday for consideration. Ms. deLeon said she withdraws that. As a Council member she would've liked to have seen that so maybe she could have maybe come up with some question or comment that you could have found relevant to your meeting. Attorney Treadwell said during the discussions that they had on Monday afternoon in the Zoom meeting they discussed whether or not it was a good idea between the library and the township to present these documents to the full Council for tonight's meeting. After those discussions, the library's attorney explain that he would talk to his client and let us know how they felt about it. Today at 11:00 he got the letter that he read and he immediately forwarded everything to this Council for their review. That was the process. That was the procedure. It was agreed upon. Mrs. Zavacky said they shared in that meeting that they can't put anything in a packet. It has to be 24 hours in advance to do it and they were shared that timeline in that meeting. Their attorney knew to get back to them if they want to make any changes to what was discussed in the meeting, but they came back with their final version. Ms. deLeon said to her nonprofit, it's hard being a nonprofit. She has the deepest respect. She's been on a nonprofit board, she is on a nonprofit board. It's really tough because you have good people trying to do a good job. And sometimes they're so concentrating, concentrated on what they're doing, they forget about the nuts and bolts they're supposed to keep the organization together. So she thinks that now we need to reach out and help them and help them do that part of their job better because you guys do the rest of it great. You've heard that tonight, but she thinks that we need to reconsider that \$107,000. And, if you want to, let's do that for this year. Let keep doing what we did in the past for this year and over the next year let's meet. And you know if Mrs. Zavacky doesn't want to be the liaison, she'll volunteer, you know, if you think that. Mr. Carocci said they've spoken to them for the past eight months really, and it's gotten nowhere. He doesn't think they negotiated in good faith and we are funding them with a \$50,000 donation. We said we would continue to work with them and trying to find a path forward, which could be a path forward to additional funding. But, at this time he's comfortable with just a no contract, a donation and trying to work on a path forward, but also looking at other options as well. It's been eight months. We're not going to continue this for another year. It's not productive. They didn't negotiate in good faith and he didn't appreciate it. He has a trust factor as well, because he didn't appreciate after the December meeting where they agreed on a one month extension for January and that we

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were going to pay for January, that the library was telling people, because we got in emails that the library's going to close January 1st or January 3<sup>rd</sup>. That's in emails that people said that the Library said that. They said "I went into the library and they told me today that we're going to close January 1st or January 3<sup>rd</sup>." This was after the December 1st meeting where they had already agreed to a 30 day extension and a payment to his knowledge was sent for January they were still telling people that. That's disingenuous. Ms. deLeon said she requested a 12<sup>th</sup> of the money. She requested that because if she wouldn't have brought that motion up, they never would've the motion they never would have gotten the money. Mrs. Yerger said she just wanted to add, that they authorize \$50,000. That gives them plenty of operating it's half, it's six months, basically of operating for them to continue and for us to continue to negotiate and get the contracts and things that are important to them. It's not going to preclude that the library is going to shut down tomorrow. It's just going to, you know, we're still donating to them. We're still providing them. We're still providing services for our residents, but it gives us the room to continue to get what we need from the library. Mrs. deLeon said did she miss something in the meeting here tonight? Attorney Treadwell said maybe we need to clarify what Mrs. Zavacky's motion was. Your motion was \$50,000 minus what was already paid in January immediately. Whatever that amount is subject to the subject to the review of the financial issues that he actually put in some correspondence to their attorney today. Mr. Carocci said that's actually more money. Attorney Treadwell said what did Lower Saucon pay the library in January Leslie? Mrs. Huhn said \$8,355. Attorney Treadwell said your motion Mrs. Zavacky is to write a check to the library after we go through this little bit of investigation, right, for \$50,000 minus \$8,355 and to do it immediately. Mrs. Zavacky said immediately. Mr. Carocci said he has not spoken much at all night, and that's fine, but there's no more public comment. If they were get to that check for \$42,000, they'd actually be getting more money more quickly than they would under the old agreement that's paid out money at about \$7,000 or \$8,000 a month. The library is getting almost half of the year funding immediately and we said we still look to working out. Mrs. Zavacky said she still wants to work on it. Mr. Carocci said the other thing he wants to point out is one of the things that hasn't been brought up tonight is a lot of people talked about that the programs for children at the Hellertown Library and he thinks they are important. One thing he hopes all of you people also go to a school board meeting because the SVSD provides zero funding to the Hellertown library. The Southern Lehigh School District provides \$68,000 a year. \$68,000 a year to the Southern Lehigh library for those early reading programs to get their kids ready for kindergarten. It's his understanding the school district is somewhat involved in crafting those programs so they are the right programs for the students. He hopes all of you can go to the next school board meeting and ask the school board why they're not funding the Hellertown Library's reading programs for youth. They provide \$0. The school district provides \$0 to the Hellertown library. He can understand you're upset that, that we only provide \$50,000 right now, but I hope you're just as outraged with the school board for not providing any funding and not also being involved in getting these kids ready to go to kindergarten and first grade and what programs are being administered at the Library. Ms. deLeon said can you elaborate on saying that there are \$50,000 now and then what's the other part? Mr. Carocci said we're going to continue to work on a path. Mrs. Zavacky it's not to say that there wouldn't be more funding down the road. There was a woman tonight that talked about like a honeymoon period, right? She kind of like that idea in that we need to continue working on this. We had one conversation she wants to continue working on it, but to move forward, to make sure our residents don't lose access on February 1st, she wants do something. She wants to make something start motioning in the right direction here. She doesn't want to lose the services that a lot of people appreciate here, but she does want to make sure that we need to all work together. We need to partner here and it might be a little rocky at first. It might be a little emotional at first, but she wants to work through it. She's hopeful. She's really trying. Ms. deLeon said so is she hearing a change of mind here? Mrs. Zavacky said no, no, it's the same. She didn't give a timeframe and a time limit. Ms. deLeon said maybe it would be nice to do that. Let's talk stages. Mr. Banonis said let him say a couple things here. He appreciates the comments that we received from so many people tonight, because he understands how passionate and how important the library is to you. What's even more reassuring about that is that you value education and reading, which is sorely needed this world. He recognizes the importance of library services like he said earlier. One of the things that stands out to him is that he didn't hear any comments tonight from the director of the library, nor any of the board members that he can recall. We've given the library in Hellertown eight months to get this issue resolved. We've tried in good faith to get this issue resolved and they have not cooperated with us. They don't want us to have those communications. We've given them eight months. He doesn't see an agreement coming together because we had this conversation on Monday and it would seem to be a positive conversation, but yet what we're hearing after the fact on social media and what

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we're hearing from their lawyer in a letter that was sent to us just a few hours ago today doesn't necessarily match up with what your expectations were coming out of that meeting. He's also concerned that we continue to pay the lawyers. We're paying our solicitor to participate in this. And he assumes that we're subsidizing the lawyer for the library because we fund the library and unless he's working for free, we're paying some portion of his bill. Those are concerns that he has, but you know, we're not giving up on the library here and we're not walking away. We're not closing the Hellertown Library. We can't close the library like he said at the beginning. We're still viewing Lower Saucon and Hellertown as part of a combined community in some respects. He hasn't heard anything tonight about any similar outcry towards the Borough or the library board about why they haven't done anything in eight months and why they've said and done things that are contradictory with one another. We're not abandoning the SV community for some purposes and keeping it for others. He gets the sense that our efforts here and what we've communicated to the public may not have been understood or heard in part, and that's disappointing. He doesn't know how much more we could talk about this, to explain the efforts that were made and how we view things. Certainly the motion that was made by Mrs. Zavacky does not preclude future discussions. And in fact, it provides some clarity for the library, at least for the first six months. They're getting the same funding and they're going to get it up front in a lump sum. That seems to him to be better than waiting for a monthly check to come in. He's at a bit of a loss, but he thinks his mind is made up. Mrs. Zavacky said she is just not ready for the \$107,000. She's not ready for that. That doesn't feel comfortable for her right now. Doing \$50,000 is comfortable for her to make sure the library feels whole for the next several months so people, our residents can get the services that they provide. That feels more comfortable for her right now, as we work through this. Mr. Carocci said he wants to thank Mrs. Zavacky for all her hard work on this. It was excellent work, excellent information. There was a motion made over two hours ago now, and he's going to call for a vote. Ms. deLeon said she was just going to ask another question. She said you said you don't have the experience or you want to see more action or more activity for your \$107,000. Mrs. Zavacky said right, she wants to see more partnership. The trust, the communication, for sure. Mr. Banonis said Mrs. Zavacky has been very clear on this. If Ms. deLeon has a comment that she wants to make to try to persuade one of them you can, but you're trying to cross examine her or ask her questions that she's already answered. Mrs. Zavacky said what concerns you Priscilla? Ms. deLeon said she has seen this so many times. New people come on the board and they evaluate, and that's great. It's always good to go over stuff, make sure we're doing things right, but everybody wants to, oh, let's see how this goes and it's just around that block, around that block. Mrs. Zavacky said we just met and you can be assured that what she's saying right now to Ms. deLeon that she's going to follow through. Ms. deLeon said we will see, she guesses time will tell. Mr. Banonis said Mrs. Zavacky's follow through depends upon the cooperation of some other parties. Mr. Banonis said he is going to make a motion as well. He regrets needing to make this motion, but he thinks that it's proactive rather than a reactive thing to do. He doesn't know what the Hellertown library is going to do with regard to allowing access for Lower Saucon residents in the library. He thinks it's important for Lower Saucon residents to have unfettered and uninterrupted access to the library. That's in accordance with Lower Saucon funding. He's going to make a motion to authorize the Township solicitor as needed in his sole discretion to immediately commence legal action, including injunctive relief against the library, its board, its director and any others he sees fit, to enjoin any efforts or actions to preclude the LST residents from having full access to the Hellertown Area Library as guaranteed Lower Saucon funding of the Hellertown Area Library and to immediately report and coordinate with representatives of the Commonwealth for enforcement of the state library access card provided under Pennsylvania law. Mr. Banonis said he is going to make a motion as well. He makes that proactively because he hopes that that does not occur, but at the same time, if it does occur, he doesn't want to have a lapse in library accessibility from the time that that would occur to the time that we get word of it and have an opportunity to address it at the next Council meeting. Mrs. Zavacky said so what she understands is after today's decision and that vote, that if the Hellertown Library decides to turn away our residents on February 1st or tomorrow, Linc can take action to stop them from doing it. Mr. Banonis said that's correct.

**MOTION BY:** Mr. Banonis moved to authorize the Township solicitor as needed in his sole discretion to immediately commence legal action, including injunctive relief against the library, its board, its director and any others he sees fit, to enjoin any efforts or actions to preclude the LST residents from having full access to the Hellertown Area Library as guaranteed Lower Saucon funding of the Hellertown Area Library and to immediately report and coordinate with representatives of

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the Commonwealth for enforcement of the state library access card provided under Pennsylvania law

**SECOND BY:** Mr. Carocci

**ROLL CALL:** 4-1 (Ms. deLeon – No)

Attorney Treadwell said comments from the audience that come six at a time, sometimes all at once, are not easy to respond to. He said ma'am the agenda item is library services that relates to library services. Library services includes the potential to keep the doors open. If they are closed correctly, it doesn't include, the Sunshine Act does not. Ma'am, the sunshine act does not require public comment before every single motion. It requires public comment on topics of discussion. And I'm not going to spend the next five minutes arguing with you from the, from the floor. Ma'am if you want call me tomorrow at my office feel free. We can have a discussion, thank you. Mr. Banonis said now that we've resolved the Township's funding and relationship of the Hellertown Area Library, he'd like to seek to expand our library services, that are available to Lower Saucon residents, in addition to the Hellertown Area Library, and he'll make a motion, to direct the Township Manager to issue a \$50,000 check from the \$110,000 that was budgeted for library services and to make that check payable to Southern Lehigh Library and to allow himself as Lower Saucon Council President and Mrs. Zavacky as the Lower Saucon Council Vice President and liaison to library services to present the check to Upper Saucon Township and/or the Southern Lehigh Library for Lower Saucon to align, at least in part with and support the Southern Lehigh Library, in addition to the Hellertown Area Library so Lower Saucon Township residents can have access to the additional library, facilities and services provided by Southern Lehigh Library. Ms. deLeon said so the new law that was just passed about agenda items, shouldn't this have been a separate agenda item because now you conveniently called it library services and you kind of lumped them all together, that's really not transparent. Mr. Carocci said he said three times the meeting was not adjourned. Ms. deLeon said just like the lady just said it's despicable. Mr. Banonis said Ms. deLeon you're not happy? Ms. deLeon said no, not at all, not at all. She doesn't have any information on the library here. They are taking money away from the Hellertown Library that we know about. And they're giving money to a library where she has no information. You want to do due diligence. Where's your due diligence on their operations and their board and their activities? Mr. Banonis said he is going to remind you back to that email that he read. It was a January 18th email that we got from Dawn and Bill Billick and he understands that Mrs. Zavacky has had some conversations. Mr. Banonis said to Chief, he is going to have to ask him to escort people out because they need to keep this meeting orderly. This has been dealt with, he's asked them many times. It's the last warning. They need to have order to this meeting to have a productive meeting. Mr. Banonis asked Mrs. Zavacky if she wants to speak to her discussions about Southern Lehigh. Ms. deLeon said who authorized that. Mrs. Zavacky said she is allowed. Mr. Banonis said she is the liaison to the library. Ms. deLeon said right, go everywhere. Mrs. Zavacky said she is allowed to. Ms. deLeon said Mrs. Zavacky is allowed to do everything and that she is allowed to do it too. Mr. Banonis said he also recalls that they had instructed the Township Manager previously to investigate other library options. Attorney Treadwell said he had contact with Upper Saucon Township. He had contact with Southern Lehigh library. He had contact with all these people based on a motion that was made by Council to look at other options. All of those things he discussed during the library services portion of the meeting. Ms. deLeon said yes, and in accordance to our administrative code pertinent information like that should be provide to Council three days before a meeting and this isn't happening. What are you doing? Certain people on Council know about this? Obviously, you know about it. Jason knows about it. You know about it. She doesn't know about it. Sandy, do you know about it? Are you still there? Sandy? Because if Sandy isn't on the entire call of the meeting technically anything she votes. Mrs. Yerger said she's trying to call in, but there's so many people shouting and yelling over each other. She honestly can only catch half of what's being said. Ms. deLeon said well that's unfortunate. Mrs. Yerger said people have no respect for each other's comments so she is not even sure what the heck you guys are talking. She understands they're talking about Southern Lehigh, but she can't understand everything else that's being said. Mr. Banonis said Sandy what essentially happened was he had made a motion to direct the Township Manager to issue \$50,000 check payable to Southern Lehigh Library and it would be payable out of the \$110,000 that was budgeted for library services. It would allow for Lower Saucon residents to have expanded library services to also include the Southern Lehigh library and would also allow himself as president and Mrs. Zavacky as Vice President and liaison to the library service to present that check Upper Saucon Township and/or the Southern Lehigh library so that we can get residents access to additional library facilities and services. It has nothing to do with any additional funding of

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Hellertown Area Library, which is still a possibility. It's simply to provide a check to them in the amount of \$50,000 with the same amount that we've authorized for Hellertown and it gives residents the access now to multiple campuses, additional materials and additional resources. Mrs. Yerger said just to confirm this has already been agreed upon from Upper Saucon? Mr. Banonis said we don't know. They may say no we don't want you. Again, we don't know if they're going to accept it. They may, they may not. If they don't accept it, then the check is voided and the money stays in the budgeted amount for \$110,000. Mr. Carocci said he thinks it's simply a way and a good way for us to express to Southern Lehigh library and Upper Saucon that we are interested in possibly partnering with them because of their vast resources, library resources, a lot that Hellertown doesn't have, but that doesn't mean we're precluding Hellertown in any way. In fact, we just voted to fund them for \$50,000. All we're saying is Upper Saucon we would like to be a part of that too. If they'll have us, we would like to be a part of that as well. That's all this authorization of payment is, and to him, it is expanding library services for all Township residents. Now hopefully at the end of all this, they will have two options. Mrs. Yerger said she just said thank you for the clarification, because she apologizes, but it was almost impossible to hear. There were so many people talking all at the same time that she couldn't understand what you were saying, but so you have a motion on the table to give \$50,000 to Southern Lehigh who appears to be agreeable to providing library services for our residents to expand our services as far as libraries to our residents, correct? Mr. Banonis said that's correct. And Mr. Carocci seconded that motion. Ms. deLeon said she has a question if she's allowed. Cathy, what does the budget say for library, the line item for the library? How is that specifically the language in there? Mrs. Gorman said she believe is \$105,000 for library services. Ms. deLeon said she doesn't know where she gets \$107,000 from, but it's whatever. It says for what? What does it say? Mrs. Gorman said it does not identify any particular library. Ms. deLeon said for other years, like the 2020 budget or the 2021 budget and previous budgets, did it identify a library or was that taken out of the language. Mrs. Gorman said a time ago, and she thinks she and Ms. deLeon had this discussion where Ms. deLeon wanted to stay with the Bethlehem Area library and she said it was in the budget that we were staying with the Bethlehem Area library and Mrs. Gorman explained back then that Council can switch because it's budgetary number. And just because it's written in the document doesn't mean that it precludes Council from making any other decisions. Ms. deLeon said Council cannot make any changes to the budget until April. Ms. deLeon said she is not suggesting that Mrs. Gorman is making any changes, she is just questioning Mrs. Gorman. She is so happy Mrs. Gorman has such a good memory of her things that she's done in those years. Mrs. Gorman said when it comes to the budget, she does have a long memory. Mrs. deLeon said she hopes to keep that in mind for her resume. Mr. Banonis said Cathy just to be clear, if they wanted to amend the budget they could do so in April. Mrs. Gorman said in April, you can amend the budget and you can appropriate any additional money you wish to library services. Mr. Carocci said so we could give in April, we could give additional money to the Hellertown. Mrs. Gorman said absolutely. Mr. Carocci said if they have progressed in their conversations with them and get some understandings. Mrs. Gorman said considering they have an excess fund balance, they would be able to do so. If they had a tight budget where they would not be able to. Mr. Carocci said his position is he wants to expand library services. He wants our residents to have an option of Southern Lehigh. He wants the option of Hellertown but for all the programs. He is fine reopening the budget in April and spending more money on library services because he thinks it's important. If that's what happens in April, that's what happens in April, but he think it only benefits our residents if we can be full members in two library systems. One is a very nice community library that offers a lot of community programs. Another one is a lot bigger that offers some different resources, some vast resources, and some vast book selections. They buy more books per month. He thinks we're offering our residents the best of both worlds at this point, and it can only get better. Mrs. Zavacky said it takes the step as well towards the regionalization of a lot of these services. Other counties have done it where the smaller libraries, because it's tough to raise the funds and the budgets are tough, that they start to come together and it's more collaborative. She knows in Lehigh County, it's collaborative, they're all in the same system, the computer system, and they have the library card. You can go to any library you want use the same library card, just an example. So this could really get that motion in play. She's heard as well and just in friends that she has and people that she knows that are associated with the Southern Lehigh Library, there are more and more Lower Saucon residents going there and getting a library card. They're using their access card to go there. She has that as a fact. Those people aren't here tonight and that's okay because they actually like going to a different library and that's okay. She can absolutely see people being upset about that, but she sees it as a broadening, a diversification and opportunity to bring them together for them to survive. She's afraid that in 10 years plus that these small libraries won't survive. She is not looking

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to destroy the Hellertown Area Library. She doesn't know what people don't understand about that. She's looking to have these things prosper and she thinks we need to get on a better path and she feels good about it because our intentions are right. Mr. Carocci said so does he. It's a great idea, a great plan to try and implement, they'll obviously see where it goes, but the more access our residents have to more libraries is better. That's the best thing possible and they both have their niche and their specialties. His thing is let's get them both going. We have had some problems with Hellertown but hopefully that can be resolved in the next couple of months, where there can be some understanding hopefully. It's not in either/or. It's a both. Let's do both. Mr. Banonis said he just wants to add something to what you said and that is it could be reciprocal where Upper Saucon or another community wants to do something similar to what we are doing here. In other words, they may want to come forward and they may want to provide funding to the Hellertown Library because of the services that are available at the Hellertown library. This is potentially, there could be some synergies here or where they could get funding from other sources and not just the two municipalities in the state that they relied upon for the bulk of their funding. Ms. deLeon said she would like to ask Mr. Carocci a question. Since the resolution we passed at the last meeting that you need two Council people to put something on the agenda, does she have his support to put on the meeting in April a library update to consider giving more money to the Hellertown library. Mr. Carocci said he won't say yes or no right now, but he will say this, he will consider it, but he wants to hear over the next couple months, he wants them to negotiate in good faith with, with Mrs. Zavacky. And he wants them to have conversations with Mrs. Zavacky as a library liaison. If Mrs. Zavacky can brief us then at meetings, when it's her time to speak at the end Council meeting, she can give us an update through February through March. Then if Ms. deLeon wants to ask him again in March about that, he'll have an answer for you, but he isn't going to put that back on the agenda if there's been no conversations with Hellertown. Meaning they won't meet with us, or for some unknown reason they cut off library programs or library services to Lower Saucon residents. Then his answer is absolutely not. But if Mrs. Zavacky says that things are going well, and we're really getting back to a real partnership with them, ask me in March and he'll say yes. Ms. deLeon said she is being positive and she's thinking that we're going to have a good relationship. Mr. Carocci said he isn't as positive as Ms. deLeon because he has seen over the past seven or eight months when Mrs. Huhn tried to negotiate with them, how they've treated her and it has not been good. They did not negotiate in good faith. He is not as positive as Ms. deLeon is, but ask him again in March.

**MOTION BY:** Mr. Banonis moved to direct the Township Manager to issue a \$50,000 check from the \$110,000 budgeted from library services, and to make that check payable to Southern Lehigh library and to allow Mr. Banonis as the Lower Saucon Council president, and Mrs. Zavacky as the Lower Saucon Council vice president and liaison to library services to present the check to Upper Saucon Township and/or the Southern Lehigh library for Lower Saucon to align with at least in part, and support Southern Lehigh Library in addition to the Hellertown Area Library so LST residents can have access to the additional library facilities provided by Southern Lehigh Library.

**SECOND BY:** Mr. Carocci

**ROLL CALL:** 4-1 (Ms. deLeon – No)

**VI. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS ITEMS**

**A. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 2021 FINANCIAL REPORTS**

**MOTION BY:** Mrs. Yerger moved for approval of the December 2021 financial reports.

**SECOND BY:** Mr. Banonis

**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

**VII. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – RESIDENTS ONLY**

**VIII. COUNCIL & STAFF REPORTS**

**A. MANAGER**

- Mrs. Huhn said she just wanted to provide Council with a couple of updates. The Meadows Road Bridge she's been informed that bids were opened December 16<sup>th</sup> to remove the existing bridge. Construction removal isn't anticipated to start until March or April. Separately, they're working on a design of the replacement bridge. A subcontractor will be doing subsurface

testing at the job site starting this week. This work is to get to the depth of the rock, which will help determine the parameters for foundations of a new structure. On the Lower Saucon Road Bridge, we have received our utility clearances and been given the go ahead. We will be advertising the project on PennBid in the next week or so. And on the Easton Road Ballfields, we have added the engineering to the conceptual layout Council approved, and that has been submitted with our NPDES permit application. We will discuss their comments with Council when we receive them. Ms. deLeon asks that the bridge information goes in the constant email. Mrs. Huhn said we will put it on our Facebook. Mr. Banonis said with regard to the Meadows Road Bridge, there were some concerns and there was at least a goal to take it down in December because of the freeze thaw cycle. Did they address that in any of the comments? Mrs. Huhn said they did not.

**B. COUNCIL/JR. COUNCIL**

**Jr. Council – Absent**

**Mrs. Zavacky**

- The only thing she wanted to start to get moving is the ability to have live stream access to the meetings. She understands the last meeting we were still waiting for another bid. Mrs. Huhn said she is waiting for another bid and will be putting it on the next Council Agenda. Mrs. Zavacky said she would like to be involved in that if there is a committee to really. Mrs. Huhn said she can pull the previous information that she has. Mrs. Zavacky said and at least put an outline of what our options are or what bids we've got, so you can discuss it. Ms. deLeon said she'd like to be involved in that too, because she's been asking since COVID. Mrs. Zavacky said she thinks it's important. Mrs. deLeon said it's been put on the back burner for way too long and that's why she decided to stream the meeting from her phone. Mr. Banonis said he doesn't think it's been put on the back burner by Mrs. Huhn. Ms. deLeon said in her opinion it has been put on the back burner. Mr. Banonis said he wasn't talking to Ms. deLeon and she interrupted Mrs. Huhn so he didn't hear what her answer was. Mrs. Huhn said we have been waiting to get some quotes and we did have some issues getting some, our IT people said it was difficult with getting the cameras, which she had mentioned before because of COVID. They said they do have some available. The other issue is that our tower here is completely full with IT information or mechanisms and it's difficult to add anything else on, so we're going to have to look at adding it outside of this unit that controls everything in this room. Mr. Banonis asked if it would be beneficial to perhaps upgrade everything at once. This unit is probably historic to when the building was built. Mrs. Huhn said it was and actually that is something we could look at as we move forward with the Zoom option. Mrs. Zavacky said let's take a look at the Zoom option because there might be a Bluetooth, it's all streaming now and Bluetooth and we can uncover that as we go along and maybe report out what the findings are. Mrs. deLeon said in the beginning when we first started having Zoom meetings she had said how wonderful this was, this concept and how it gave the people an opportunity. She must have gotten 10 emails else about the library that "I COVID, I can't come to the meeting tonight, really sorry." It would've been an opportunity for people to come. She said that would be nice for you to be working on, to have that accomplished by when we started meeting in person and that never happened. That's why, in her opinion, it was on the back burner.

**Ms. Yerger**

- No report

**Mr. Carocci**

- He just wants to thank Mrs. Zavacky, Attorney Treadwell and Mrs. Huhn for how hard they've worked on these library issues for us to get to a good starting point with two different systems. He apologizes for, he thought some of the people were a little out of line tonight interrupting and stuff like that. He's sorry that people might not have treated you well tonight, all three of you. But he wants you to know that he appreciates your work on behalf of the township residents and on behalf of this Council. Thank you all three of you all very much.

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**Ms. deLeon**

- She attended the Hellertown Lower Saucon Chamber meeting last night, and they are busy scheduling bands to play music in the park and scheduling all kinds of stuff. Also this week, the remainder of the week is restaurant week and she went to a couple restaurants and foods delicious. Try to patronize our local restaurants and that's all she has.

**Mr. Banonis**

- He has some news that may be of interest to the citizens. The shopping center on 378, which is across from us here, has been vacant in large part for a while. We received word that the Revolutions property has changed ownership. The new owner intends to reopen it in a similar format to what was there before with bowling alleys and other entertainment. He thinks that's a positive development for the Township. It will draw residents into that shopping center, which otherwise had some vacancies in it. Glad to see that we're getting back to some normalcy there and getting some tax revenue coming out as well.
- He also talked with the engineer about the design for the Eastern Road ballfield. We've come to somewhat of a finalized design for the ballfield. He's going to be presenting that to representatives of Saucon Valley Diamond Sports, which will be the local baseball entity that will largely be using it. And to the extent possible, representatives of the high school baseball program to get some input on some of the finishing touches. The permits have been requested for the ballfield. They went out a week or two ago and they're now in the hands of the different entities that need to approve them. We probably have an opportunity to provide a little bit of feedback and hopefully we can get those permits in and in our hands by May or June. And at that point, hopefully we can have some contractors in place ready to go and improve that field for the residents and the Township.

C. **SOLICITOR** – No report

D. **ENGINEER** – Absent

**VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT - NON-AGENDA ITEMS – RESIDENTS/TAXPAYERS ONLY – 3-MINUTE TIME LIMIT**

- Hunter Gress, 3703 Old Philadelphia Pike, said there's a lot he'd love to say on the agenda item about what just went on after. He was not allowed to comment again, it's not for that. Last meeting, there was a Resolution passed #31-2022, and he'd like to direct everyone to point 18 of that Revolution or Resolution, which reads and he quotes "letters shall not be read during public comment unless such a letter can be read within the allotted three-minute time for public comment. No extension shall be allotted or shall be granted for residents or taxpayers reading a letter during public comment. Any letters cited or read may be submitted to the township manager" and he'd just like to make sure that Councils following these rules as well and not giving more than three minutes to a letter, which happens to agree with them when the people over here are silenced after three minutes, because they may happen to disagree with Council. Mr. Carocci said public comment does not apply to Council. Mr. Gress said he doesn't mean to argue with you, sir. He knows you guys don't like that as part of this discussion, but the letter read was not a Council member's letter, it was that of a citizen. And so he feels it should be treated the same as any other public comment. If you guys don't want to follow that, it's your Council, that's your choice, but thank you for listening to him. Mr. Banonis said he appreciates that and in deference to the person who has the disability and who sent that in to him, because she was immunocompromised, if he gets an email like that again, he'll read it really fast so that he makes sure he gets it in in three minutes and make you happy.
- Margaret Segaline, 2075 Leithsville Road, said regarding a statement that you just made about Eastern ballfields development. What is the anticipated cost of the ballfield? Mr. Banonis said we don't know yet. It hasn't been sent out for bid. Our intentions are to seek grant money for that in part, and we can also use open space money to develop that. We currently have over \$9 million, almost \$10 million in the open space fund. We have tried several times to certain pieces of property for conservation reasons. We've also tried to get conservation easements, and those efforts have not been successful because the property owners are either unresponsive or not interested in providing

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property to us for sale or to put an easement on their property. Rather than keep \$10 million parked in the bank, we would like to utilize some of that money to improve some of our park systems that will be benefit to the residents. Ms. Segaline asked did agree to that when we voted for it? She's just curious. She voted for open space, but she doesn't remember what the guidelines. Mr. Banonis said parks are considered to be open space. Outdoor recreational facilities that are largely undeveloped. We're not putting buildings and this is to actually use that money to improve a field that currently has some issues. The resident said t's pretty dilapidated. Mr. Banonis said just to provide some history. That was a ballfield that the township actually acquired from the church. The church either didn't want it or didn't want to maintain it any longer so the Township has taken it on and it's time for us to inject a little bit of open space money into it to try to make it a nice ballfield that people can use. Part of the goal here is that in both Hellertown and Lower Saucon there is no full size baseball field that has lights on it. In conversations with the representatives of the baseball organization, there are a lot of other communities that do so the lack of lights limits the playing ability on that field in the early spring. It also limits in the fall because of daylight issues. It also limits the amount of use and depending on how we improve this field, it may actually provide to us a source of revenue. If we rent it out to perhaps a baseball league or something like that, there are a lot of travel leagues that are in search of fields. If we build a fine field, I'm sure there are some that may be interested in it. Now his goal here is not to build out a ballfield and have a for-profit venture there. The goal is to provide a ballfield for the residents of both Hellertown and Lower Saucon and their children that are of that age that would play on that size field as well as adults who are playing on that type of field to have access to it. That's why we're looking at this field and we've had discussions about this. You may not have been at those Council meetings. There are minutes on it. This has been discussed and vetted and approved by the parks and recreation board. They're fully in support of it. Those are residents of the township who provide input to us on Council as to how we're going to advance the park and recreational opportunities in the township. He is encouraged by it, he's glad. And, this is something also that had been on the agenda back in 2012 or 2013 and that was something put on the back burner for some reason. We have injected new life into it and we're going see this through. Ms. Segaline thinks it was put on the back burner possibly because open space was fairly new at that time. She just wanted to ask when you get the bids, if you could make that. Mr. Banonis said that would be part of the agenda, we have to. We have to by law because he expects the dollar amount is going to be above the minimum threshold for us to spend township money. It would be an agenda item. At that point, we'll do our due diligence on the vendors and the supply chain issues and see which is the best and most sensible option with the money that's in the open space fund. We're not building an aster turf field here. We're not spending \$4 million, at least not in his mind. Maybe other people on Council may disagree with that, but he doesn't think that's a sensible use of the funds, but he thinks we can make something better than what we currently have.

- Laura Ray said the topic that she wanted to bring up, which you already brought up was regarding the streaming of meetings. She doesn't recall how long it's been since you've had the Zoom. It's been a while. She did attend pretty much all your Zoom calls. She appreciated having that option. She thinks a lot of people would still like to see that. She knows you, however many months, you've been looking into getting things set up. She doesn't know why it's taking so long with what kind of money our Township has to deal with. Her church has streaming everything. They're on Facebook, they're on Zoom. She thinks we should have at least some sort of option, even if it's just hearing sound, because believe her reading the minutes is extremely painful to do. And it's hard to know if anything's really captured, totally accurate with how much stuff gets said. She thinks we should be doing something in the interim. If you can't get cameras set up and whatever, you should be able to have something available right away. Her other topic and she zoned out a little, you're talking about bridges, but do we have an update on the Lower Saucon Road bridge? That's been like detoured for two years or however long. Mr. Banonis said that was already discussed, but if Mrs. Huhn wants to discuss it very quickly. Mrs. Huhn said we received our utility clearances and have been given the go ahead and will be advertising the project on PennBid in the next week or so. Ms. Ray said so what's the big hold up. Mr. Banonis said there were a couple of issues. One was there had to be a bog turtle survey because the wetlands that are adjacent to it. That can only be conducted during a certain period of time during the calendar year. It can only be conducted by a person who is called a bog turtle surveyor, it's a profession, and that person did their survey. And then in addition to that,

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because of the nature of the bridge that's going in and the crane we had to relocate or seek to relocate utilities in, it was in Verizon's hands for a period of time, a long period of time, they finally approved it. Then it went to PennDot gain for approval. That approval just came through. It's our goal, but we don't know if we can accomplish this, but it's our goal to have this done as quickly as possible and have the bid process done. When that occurs, we hope to be able to complete the bridge before October 1<sup>st</sup>. There's no guarantee that we can do that. If we don't complete it before October 1<sup>st</sup>, then we have an issue because DEP will not allow us to touch that bridge because of downstream spawning of trout. We now then have to wait until that window of time closes and at that point we're going to then have to do it next year, but we're hoping to get it done this year. We have no control over it again.

- Renee Hillman, 2276 Wassergass Road, said she just wants to express her appreciation to the Road Crew. It's difficult winter time and she just says that they did a good, good job this last two times. She'd love not to have to see them out there again this winter, but she does appreciate that. Mrs. Zavacky said she agrees.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION BY:** Mrs. deLeon moved for adjournment. The time was 9:30 p.m.

**SECOND BY:** Mrs. Zavacky

**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

Submitted by:

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Leslie Huhn  
Township Manager

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Sandra B. Yerger  
Council President