

1. **Meeting Called to Order** – The meeting was called to order by David Spirk at 6:32 p.m. at Town Hall.
2. **Roll Call – Present** – Members: David Spirk, Chairman, Tom Butera, Vice Chairman, Keith Meier (phoned in), Frank Thompson (6:35 p.m.), Niloofar Aflatooni, and Bill Ross; Staff Liaison: Stacy Werkheiser; Council Liaison: Jennifer Zavacky (6:38p.m.); Brien Kocher, Hanover Engineering. **Absent** – Member: Krista Baum; Jr. Council Members: Colin Griffith and Mason Simms. **Guests:** Victoria Opthof-Cordaro, Greg Best, and Jason Banonis.
3. **Nomination of Officers**
 - **Nomination of Vice Chair** – David Spirk moved to nominate Tom Butera as Vice Chairman, second by Bill Ross. Motion passes 5-0. (Krista Baum & Frank Thompson – Absent)
 - **Nomination of Chair** – Tom Butera moved to nominate David Spirk as Chair, second by Bill Ross. Motion passes 5-0. (Krista Baum & Frank Thompson – Absent)
4. **Approval of November 1, 2021 Minutes** – Bill Ross moved for approval of the November 1, 2021 minutes, second by Tom Butera. Motion passed 6-0. (Krista Baum – Absent)
5. **Presentations** – None
6. **Citizen Non-Agenda Items** – Jennifer said she has a resident reach out to her regarding a Pickleball who goes to Grange to play there. She said it is a fast-growing sport of all ages. She wanted to jumpstart the conversation since she has spoken to several residents who are interested. Dave said they would have to determine what field they would use. Jennifer said she believes there would be some residents in the Township that would gather information and bring some ideas back. Dave said they can come to a meeting and present their ideas to them. Bill added an idea that he wanted to share and that the open area behind the Lower Saucon Authority building, it is flat and there is access to parking. Jennifer said she believes the little lacrosse players use that field. They discussed how many would be needed, and the space that would be needed. Jason added there may be some other areas in the Township that he may be able to present in the future and will present it if it would be available. Jen said she has already been to Grange Park and it is packed with all ages. Jen said she can have them gather how many courts, how much space is needed etc. Jason said to have an overview of the whole pickleball game would be helpful, and then they can talk about location.
7. **Updates**
 - **Eagle Scout Project Completed** – Frank said the project is complete, but there needs to be information placed in the kiosk. Jason said he believes it is the Township Manager and Public Works that would add this. Jason added that it is on the agenda for Logan to be at the next Council Meeting. Stacy added that Logan’s mom confirmed with the Township they will be at the Council Meeting. Jason thanked Frank for his time he dedicated to Logan and his project and for keeping them updated.
 - **Easton Road Ballfield Update:** Dave introduced Greg Best, Lower Saucon Resident (2529 Black River Road). Jason introduced the redesign of the Easton Road Baseball Field from Hanover Engineering. It has been submitted to the Northampton County Conservation District for approval. An NPDES permit has been requested because the earth disturbance is going to be greater than one acre. This permit process is about 6 months long. There were previous permits that were pulled and approved by PennDOT and DEP with regard to wetlands and for driveway access. These permits have been requested for renewals. It is anticipated that there will be some comments that come back in about two months. Permit applications were submitted about one month ago. Jason reviewed the redesign referencing the drawing, and he is very happy with the design and this is what has been submitted to the state for approval. He is happy to have this project resurrected and moving forward. On behalf of Council, he thanked Greg for all of his input, and everyone involved. Dave added that his reflected about what was talked about many years ago. He said the motivation behind doing this

project making it a better field is it collects a lot of water; the upper field was not used after it was put in. Dave thanked Jason and Greg for spearheading this and hopefully it comes to fruition. Greg thanked everyone for supporting their program for the youth. He said they are very fortunate as a board to have Alex S., who works for a company that installs ballfields, and he has dedicated a tremendous amount of time reviewing plans and gave some real cost savings measures. He said when they get to the bid set, they can provide cost savings measures without effecting the performance or even improve it. Greg said last week at the meeting they had last week with Jason, that as some issues that may arise, he understands it is Mockingbird Lane, they are trying to stay a step ahead to overcome some of the resident's concerns. He said this project also brings an illuminated field because other than the Majors field at Dimmick Park, there is not another illuminated field for anyone to play above 12 years old. They are also talking with other organizations that are affiliated with Hellertown-Lower Saucon and Legion. They have discussed how everyone would want to participate to help share some of the costs and maintenance. They were fortunate to get a groomer and another one was offered to them as well. He said the community is really excited to participate and have a field they can really be proud of, other than just the Majors field. He said they had talked about early on about seeing if this was going to be a skin field. Jason said this plan was shown to Saucon Valley Diamond Sports (SVDS) at their Board Meeting, and they love the plan. They had talked about getting some input on the size of the dugouts, and what Alex S. had said is that ballfields now are being built with dugouts that are typically 45 to 47 feet in length and 12 to 15 feet in depth. Greg said they do not dugout anymore, and they were not sure if it was an ADA concern, he said 90% of the fields that.....he said the company also re-turf fields and initialize turf fields, and then when they build fields, they are no longer in the ground, there is no 2 steps down anymore. He said they had discussed Southern Lehigh's field where they have the dugout and then on top that, there are stands. Jason said this is different than the Saucon Valley High School field where the bleachers are so far down the lines, it is difficult to see the action taking place. Jason said the other item that was discussed with SVDS was the distance with Homeplate and the backstop. For example, the big field at Dimmick Park, there is a tremendous amount of space. Also, discussed and suggested by SVDS was for a structure behind home plate that can be used for storage, a snack stand, a booth for announcing games and running a scoreboard and he thinks this is feasible and can be put into the design. In addition, there would be a placement of multiple batting cages and bullpens. Frank asked if that would be in the future? Jason, said no, it would be in the plan. Greg added it poles and nets – not a huge structure. Jason reviewed the plans again in more detail. Bill asked if the 350 ft is good enough to meet the required dimension? Greg said it is. Jason said sometime in the future, which is currently the infield, to put a pavilion or some other recreational structure, playset but also consider that nobody would get hit by balls. Jason also discussed some drainage. Greg added if there is a need for clarification or any questions, they have a lot of generous volunteers with a lot of different random expertise. They are more than happy to do any research that may help. Jason said once the questions come back from the NPDES, they will have a pretty clear understanding of the final product, maybe 2 months from now, and at that point they can send it out for an RFP. Even though they won't have the permits in hand, they can at least start the process to address supply chain issues and staffing. Instead of waiting for the permits to come in, his recommendation to Council will be to bid it out and start getting some prices and line up some contractors and suppliers so that they are in line so when the permits do come in, hopefully June, they are ready to go and break ground. Maybe even be able to use the field in fall depending on how the construction process goes. Dave said that would be ambitious and would be tremendous. He added two things, on the big field at Dimmick, he said he thinks the Iron Pigs came and put down the infield dirt. Jason said he believes this was at knee-high field. They had won a contest and as part of the contest, they were able to pick a field and it was the knee-high field next to the Dewey Fire Co. Dave said he thinks they also got the dirt for the big field too and they had to spread it. He said this is a special in-field mix. Dave suggested to Greg that they should put a list together of all wish list items, and the worst that could happen is they will stop at a certain point on the list and the remaining items would be put in for the future whether it is the Township, SVDS, or fundraising. He mentioned about a score board, this way the site contractor could at least put in the rough electric. A list of items was reviewed that they could add. He (Dave) said he would like to see everything in the RFP, and if needed ask for donations. Greg also added that he is the Vice President of softball, and the softball community was very vocal about that field and they thought maybe it could be a skin field and used

for both softball and baseball, but it didn't work out. Greg said they have an illuminated field at the Township. Greg had heard it was tough to get this field, and he said he would bring up these since he would be at this meeting. Greg said the drainage is awful at this field. He knows there was some renovations were done to try remedy this, and it is a lot of infield mix across the parking lot. Dave said he didn't know there was a renovation done. Greg said something was done in the Spring, someone did something. Pea gravel was dropped underneath where the bleachers are on the parking lot side. Dave said he is going to assume Public Works may have done this. He said it lasted until the heavy May rain, and they tried to put some of it back. He said they have a different agreement with Dimmick in that they let them maintain the fields and groom them and everything they need to do and it works out really well. Greg said they also installed some security cameras. He also reviewed that some people are putting top soil down and he wants them to know that they are not doing, and said it is not them. Greg said they has strict instructions years ago that they are not to touch the fields. They are to call, and Public Works takes care of it. He said the biggest challenge is that it is not reserved for Saucon Softball. They have lost numbers years over years that go to club-style teams because they don't have, whether it be the facilities or talent. His goal is to try to get as many participants back in and get the numbers back up. One of the things they are doing is bringing in clinics from pretty well-known Hellertown-Lower Saucon (HLS) alumni in the softball community and getting the numbers back up. Greg said last year in fall ball they reserved the field for 3 days on each field to offset what they had at Dimmick, but by October it is dark. He said another organization had the field one night and the lights were left on, and an email went out and the other organization replied and said it wasn't them because they hadn't used the field yet. They said the field was reserved and unused. Saucon fall ball had to go to Wilson, Palisades, and would like to keep to try to keep the field for Saucon athletes. Dave said he agrees and he would like to understand. There were discussions on what organization it could be. Jason said he knows soccer uses the fields at Grist Mill, and things the propose of the field should be used for that sport as a priority. Dave said they should check with Carol. Bill added that in past the soccer league used that, but they do not have the numbers they used to as number are down. Bill said we should try to clarify this if someone is using the field, and be sure they really need it because we have an organization that wants to use it regularly. Greg said he appreciated that and it may have been a backup but it was tough for them. Dave said Jen and/or Jason can find out. Dave said he thinks Greg can make a list of what is needed on the field and an addendum to the RFP because they are both ballfield that get similar dirt. Dave said maybe adding trench drains, and thinks it may be minimal in the grand scheme of things. Jason said it is also easier to do since it is a skin field – it just has to be dug out, put the drains in, and fill it back in and it settles, make sure there is no unevenness, roll it to make sure it compacted. He said it is easier to do on a softball field vs. a baseball field because you don't have to worry about the infield. Greg said that they would like to ask to maintain the fields, not bringing anything in (infield mix), just using rakes and drags. He knows the Township subcontracts the grass mowing. Dave said the style if very different, that Lower Saucon Township does 100% and nothing by the citizens. At Hellertown, Dave has done everything and lined the fields 100 times. He said the question is can they ask to move on some of this. Jason said he thinks Greg would want to just maintain the infield and not the grass. Jason said he would suggest for him to send Jen and Jason an email and they can present it to the Township Manager. He said the reason he suggests this is that there were comments from residents in Steel City and a lot of the things were taken care of inhouse and they are more than willing to do this. Jason said they may be able to do some of these things, and he isn't sure what their technical capabilities are, maybe they have done it elsewhere to the extent they need to hire outside contractors to do the work – he isn't opposed to doing this but if we they can get a list of the things and they can present it to Leslie and she can sit with Roger, the head of Public Works, and they can determine if they can do these things. The operational part is to reserve it for softball, and some of the maintenance issued, he feels is an easy list. Dave said he agrees that Public works can do everything but the ultimately, with ongoing maintenance, he thinks should have some leeway to allow a proven commodity of SVDS to take care of the infield by bringing in a groomer and leaving it there. Dave said he thinks this should have some consideration and Jason agreed. Greg said he understand that Wednesday is dedicated to an adult league, and he would ask that at least every day of the week during softball season that there is a field available to the residents that they play for SVDS. Jason said he is going a step further that it's not just a field – their options for a lighted softball field are none. Jason

said she thinks that field should be their “A” field, it should be the field they aspire to have the most since it has the best amenities, it has the lights, they can practice on it, play games on it, as long as the time ordinance is followed. Jason said it should be their primary field especially in the early Spring and late Fall. Greg said most of the items he has to review is really to just receive permission to do things to the field. Dave said put a list together and they will go from there. Greg said he can have the list to them by the end of the week.

Dave moved the topic to the Miracle League and using the Easton field or other field. Dave said he looked at the field sizes that The Miracle League plays on and he is not sure they would use, what would be a Major League Baseball field. What he said they can use in Lower Saucon Township to host The Miracle League if that is a possibility, would be the Polk Valley Park fields. He thinks they are better suited. He asked Victoria if she ever had any functions in the Polk Valley Park fields. Victoria said she has been there but has not had any functions there. She had the opportunity to speak with Amanda about the needs and capacity are for their Miracle League and Special Olympics Organizations in the valley. Amanda indicated that the Charles Chrin Center, which was a 4-year project, \$500,000.00, the turf surface itself is \$100,000.00, and they had to do a lot coordinating with National Miracle League to make sure it met all the specifications they wanted. It was a very, very long and arduous process, and that field serves the community well. For Miracle League, they are sufficiently staffed with that, Amanda did not foresee that there would be an additional need in the community for a second field or facility so that was wonderful to hear that from her and even just some of the information on how they came through that process at the Charles Chrin Center. Victoria discussed with her some ideas in just making our field, since we were spending this effort and money on it, to make it friendly for spectators and family members who may have different abilities to utilize the field since all this work is being done. Things that she and Amanda discussed were a shaded pavilion, a lot of children with special needs are sensitive to sun and the elements more so than neurotypical kids so having a place for them to be able to go during practice is nice, and everyone uses pavilions. The other thing Amanda talked about was park benches that are ADA accessible. In Hanover Township, their park that has a playground has a lot of different items on it and we could go there and use that as an example to try to put some of those features at our park, not the playground equipment, but different things that were ADA accessible. Victoria said she did see on the drawing, she wasn't sure if the pathway that leads from the parking lot to the bleachers, what surface that is. Dave said it is ADA compliant, it will be asphalt and have the right slope at 5% or less. Victoria said that is wonderful. Victoria asked Amanda about bleachers, and what typically does the special needs community like to see and she said at Charles Chrin there are no bleachers, everyone is just right there by the fence. Typically, when you have someone in a wheelchair, they don't want to deal with anything that has to do with bleachers, and that makes sense, other than elevators at big fields there is no way to get to them but having a space that there could be a wheelchair or two at the bleachers. She knows they had some discussion about having bleachers above the dugouts, just if there is space there that someone could park their wheelchair if they needed to, a family member or a spectator, just to have that in mind. She wasn't sure if the ADA regulations already require that for the portion that is dedicated to the bleachers or not. Victoria said she hear they were thinking of doing pavilion anyway, so the picnic tables that are ADA compliant, to have at least one of them she thinks would be sufficient so that anyone that had a wheelchair could utilize that table. She said with her son, he is on a very specific feeding regimen and he cannot feed himself, having a table to bring him to if she were there for her daughter who can participate and practice in softball or baseball, that would be really helpful. The little things that are helpful if you are going to be buying these things, we can try to look at options they make for ADA compliance. Dave said the field and now the dugouts will now be all ADA compliant. He said the field is less than 5% slope, and the pathway is ADA compliant, he thinks Jason's idea of having the pavilion down near the parking lot in the outfield is probably the safest spot, and it is convenient to the parking lot. He said it isn't the greatest spot to watch the game, but nevertheless, it is a safe spot. You may have a homerun clear the fence by 20 or 30 feet, but it is very rare. Bill Ross said they could put netting up behind the fence to protect the pavilion or people out there. Dave said they have the pavilion set up what would be the outfield in Steel City, and they have had no trouble there. Bill said it is a smaller field with smaller players, with a big field you are more likely to get.....Dave said there may be a couple, and he has seen a couple go.....and he said the

houses aren't that far away from the fence at Dimmick and he has seen some go into yards. Dave also said it would help if there were some trees behind the.....Jason said he thinks the design will implement some trees, especially along the first base side to have some screening between the lane and properties over there and create a buffer for noise separation and also to catch anything that may go over that way in addition to the fence. Jason said it may take a while for those trees to mature but they will at some point. Dave asked Victoria who put that in, Palmer Township? Did Palmer Township pay for those things? Victoria said she isn't sure how they split it up and she does know that there was one council member, she thinks he just recently went off Council, but it was a passion of his to provide a space for people with disabilities and they worked with Charles Chrin who she thinks donated a lot of manpower to make this facility work with.....that is the facility and it was, like she said, apparently a very, very involved multi-year process to make sure that they had everything in place to comply with The Miracle League's regulations and it does serve the entire Lehigh Valley, including Saucon Valley students she is told. As far as what they need for the Special Olympics, there wouldn't be any need for a field for that either, they have sufficient resources right now to serve their community and other placed, there is no need there but she did say she thought it was wonderful that we wanted to try and make our ballfields more accessible and these are the ideas on a smaller scale, not building a Miracle League field that we can take a look at.

Dave asked if anyone else had anything to add or any questions. He thanked Greg for coming.

Greg also mentioned that the lights at Town Hall for the basketball court. He said the lights that are on there right now, they are a metal halide high intensity discharge lamp which takes about 10-15 minutes to fully ignite and go on. If you miss the blinking light, it takes 10-15 minutes, so his company, Graybar Electric, they have a certain amount they can apply for a local grant, so Greg applied for it last year, but he didn't get it. He said they can get 2 – 4 lights for free depending on what size, which they would donate and there would be no cost to the Township. He is not sure how this works, but they just did Grange Park in Macungie. Dave asked if the lights can retrofit right on? Greg said exactly, he said it is actually a new fixture, not just a lamp. If the Township was willing to have the electrician, he isn't sure if we have an in-house electrician, if not they have a host of local electrician that do a lot of this stuff, and a few he mentioned live in the Township. Greg said if the Township would like to accept the donation, they would have to put it up. Jason asked if the donated lamps are more energy efficient. Greg said yes, they are about 80% more efficient, they are instant on, and with that the usage for one 45-minute period would be equivalent to the usage of the entire week based on what that kilowatt hour savings would be.

MOTION: Dave Spirk made a motion to accept Graybar's donation of lights, and recommend Council looking the possibility of installing them.

SECOND: Bill Ross

ROLL CALL: 6-0 (Krista Baum – Absent)

Greg asked if the timer can be looked into on the courts because the timer does not initiate until 7:30, so in the winter..... Greg asked if the timer can be changes so it goes on at 5:00p.m. and then it goes off at 10:00p.m.

Jason asked an additional question regarding the lights on the baseball field to be sure the neighbors are less effected. He wanted to know if the same can be done here. Greg said they are sensitive to the light trespass because the LEDs are a lot brighter, but then can control them. There is a way to have a cutoff and explained how to address light trespass.

7. **Special Event Applications** – None

8. **Old Business** –

- Items Needing Attention at Steel City Park: Stacy added the only item she is aware of is the arborvitaes along the fence. Roger had obtained quotes a while back. She will check with Roger if they are still good. Dave asked her to bring an update to the next meeting.

9. **New Business** – None
10. **Public Comment** - None
11. **Adjournment**
Motion to adjourn by Frank Thompson at 7:30 p.m. Second by Tom Butera. Motion passed.
12. **Next Meeting:** Monday, March 7, 2022 @ 6:30 p.m. @ Town Hall.