

1. **Meeting Called to Order** – The meeting was called to order by Kevin McGovern at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall.
2. **Roll Call – Present:** Members: Kevin McGovern, Chairman, Robert Blasko, Maia Simon, Jerry Holum, Shaun Yanchuk and Niloo Aflatooni (arrived at 6:45 p.m.); **Council Liaison:** Laura Ray; **Staff Liaison:** Carol Schneider; **Absent Member:** Phil Spohn, Vice Chairman; **Absent Council Liaison:** Priscilla deLeon. **Jr. Council Members:** Cole Hubert & Samuel Van Norman. **Township Solicitor:** Steve Goudsouzian; **Guests:** Cindy McKellin.
3. **Approval of May 6, 2024 Minutes** - Kevin started by giving a summary of the April meeting going over updates and asked if anyone had corrections or additions to the minutes, Maia asked Carol if she was looking for typos or just errors? She said that she had a bunch that she would just send. Carol said it was fine to email her the changes. Kevin asked Laura if she was comfortable approving the minutes with typos and moving forward? Laura said that Maia could point the typos out and then we can approve them with the corrections as noted, so they can get on the website. Kevin said good point. Steve said the other alternative might be that you approve the minutes, subject to the typos being fixed. That way you have them done and you can address them. Kevin thanked Steve, and Maia motioned to approve the minutes subject to the typos identified.

MOTION: Maia

SECOND: Robert, motion passed 6-0 (Phil was absent).

Kevin asked Steve if he wanted to take a few minutes to introduce himself. Steve said that he wanted to primarily come, introduce himself, say hello and say thank everyone for all the hard work they were doing. He said that he knew that most of the committee was relatively new and he thought it might be helpful to come and provide some framework and guidelines as to how this works and what their role is, what their role wasn't and what would help. He said as an advisory board it's always hard when people are new, the concept is there's a lot to do and a lot that you want to do. There is an impatience almost. Unfortunately, for those of you that have worked in the public sector, the public sector doesn't always work as fast as what you may be used to, things go a little bit slower. That being said what you might want to consider or keep in mind as a board, your role is to primarily to provide recommendations to Council. It's always difficult because you want to do things, but you can't take official action other than recommending to Council what you think they should do. That's the process. No one is trying to hamstring you but he said he'd rather have this conversation now with everyone so he could answer questions and you can move faster. What he would hate to see is the PR Board provide input and have conflict and go back and forth and not be able to accomplish what you are looking to do because, these are obviously good things that you want. He said without going into detail, what obviously complicates things is that the board meetings and the Township Council meetings are public (on YouTube) and you know what they are, and that provides a level of complexity. He said, that is really what he wanted to do rather than anything else and answer questions that you may have and help along the way. He said that you can make motions, there isn't anything wrong with making motions, choices or making decisions, he just wanted everyone to know what the framework was from a legal standpoint compared to anything else.

Kevin said that was very helpful, and thanked Steve. He said that they have had discussion on potential projects and potential initiatives. One that they talked about last month which was very clever. It was the development of QR Codes. He said that they would post a QR code at every park (on the bulletin board) for the public to access and report an issue to staff (example, that "they are at this park and they see something that needs a repair" it could be a hornet's nest or something that needs to be repaired), it would make it easier for someone to report. Kevin asked Steve if they (PR) would have the ability to make this happen or do we have to talk to the town manager or the town recreational team on that or do we have to go to Council and recommend that we do that? Steve said you don't have to go to Council but you can't do this on your own, but he said that he can certainly recommend going to Roger or the manager with this. He said what makes the most sense is to consistently go to the same person in the first instance. Perhaps, go to Roger & Cathy and say we have these things, where do you want us to go? He said he thinks this will help, this way if it requires Township Council approval or something else, you can go down that road, but if it doesn't, it can be handled administratively (like a lot of things). Kevin said it sounds reasonable.

Maia said that she thinks they can take this to Council, they have a project that they started on, identifying invasive plants in the parks. She said that she thinks they did take this to Council and Mr. Banonis didn't like it at all, but it did pass if she's correct. Laura said she wasn't sure if they had a motion on it, she'll have to go back on memory on that. Maia said by the way, she has been talking about this project as a native plant project, but she really thinks (as she has been doing more work) that it's an invasive plant project, because that's what they need to identify to get rid of them. She said, she didn't know where they were with this project, or whether it was voted on by Council. Maia asked Steve if this was the sort of thing they needed to take to Council? Steve said no, what he would recommend again, is to start at the same levels, you will lose your effectiveness and people will lose track of things. He said once you have your established chain of communication, start with that chain always. For example, you start with Roger/Cathy and say this is what we want to do, and they say that's great but we can't do this on their own and then say, that needs to go to Council and subsequently put on a Council agenda. Laura asked if this (QR Code) would be for staff to do at this phase, would it? Steve replied, not necessarily staff, but it's a good place to start. He said his point is, and he doesn't mean it in a negative way, he's just trying to help PR. He said that you don't want to be in a position where things are going in all different directions because you don't want to become that committee that's sort of shooting shotgun style. If that's the plan, check what's happening. Maia said to Laura that it came up when she made her report and she may not have made a motion at that point. Laura agreed and said no, at that point, she really couldn't make a motion. She said she thinks she mentioned it, she said for the beginning part, PR wanted to identify the invasive plants and it would be their legwork.

Maia said that she felt like she was the reason why Steve was there (at the meeting) because she sent emails to Carol, Cathy and Priscilla. She said that Cathy sent her a very kind and thorough email, explaining what the procedure was at the Township. She said she was not only new to the board but new to the Township as well. Steve, Carol and Kevin all disagreed and said that wasn't the reason that Steve was there. Carol stated the majority of the board was new. Maia said, ok. Laura said that Maia's request was different, she wanted to buy an application (Picture this app.) and have a reimbursement and they would need a motion for that piece of it, even though it's a minor amount, they would need to make a motion. She said that's what Cathy directed to do. Maia said that she didn't spend that money yet, she said that she was having an issue with the app. and more will be revealed. Kevin asked Steve if there was anything else he wanted to share with the group? Steve said no and thanks for doing great work, he wanted to help and be as effective as he could.

Jerry said that it sounded like the approach wasn't hands on. He asked if he could get Kevin to help him pick up/clean up branches on the trail/park? Steve said that could become a liability issue for the Township. Jerry questioned, even if it was a branch? Steve said that as a public citizen you don't want to take on more than you should, you can't go there with a chainsaw.... He said again, you want to have open lines of communication, if you talk to Roger and he gives you permission to clean up, then so be it. Kevin said if PR would see something that would be in need of cleaning, they should let Roger (Public Works) know. He said Roger could simply let him know if they had a crew out nearby, (to clean up) or tell him (Kevin), it would be easier if he could pick it up or move it over for them. He said as members of a committee, liability is taken to a new level. Steve said exactly, it's a potential problem that we want to avoid. Niloo arrived at 6:45 p.m. Steve said if there wasn't anything else, he was going to go. Steve left at 6:46 p.m.

Jerry stated he didn't know if anyone read the sports pages or not but we have a talented athlete on their board and should be recognized for Wrestling & Baseball. He asked Laura if she could ask Council to recognize Cole for his efforts. He said Laura should have Council present Cole with a Resolution. Laura said she didn't know how they went about doing that and she didn't know sports stats. Jerry told Laura to bring up the recognition as Council has done in the past. Kevin asked Jerry if the recognition was for only Cole or all of the Wrestlers? Jerry said all four of them. Carol mentioned that she thought the recognition was at State level. Jerry disagreed and said that it was district level. Laura said she'll reach out to Cathy.

4. **Presentations:** None

5. **Citizen Non-Agenda Items:** Laura asked Cindy McKellin if she had a non-agenda item? Cindy was in the audience and said no.

6. **Special Event Applications:** None
7. **Park Updates:** Kevin said he wanted to follow up on park updates and the QR Code idea. He said that he likes the idea if someone is out and about in a park and has a concern and all they have to do is scan a code for help.
 1. **Town Hall (Niloo)** - No Report
 2. **Southeastern Park (Kevin)** - No Report
 3. **Steel City (Shaun)** - No Report
 4. **Polk Valley Park (Robert)** - Kevin asked Robert how the Eagle Scout project was going. Robert said that he received an email from Sebastian that his project was approved by the Eagle Scout Counsel and noted that he would be starting in two weeks (5/15) or so. Robert said that he offered his gas-powered post hole digger if needed to Sebastian.
 5. **Kingston Park (Kevin)** - No Report
 6. **Easton Road Ballfield (Jerry)** - Kevin asked Jerry if there was a place to sit if we have the next meeting at the Easton Road field (as scheduled) or if we should revisit the field in August or September for meeting? Jerry answered and said he chuckled at this because he was reprimanded for going down on the property. He said, as you know with the past updates, he gave detailed reports or timelines from the Engineer on site. He was told, that due to liability reasons that he shouldn't go down there....Jerry said that he didn't think that the field would be ready in a month and they should put the discussion on the back burner until later.

Kevin said that he liked meeting at the parks and we'll flip the agenda around and meet at the baseball field at a later date, maybe in the fall. Laura asked if they should go somewhere else next month? Robert asked about meeting at Polk Valley and Carol stated that PR met at Polk Valley last year. She stated that all the parks they picked this year, haven't been on the meeting list recently, and that's was why the group picked the parks they did, this year. Kevin asked Carol to see what parks PR had listed and they could change up the schedule and come back to the ballfield.

Jerry said the baseball field is moving a little faster than a snail's pace and appears that it will not be ready by June. He said 60% of the perimeter of the fencing is finished, the netting hasn't been started yet and the posts will be put 65 feet into the ground and will be a big job. They're doing some crane work to set the dugout slabs; it appears that CH & N are not doing all the work and have some jobs subcontracted out and may not be getting done as fast because of it. They had a change order for test borings and results came back negative which caused a delay, the sod will go down and will have to be watered and take root 6-8 weeks later. Kevin asked if Jerry had anything else? He said it sounds like the ballfield is making progress.

7. **Heller Homestead Park (Maia)** - No Report
8. **Sandra Yerger Community Recreation Area & Nature Preserve (Phil was absent)** - No Report
9. **Saucon Rail Trail (Maia/Jerry)** - Kevin asked if there were any other park updates? Jerry said our Public Works took care of cleaning some stuff at the trail and they did a nice job. He said that the grass is really high on the borders of the rail trail, he doesn't think they did their first mowing of the Rail Trail yet. Maia said that's important because high grass is a tick habitat. Kevin said it sounds like they took care of all the safety concerns. Maia added that there has been some work done at the Reading Trail and it looks nice, it's a volunteer group from all three communities (*Penn State Extension organizes*). Jerry mentioned that he went to the last Saucon Rail Trail Committee meeting in March and that they were almost finished with identifying all the railroad stations by putting big markers up. He said he thinks that they are planning on putting up plaques' up with some history.

- 10. Nature Reserve-Invasive Species - Review the Picture This App.** - Kevin asked if there was any discussion on the Picture This App.? Maia said yes, everyone needs to have one or both of the apps. She said she was hoping to show everyone on her iPad. She mentioned that the only part that she hasn't figured out yet was how to get all of the information on the Pindrop app. and that's where the map will be. She said that she has established a group on Pindrop for the invasive plant project. She said, when you get the app on your device, you can go to the established group and join so they can all update the same map. She said that there is a free version of the app., but it doesn't allow you to do much on it. She said that she's trying to get an account called LowerSauconParks&Rec@gmail.com and have everyone sign in to that so they only have to pay once however, she's having an issue signing up another account on her device and may need someone else's device to do so. She said that this didn't need to be done right away but wanted to remind everyone that they need to work in pairs. One person will work on Picture This App. and the other will work on the Pindrop App. She said that one person will take a picture of the plant with their camera and the other person will add the picture of the plant with the location on the Pindrop App. She said that you cannot add a pin without the name of the plant, that's why we need the Picture This App. So, between the two people working together, you will have the pin dropped at the GPS location and we'll know what plant is identified (Red Oak). Kevin confirmed that you need both Apps. (one App. identifies the plant and the other gives the location) he also asked if the location was specific and Maia said yes it was clear in her yard (detailed enough). Maia wanted to add that the DCNR (Department of Conservation and Natural Resources) gives grants for removing invasive plants. She said it would have to be at least \$50,000.00 and the Township would have to pay to 20% of that. She said her goal is to cover enough territory by September that they can stipulate the rest of the Township so they can put a grant application in November. She said that she has the details at home, she said that she would like to get enough data to say this is how many trees they would have to remove and this is how many white mulberries we have to remove because they all have different things...and have it all done so we can get this information in for next years budget so that the 20% can be in next years budget so we can actually hire someone to dig these things out. Kevin said he liked what you she was saying, his question was if they map this out using Picture This and Pindrop, put together, then they would go to Council and request that, his question is from the process perspective, he said he and Sam did this and it was easy peasy, what he's fearful of is, is what Steve said at the beginning of the meeting, we don't have approval of the funds. He said so, we risk doing all of the work and not being supported by Council and we would end of with no money for the grant. He said that he wonders if this is the right approach or do, they start with going to Council/Roger and see if there is support first before they put the effort in? He said this as a question to the group, not as a statement. Maia said she could make a motion that they recommend to Council that Parks & Rec. will be collecting data that can be used for a grant application for removing invasive plants in the parks and that can go to Council and they can say yes or no, right? Niloo asked if Lower Saucon has ever does this before? Maia said it was done 25 years ago, Consultants were brought in to do a Natural Resource Inventory and they gave a list of invasive plants that they identified along with giving a list of native plants they found, fish in the streams and different natural resources that went on the record as saying that it's important get rid of them. She said that this is a project that they may want to liaise with the EAC about and work with them. She said with Kevin's point, we will take a motion to Council that will cost \$30.00 and they will independently put together a grant request. She said her idea is to have the information ready for the 2025 budget but if it's not ready until the 2026 budget then so be it, they can spend another year collecting more data. She said she thinks it's wise to make sure the EAC doesn't feel that were stepping on their toes, and Council thinks it's a good idea, she said that she's pretty sure that three people on Council like the idea and since three is a majority, she wasn't too worried. Kevin asked what everyone thought? Laura asked, what park this was for? Maia said she was thinking of doing the Heller Homestead first and Kingston Park second and then come up with a number of each invasive species per acre and stipulate that over 150 acres of parks and they can come back and say they want more data, and so it would take another year. Laura asked if that would be an accurate guess? Maia said she thinks that's the way it works. Laura said she couldn't think that one through. Robert said besides the parks, our Township is 22 miles long from one side to the other, there is a lot more land in Lower Saucon than parks. Maia said yes, and she's not on EAC because she was needed there, and EAC is busy doing other things like...and because their bailiwick is the parks, they should start with the parks. Kevin said you've been clear with that. Laura said that makes sense, you will be showing your example for the Township. Robert said he wasn't disagreeing with it. *(There was some discussion on Spotted Lantern Fly's and how the insects were an invasive species).* Kevin said so what do we want to do?

Niloo said the max is \$30.00 and asked how many hours? Maia said \$30.00 for the app. and we spend four hours, two weekend days a month, Saturday one month and Sunday another month. Niloo asked among us or can we have other people help? Robert said can we have other volunteers? Maia said absolutely. Niloo asked, can do it ourselves or with volunteers? Maia said, yes either way. Kevin said let's back up a minute, he likes the questions about the process, but we have to go back to what Steve said, how do we get support to do this? He said that Steve just told us we want to be careful and we want to make sure this isn't a conflict with other Township initiatives. Laura said she didn't think anyone else was identifying invasive plants. Niloo said we want to know all of the details first before making a decision, she repeated herself and said a max of \$30.00, four hours every other weekend, that's what she wants, do we want to do this or not? Robert said can it be set up that way, can we send you the pictures? Maia said absolutely, if you have a picture with a location embed in it, she will look it up and put it in Pindrop. Robert said, four hours, twice a month? Niloo said, eight hours per month, if you are going make a motion then I will second it, now you have to ask the Township, this is it. Kevin said he likes what she is saying, so make the motion. Jerry said that he didn't think it was a Parks & Rec. situation and they should partner with the EAC. Laura said she thinks it's both. Jerry said that's why it would be a an EAC situation, what they should be looking for with this is partnering with the EAC, he said bring this before the EAC and see what they say. He said he thinks it's more their bailiwick than it is Parks & Rec. Laura said it's both. Kevin said that's a good point. Laura said they would be using the park as a public example of identifying invasive species. Jerry said that's why it would be a good partnership. Laura said, then again, they have an arms-length of projects too. Kevin asked, when's their next meeting? Laura said next Tuesday (5/14). Maia said she couldn't bring up the Township website, but in the description under the Parks & Rec., that it's part of their responsibility to maintain the flora of the parks, it doesn't say get rid of the invasives, but it does say that it's part of their purview as PR. She said, and with the EAC fighting the dump and other things that they might be doing, which Laura knows better than her, Laura, Priscilla and she, decided last December that she (Maia) would be involved with the PR committee and do this under the auspices of PR, now Mr. Banonis thinks this is completely ridiculous and we shouldn't be doing this at all, much less doing it under PR. However, we (PR) do have the authority to be taking care of the vegetation in the parks. Kevin said he didn't think there was an argument there and he thinks Jerry was questioning if there was an opportunity to work with the EAC or make them aware of it. Laura said, absolutely. Kevin said just to let them know again, back to what Steve said, so were not in isolation but yes, he thinks it would be under the purview, be he thinks it makes sense. Robert said that his suggestion would be that Maia should go to the EAC meeting. He then asked Laura if she will be there and she said yes, present this to them in the manor like Steve said, and say that we don't want to step on anyone's toes and see if they would want to work with us and would like to volunteer. We don't want them to reject the idea or be insulted. Maia asked if this was Tuesday, the 14th. Laura said or she could present this? Maia said she's happy to go. Laura said she'll have to get it on the agenda and she'll talk to Dru. Kevin said what he's hearing is you folks will attend the EAC meeting on the 14th and bring the idea forward and we can talk at that point and he guessed that they can wait and let Council know what we are planning. Laura said so we can wait until after both of those meetings. Kevin and Laura agreed that money isn't involved and they'll talk about what they were planning on doing. Niloo said, aside of all of the politics, she's not involved with politics. She said it's a great project and she would like to bring her boys and get to know all of the parks and the nature. The other things included are up to the boards and council to make a decision, but she thinks it's a great idea. Maia said her thought is they will do a trial run at the Heller Homestead (HH) with just the PR group (or those that want to do in the group), and if it goes well, we could reach out to the scouts and the general public to help. She said they don't always have to do this together; she has done some on her own. Laura asked how do they know that they aren't overlapping? Maia said, her thought was, they will go to the HH for the rollout and trouble shoot any issues that come up. She said that they won't do the part that she already did. Kevin said that he thought that was a good plan, however, he thinks the question was, is the system smart enough to recognize if the area was completed (or has been done) already? He said he wants to move on in a second because they are getting caught up in the details. Kevin asked, is the system smart enough if the area has already been pinned? Maia said she didn't know that but, we'll be right next to each other. Kevin said, ok, we could figure this out at that point. Maia said we could also send a text to each other stating that said area was completed. Kevin said that there is no motion, Maia and Laura will bring this topic up to the EAC on the 14th and let them know, he said he's not hearing a lot of discussion so he'll take this as people are ok with this and this will come back to the PR and we'll support it as long as there is enough continued interest. Laura asked, if they wanted to do

anything at Council then? Or should she ask Cathy about the \$30.00 fee? Maia said, she decided to eat the \$30.00. Laura said she'll pay for the app., it's the easiest way to do it. Kevin asked if there were any other park updates? Niloo said she'll go (report) next time.

Kevin said that Carol shared that the Public Works Department was aware that the door at on the Little free Library was damaged at Polk Valley Park and they are addressing it. Robert said that was on his report along with the split rail fencing. Kevin said that there was a follow up on the theft at Polk Valley Park, the report stated that there were 10 thefts from 2020 - 2024. Maia said that maybe the people that were saying it was happening all the time, were not calling and reporting it. Laura said the Police put in a license reader at Polk Valley Park. Robert said that they will be putting up signs for the license readers. Carol mentioned that the signs were ordered.

8. Event Updates:

- 1. Heritage Day - May 18th** - Kevin said that he will be there, and hopes others can join as well.
- 2. Movies in the Parks** - Kevin said that they will talk more about the dates for the Movies at the next meeting and hopes to get some PR volunteers for each movie (June 21st or 28th - Aladdin, July 19th or 26th - Zootopia and August 9th or 16th - The Little Mermaid exact dates TBD). Kevin asked if there were any other questions on the event updates?

Maia wanted to remark that she was manning a table or womaning a table at the Heller Homestead at Heritage Day on the 18th from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. and she'll be speaking on birds and native plants. She said that she is not representing the Parks & Recreation, but none the less, she is not aloud to sell the plants that they wanted her to sell because she's on the board and nothing that she's handing out says that she's Parks and Rec.

9. New Business:

- 1. Comments on the 04-08-2024 Upper Saucon Township - Proposed Amendment to Township Comprehensive Recreation (1 & 2 Covered together)**
- 2. Open Space Plan & Comments on the 04-04-2024 - Springfield Comprehensive Plan Final Draft** - Kevin said that he read through both items and thought they were very comprehensive and didn't have any comments. He said that it didn't appear that anything would impact any of our parks and he didn't have any concerns. He then asked if anyone had any comments other than what he stated? Robert said, that Laura told him earlier that it would be a good idea to read through to get some ideas for our plan. Kevin asked if we have the same thing for our neck of the woods? Laura said we do have an Open Space Plan but it hasn't been updated for a while. Kevin asked if there were any more comments? He then asked Carol if they had to take action on this and Carol said no.
- 3. Resident Park Survey** - Kevin asked for a refresher on the Resident Survey and Carol said that Laura mentioned doing a survey about the parks. Laura mentioned that she would be interested in doing a survey like the school board did asking our residents what they're interests or needs are in our parks. She said that we can do it similar to the schools and have it online, fill out a form or however they collected it, for several few weeks. She said that they could make up questions. Kevin said that he liked that. Maia said that she just completed a survey for DCNR about outdoor recreation so she'll track that down. Niloo said she can help with creating a survey on a Google form. Laura said she's not sure what she would do yet, she may want to have different options for people as far as paper, online etc. Kevin said that he liked what the schoolboard did, they sent out a survey link. He said it didn't take long to fill out. Laura said Hellertown got rid of their Bocce Ball court because it wasn't used. She said she personally likes Bocce but...Niloo said, its good, but you need to do something with the data. Laura said they could use the data for making decisions, maybe we could list choices. Kevin asked should we ask Council to do this and take some time to develop the survey? Laura said we could do that. Kevin asked if they all agreed? The board collectively said yes. Niloo asked if

it was Council that initiated the survey? Kevin said no, we would ask Council, he's sure they would say yes. Niloo said she thought Council suggested to do the survey? Kevin said no they didn't, good question.

4. **Community Day Softball Game Status** - Kevin asked Jerry if he had a status on this. Jerry said that Mayor Dave Heintzelman brought this up at a Borough Council meeting and they thought it was a good idea so Hellertown is behind it. He said this softball game is meant to be fun and he got Guy Lesser the former Chief of Police to help him set up some rules up. He asked Cole to join him on the rules and safety committee and Cole said he would. Kevin asked if this is something that Council has to approve? Laura said she didn't know if they had to do anything official. Jerry said all the girls on Council said that they are interested in playing, and he said that he saw that Laura had a softball jersey on today....Laura said that it's a football jersey. Jerry said he has a celebrity joining the team, the former Mayor of Hellertown who is 90 years old, said he would take a swing. He also stated that he's looking at getting an announcer. Kevin said that we'll let you run with this and he assumes that this would be open to our committees and Hellertown's committees? Jerry said it wouldn't be open to the general public, it would be open to boards and council, not street people. Laura questioned if retired members could join as well? Jerry said yes. Kevin said he liked the idea and we'll let Jerry run with it. Kevin asked if there was anything else they wanted to talk about? No one mentioned anything. Kevin said that they have a couple of take a ways... Carol will let everyone know where they will be meeting in June by email (Easton Road Ballfield won't be ready).

10. **Junior Council Reports:** No Report
11. **Adjournment** – Kevin asked if there was anything else at 7:44 p.m.?
13. **Next Meeting:** Monday, June 3, 2024 @ 6:30 p.m. @ Kingston Park Pavilion.