

1. **Meeting Called to Order** – The meeting was called to order by Tom Butera at 6:37 p.m. via Zoom.
2. **Roll Call – Present** – Tom Butera, Vice Chairman; Niloofar Aflatooni, Krista Baum, Keith Meier, Bill Ross, Members; Jason Banonis, Council Liaison; Mason Simms, Junior Council Member; Brenda Detweiler, Township Administrative Assistant.
Absent – David Spirk, Chairman; Frank Thompson, Members; Breanna Kemmerer, Colin Griffith, Junior Council Members.
3. **Nomination of Officers** – Bill Ross nominated David Spirk as Chairman, second by Niloofar Aflatooni. Motion passed 5-0 (Dave Spirk, Frank Thompson – Absent). Bill Ross nominated Tom Butera as Vice Chairman, second by Niloofar Aflatooni. Motion passed 5-0 (Dave Spirk, Frank Thompson – Absent).
4. **Approval of December 7, 2020 Minutes** – Tom Butera moved for approval of the December 7, 2020 minutes, second by Niloofar Aflatooni. Motion passed 3-2 (Krista Baum, Keith Meier – Abstain; David Spirk, Frank Thompson – Absent).
5. **Presentations** – None
6. **Citizen Non-Agenda Items** – None
7. **Updates**
 - **Little Free Library at Southeastern Park** – Tom Butera said we still need a material list and a weight of the design. Brenda Detweiler will forward the contact information to Tom so he can reach out to them.
 - **Little Free Library at Steel City Park** – Tom said Dave Spirk was working on a design and they have not had a chance to speak about it. He will follow up on it.
8. **Special Event Applications** – None
9. **Old Business** – None
10. **New Business**
 - **Plans for Edelman Minor Subdivision – 1816 Reading Drive – Review and Comment** – Tom said he reviewed the plans. He reminded the Board they don't get to dictate how the construction practices are performed. They are there to allocate where park funds will go. In the past they usually allocate it to the park nearest to the subdivision. Bill Ross mentioned that the Trail Head would be a good location for this subdivision. Brenda said that she will mark the meeting minutes to reflect the suggestion. Krista asked what sort of improvements they would want to do in that area. Bill said in the past they installed a water fountain, have done some landscaping, and cleaned up the area. Aside from the Trail Head, it also includes the trail itself. There may be repairs that need to be done to the trail or improvements they would like to make. The Board members had no comments on the plans.
 - **Plans for Lehigh University Minor Subdivision – Seidersville Road – Review and Comment** – The Board members had no comments on the plans.
 - **Park Locations for the May, June, August, and September Meetings** – Brenda said four different park locations are needed, provided an in-person meeting can be held. The June meeting is normally the Volunteer Picnic, but she does not believe it is going to be held this year. Tom suggested waiting until the March meeting to discuss the locations. He is going with the hope things will get better and we can have the in-person meetings, as well as including Dave & Frank in the decision.
 - **Blessing Boxes** – Brenda asked Tom if he knew what direction Dave was going when he asked to have the email forwarded in regards to the Blessing Boxes. He understands from the email that Kristen Lockett wanted to propose putting these in other parks. He asked if anyone had any issues with putting one of these in a township park. Jason Banonis questioned how it was secured so animals

cannot get to the food products being kept in the box. Krista said she is part of the Facebook group that keep each other informed on re-stocking and repair and she often goes to refill them. They are set rather high (probably a little higher than the Little Free Libraries) with a thick plastic/plexiglass on the front and there is a lock to secure it shut. Based on locations they currently have she would say they should be placed in the public part of the park, not in a remote area. The group is very active and the boxes are visited frequently. Jason said it's a great program for people in need. Bill asked if the group builds and installs the boxes. Krista was not sure of the answer. Bill said he likes the current placements of the boxes in public places and would probably prefer that more than in a park, but doesn't see a problem with putting them in parks if they are securely shut. Tom said he's seen them and they are built securely. Woodland Hills Park is probably not a good location since it is more remote, but Town Hall Park is busy and would be a good location. He isn't sure where to go from here because he didn't get to discuss it with Dave. He would like the meeting minutes to reflect everyone is in favor of the boxes. Maybe next time Kristen could join them at the next meeting or send them more information. Jason said he will bring it up at the next Council meeting under his report. If there is funding or materials needed, he would like the township to provide them.

- **Board Member Responsibilities** – Niloo had requested guidelines and responsibilities for Parks & Recreation Board Members. She thought it would be good to have them at the beginning of the year to refresh everyone, as well as educate the new members. Brenda had emailed them earlier in the day. Krista asked if she had suggestions on updates, would it be ok to send a marked version for the policies? Tom said they are an advisory board. They don't have authority to change & remove things, but they can make suggestions. If she has suggestions, she can forward them and it can be discussed as a board. If they are in agreement, it can be presented to Council as a suggestion. They are looking to make the parks better and it's nice to have a close relationship with the Council members. They have always been very supportive of the parks. Jason mentioned to Krista that he's the Council liaison to Parks & Rec. He participates in the meetings and reports back to Council. If there are issues or recommendations, he shares it with them. Council gives great deference to the recommendations from the Parks & Rec Committee. It represents a wide swath of the township in terms of geography and demographics. It allows them to know what the residents are interested in. Krista said that she's been trying to dial into meetings and become more involved. She recalls a conversation in regards to Parks & Rec not receiving a certain amount of funding from the Steel Club. She recalls hearing that Leslie was looking to update policies. She has read them and doesn't have any problems with them, but didn't know if there was a way should could help. Jason wanted to acknowledge Steel Club got their final approval from the township for their first phase development. He wanted to commend them for their hard work as it's an accomplishment for the community. More importantly, from a Parks & Rec standpoint, they preserved over 100 acres of open space in the center of the township. It really adds to the value of the community. Tom said that has always been a big part for Dave – his concern for the community and giving back. Bill thanked Jason for being a Council liaison. In the past, staff members did a great job, but he felt Council ignored them. He is pleased that Jason has been sitting in with them, being active, and really listening to them. Jason thanked him & said he's committed to Parks & Rec. They are fortunate the community is blessed with having some quality parks and people who are using them. The least he can do is participate to try to keep that dialogue going and keep advancing things for everyone's benefit.
- **WalkWorks Grant** – Jason wanted to make the Board aware the Township received a \$20,000 grant for a program called WalkWorks. A consultant was hired & will be working with the Township. The program is designed to create a comprehensive plan to promote pedestrian & bicycle access throughout the township. It promotes health benefits, cuts down on traffic, and makes access ways safer for pedestrians and bicycles. He is the Council Liaison to this committee. The committee is made up of various members of the community. There is someone from the medical community from St. Luke's, from Lehigh University, from the Saucon Rail Trail, and various others. He wants to bring it to the attention of Parks & Rec. If they see a need or an idea with regard to enhancing access to Parks & different areas of the community, they can discuss it with him. The grant money is to pay for the consultant to look at what we have and to make recommendations. One area he feels is primarily suited is the Route 378 corridor because it is not conducive to pedestrian traffic. He's sure there are other areas he has not contemplated and he would like them to share their ideas with him. It doesn't have to be during a meeting. They can call him anytime or send him an email. He was hoping

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to discuss it with Dave because the footprint of the Steel Club may be something to look at. He understands that WalkWorks will help integrate systems already in existence. For example, Polk Valley and the Rail Trail. Maybe something can be run in from Polk Valley Road to connect it to Meadows Road. He believes that the Meadows Road Bridge will be getting replaced, as Council will be discussing it with a representative of PennDOT this Wednesday. The bridge is owned by the County. Funding will be coming 80% from the federal government, 20% from the state. It's good to get that access point opened up. Maybe something can be tied from Meadows Road to Polk Valley Road.

- **Discussion of Recreation** – Krista asked if the Summer Camp is under the Parks & Rec Board. Jason said it's under the Township and it goes before Council for approval, but it isn't administered by Parks & Rec. It is run by the Community Center. She has seen the Fire Company's new truck and would love to see it incorporated into the summer program, but understands that it is not part of the Parks & Rec Board.

11. **Public Comment** – None

12. **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn by Tom Butera at 7:14 p.m.; second by Bill Ross. Motion passed 5-0 (Absent – David Spirk, Frank Thompson).

13. **Next Meeting**

Monday, March 1, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.