

## **BARNEGAT LIGHT TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION**

### General Meeting Minutes

June 9, 2018

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#### I. John Tennyson, President of the BLTA

- John called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM, and discussed the agenda and the process for asking questions, with two Board members having roving mikes.
- He thanked members Todd and Barbara Albert for their very generous contribution to the BLTA of \$1,000.

#### II. BLTA Reports

- Treasurer's Report – Bill Chnelich  
Bill presented the financial activity for the year as of May 31, noting the increase in the fund balance. Dues were up slightly, and the printing costs of the newsletter were much less than last year, but we had an increase in technology costs due to our website consultant, and an increase in insurance to cover the wine and cheese event. Subsequent items such as the \$1,000 contribution, and the expense for Pavilion benches, were not included in the May 31 totals. The financials through May 31 are posted on the website along with these minutes.
- Tax Exempt Status/Constitution and By-Laws Changes – John Tennyson  
John discussed a change in our tax-exempt status which would require a change to the Constitution and By-Laws. We recently discovered that in September 2014 our tax-exempt status was changed by the IRS when we submitted a new application as part of a process to correct prior year missed filings. From 1985 to 2014 we were exempt as a community organization under Tax Code section 501(c)(4). Since September 2014, we have been tax exempt under Tax Code section 501(c)(3) as a charitable organization. As a result, contributions to the BLTA are now tax deductible for those who itemize deductions on their returns.

The Constitution and By-Laws will need to be changed to reflect the change in status, and we cannot conduct any activities that would be inconsistent with a charitable organization. The Constitution and By-Laws changes will be presented at our July 14 general meeting.



- o Membership Report – Ed Ebenbach  
Ed presented the membership report through the end of May. Membership is ahead of last year at this time, and the membership drive is still ongoing. We have 511 current members. We also have a BLTA Facebook group with 127 members currently, up 20 from last year at this time.

- o Website Update – John Tennyson and Tom Zesk  
John noted that we have been working with a website consultant to help with design issues and to post our news and events articles and BLTA documents. Tom Zesk is the liaison with our consultant and sends the articles and items to be posted each week.

Tom then mentioned that we update the website each week with the articles and events from that week's Sandpaper that would be relevant to property owners in Barnegat Light. The new articles are usually up by Friday morning. We also added a new section to the site highlighting special events that are coming up in Barnegat Light, such as the wine and cheese party and Blessing of the Fleet next weekend. The Homeowners section includes important information and links to key websites in the Borough and government. Tom also noted that he also manages the BLTA Facebook Group and generally posts items of interest each week. We currently have 127 members, and all BLTA members are welcome and can sign up through the website.

- o Little Free Library and Newsletter – Mary Ann Crutchlow  
Mary Ann reminded everyone that the Little Free Libraries at the Post Office (and Borough Hall) are updated frequently and available all year round. She also noted that our winter newsletter was available in the back of the room and on the website.
- o Wine and Cheese Party – Rich Brodman  
Rich presented the details of the BLTA Wine and Cheese Party next Saturday June 16 at the Fireman's Hall from 5-7 pm. We will have wine, cheese, refreshments, and juice for kids.

### III. Freeholder Virginia Haines and Sheriff Michael Mastronardy Presentation with Q&A

Freeholder Haines discussed her background and areas of responsibility as a Freeholder, which include Human Services (Social Services, Women's Commission, Workforce Development), Transportation, and the Planning Department. She also discussed areas of focus for the Freeholders. The Freeholders meet every Wednesday at 4:00 and the meetings are open to the public.



Freeholder Haines then took questions on a number of topics:

- County financials, which are available online on the Ocean County web site;
- Funding for pensions for retired government employees;
- Programs for opioid addiction;
- Legalization of recreational marijuana (she was opposed);
- Road paving in Harvey Cedars

Sheriff Michael Mastronardy then gave a presentation on activities and new areas of focus for the Sheriff's Department, including use of drones for assistance in locating missing persons with autism or dementia, and 911 calls and caller ID to locate callers. He also took questions on a number of topics related to the Sheriff's office and police activity.

IV. Rob Zarko, President and Founder of the Ship Bottom Brewery

Rob Zarko, President and Founder of the Ship Bottom Brewery, gave a presentation on the craft brewing industry and his background as a brewer in Pennsylvania and Long Beach Island. The craft brewing industry has seen a tremendous amount of interest and growth in recent years. Rob noted that he had vacationed in LBI and named his brewery after LBI even when it was located in Pennsylvania. He finally was able to find a location in Beach Haven to start our only craft brewery on the Island.

V. BLTA Annual Survey – Bill Chernelich

Bill Chernelich presented the results of the BLTA Annual Survey. The Survey received 468 responses out of 555 invitations, a very strong response rate. A handout summarized the key responses, and is posted on our BLTA website. The survey questions related primarily to how our property owners currently receive information about Barnegat Light and the Borough Council, and their preferred methods.

VI. Kirk Larson, Mayor of Barnegat Light

Barnegat Light Mayor Kirk Larson discussed a number of topics being considered by the Borough Council and fielded questions from the audience.

He noted that the Pavilion was nearing completion and the pavers were being put down. He thanked the BLTA for their contribution for Pavilion benches. He also noted that the mini-golf course was still anticipated to be open in July on schedule, and that the gas station owner was trying to find another operator to lease and run the station, with a July target opening. In the Q&A, he discussed some of the issues with airBNB and said the Borough Council was studying other towns who imposed rental time restrictions to reduce the exposure from airBnb rentals.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM.

VIII. July 14 BLTA General Meeting

The next BLTA General Meeting is on July 14 at the First Aid building, and will feature Megan Keller of the Long Beach Township Police Department; Mark Lipman with a presentation on Barnegat Light history, including the Lighthouse and shipwrecks; Teresa Hagan of the LBI Garden Club; and Kirk Larson, Barnegat Light Mayor.

Recorded and submitted by:

**Tom Zesk**  
**Recording Secretary**  
**June 20, 2018**