

BARNEGAT LIGHT TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION
 Trustees Meeting Minutes
 April 18, 2020

<u>Attending:</u>		<u>Excused:</u>	
Barbara Truncellito	Philip Kahn	Virginia Fitzsimons	
Rich Brodman	Kay McDonnell		
Bill Chnelich	Betsy Aras		
Tom Zesk	Jack Byrnes		
Mary Ann Crutchlow	Patty Francfort		

I. President's Opening Comments

Barbara Truncellito called the Trustee Conference Call meeting to order at 10:00 am. The Trustees approved the minutes from the March 14, 2020 Trustee Meeting.

II. Reports

o Membership Report – Rich Brodman

Rich noted that the latest update of the database for 2020 shows that we have 443 members so far, vs. 387 at the March meeting. The 443 includes 19 new members who were not members in 2019.

Rich recommended that we send out a reminder message from Barbara to members in order to get former members to renew their membership. Any 2019 members who have not renewed after the July meeting will be considered nonmembers for 2020 until they renew.

Rich and Kay McDonnell discussed the revised online membership form that will now be available on the website to make it easier to join the BLTA. The form can also be used as a link on constant contact emails. The Board approved the form and authorized Kay to have Marie (our web consultant) input it onto the website.

The Board also approved having Marie add a Paypal and credit card option to the website so that potential members could complete the membership form and pay dues online at one time. The cost of adding the Paypal and credit card options is approximately \$660 for installation and first year, and \$150 for each subsequent year. The form and payment options are expected to be in place before the next Trustee meeting in May.

○ Treasurer's Report – Bill Chnelich

Bill presented the first quarter financial report as of March 31, 2020. Income year-to-date is \$8,205 (\$7,525 of dues and \$680 of contributions) and expenses were \$2,999 for an increase in the fund balance of \$5,205. The current fund balance stands at \$17,440 as of March 31.

On other matters, Bill noted that the Form 990 was filed electronically with the IRS. Also, the financial records and receipts for 2019 are now available for the annual review by Rich and Phil, as required by our by-laws. That review will take place when Rich and Phil can review them live in Barnegat Light.

○ BLTA Website and Social Media – Betsy Aras

Betsy noted that the website continues to be updated each week for relevant articles, which are mostly on COVID-19 issues and virtual events taking place.

Betsy updated the group on website usage for March. Our Google Analytics report showed that our website had 1,132 user sessions, which was significantly up from February and last year. The bounce rate was up slightly, likely because of the new procedure where readers are taken directly to the Sandpaper in order to read an article.

The Facebook Group now has 229 members, most of whom are active and read our posts. There were 402 posts, comments and reactions in the last 29 days, up significantly from last month. Betsy expects to post multiple times a week during the next month, especially given the need for current information on COVID-19. Recent posts have featured information from the Ocean County Health Dept. and the St. Francis Food Pantry.

Betsy noted that we received a comment on the website from a reporter doing an article on beach access during COVID-19, and whether we had received any comments from our readers. We have not received any comments at this point and the Trustees authorized Barbara to respond accordingly.

Betsy is building an archive of photos taken by Rich, Betsy, and other Trustees, which would be available for use on the website to highlight articles and the heading.

○ School Board Strategic Planning Committees– Barbara Truncellito

Barbara discussed the LBI School Board and the internal and external strategy committees. The next School Board meeting is Tuesday (April 21) and will be conducted by Zoom and should be able to be watched online. The strategy committees met and will be making presentations on Tuesday. Minutes of the meeting will be posted on the School Board website.

- Joint Committee of Taxpayer Associations (JCTA)– Barbara Truncellito

Barbara attended two conference calls of the Board of the JCTA. Although there was some discussion of the flooding issues facing LBI, the primary discussion was on ways to help during the COVID-19 crisis.

The JCTA has established a fund at Bank of America which will provide gift cards for food to the St. Francis Food Pantry, and meals for medical workers at the Southern Ocean Medical Center. The meals will be provided by participating restaurants. The contributions to the JCTA Fund will be split 50/50 between St. Francis Food Pantry and the Medical Center.

The JCTA asked for a \$500 contribution from each Taxpayer Association. The BLTA Trustees decided to contribute \$1,000, consistent with our contributions in prior years for other crises. The BLTA Trustees will also act as a liaison for our members who would like to contribute to the Fund. Any contributions to BLTA which are designated for the JCTA Fund will be contributed by us to the Fund.

III. New Business – Items for Discussion

- 2020 Events and General Meetings – Rich Brodman

Rich gave a quick update on our scheduled meetings for 2020. As a result of the social distancing guidelines and public meeting restrictions, the Trustees agreed to postpone the May Wine and Cheese event until the Fall. Also, the June 20 meeting at the Pavilion will be cancelled.

The Trustees discussed having a virtual meeting in July, combining the topics of the June and July meetings (Freeholder Haines, Mayor Larson, and Sean MacCotter on flooding). We also could add a COVID-specific speaker. Presenters could be recorded or be live on Zoom or other online platform, with questions submitted in advance. The format and revised topics would need to be determined, and will be discussed at the May 9 Trustee meeting.

- Monthly Newsletters – Barbara Truncellito

The Trustees discussed the next two newsletters. The first would relay the information on our contribution to the JCTA Fund and the ability for members to make contributions. The second would discuss the postponement of the Wine and Cheese event and the cancellation of the June 20 meeting.

- Borough Council and other issues – Barbara Truncellito

The deadline for installation of water meters was postponed until December 2021.

IV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:18 AM. The next Trustees meeting will be a conference call or a Zoom meeting, on May 9 at 10:00 AM.

Recorded and submitted by:

Tom Zesk
Recording Secretary
May 7, 2020