

BARNEGAT LIGHT TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION
 Trustees Meeting Minutes
 March 14, 2020

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

I. President's Opening Comments

Barbara Truncellito called the Trustee Conference Call meeting to order at 10:00 am. Barbara commended Mary Ann Crutchlow for the exemplary job in producing this year's newsletter, and thanked all contributors for contributing articles.

The Trustees approved the minutes from the February 15, 2020 Trustee Meeting.

II. Reports

o Membership Report – Rich Brodman

Rich noted that we have updated the database for 2020 with the assistance of Ed Ebenbach. The 2019 membership database and Constant Contact distribution list were rolled over, and new members are being added. Any 2019 members who have not renewed after the June and July meetings will be considered nonmembers for 2020 until they renew.

We also have 907 emails in our distribution network (including 222 nonmembers). 15 people unsubscribed, but this is typical. We have been communicating with our members each month via a digital newsletter, and our open rate on last month's newsletter was 74%, a very high number for newsletters.

The Trustees discussed implementing an online solution for the membership database. The current excel database has worked well but is getting obsolete in today's environment. Kay McDonnell has already done a lot of work on this and can help after the current semester at UPenn, where she is instituting the online classroom system for the school. The Board agreed to establish a subcommittee in May to begin work, with a goal of issuing a report of recommendations at the August meeting.

○ Treasurer's Report – Bill Chnelich

Bill gave a brief summary of 2020 costs to date, which is primarily the IT expenses for January and February (approximately \$500), and the newsletter printing and mailing costs of approximately \$2,000 (\$1,400 for the newsletter and \$600 for mailing). Our current Fund Balance is \$9,400.

○ BLTA Website and Social Media – Betsy Aras

Betsy, Tom and Barbara gave a recap of the call with The Sandpaper regarding use of their articles and photos on our website. The Sandpaper is appreciative of the publicity that we are giving them, but want to protect their copyright with respect to articles and photos. The Sandpaper and BLTA agreed that we could use Sandpaper articles on our website, but would limit each article to a headline and one sentence, and then would provide a link which would take the reader directly to the Sandpaper website for the full article. We would use our own photos for the articles and would not use the Sandpaper photos. The Sandpaper Facebook page does allow for the sharing of posted articles and photos, so we would continue to share Sandpaper Facebook posts.

Betsy updated the group on website usage for February. Our Google Analytics report showed that our website had 988 user sessions, which was significantly up from January and last year.

The Facebook Group now has 221 members, most of whom are active and read our posts. There were 112 posts, comments and reactions in the last 28 days. Betsy expects to post 2-3 times a week during the winter, 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.

We are 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 Referendum– Barbara Truncellito and Virginia Fitzsimons

Barbara and Virginia discussed the LBI School Board strategy committees. There is an external State of the Community Committee, and an internal State of the Schools Committee. The committees will be meeting and collecting data, with a goal of issuing a final report by the end of May. The meetings will likely be done by conference call given the COVID-19 guidelines, which could result in some delays.

Virginia will be serving on the State of the Schools Committee. The Committee will produce a report dealing with issues after researching strengths and areas of concern within the schools.

The School Board hired an independent engineer to do an assessment of the existing schools so that updated and independent information is available to the School Board for future decision making regarding the school buildings and potential consolidation.

III. New Business – Items for Discussion

o 2020 Events and General Meetings – Rich Brodman

Rich gave a quick update on our scheduled meetings for 2020, noting that there were no changes since February. The scheduled meeting dates for the general meetings are June 20, July 11, and September 12. The anticipated speakers are:

- June 20 at the Pavilion - Freeholder Ginny Haines and Mayor Kirk Larson.
- July 11 at the First Aid Squad Building - Sean MacCotter on Flooding, and Mayor Kirk Larson.
- September 12 at the First Aid Squad Building - Megan Keller of the LBT Police Dept., and Mayor Kirk Larson. We are also considering additional presentations from the Fire Department and/or First Aid Squad.

It was noted that the COVID-19 virus guidelines could impact the meeting dates.

o Borough Council and other issues – Barbara Truncellito

Barbara noted that there has been some consternation in town over the sighting of coyotes on 9th St. and 27th St.. This may be an issue that we feature at one of our meetings if the situation still exists.

IV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 AM. The Trustees decided to have the April meeting as a conference call or a Zoom meeting, on April 18 at 10:00 AM.

Recorded and submitted by:

Tom Zesk
Recording Secretary
April 15, 2020