

BARNEGAT LIGHT TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION
 Trustees Meeting Minutes
 May 9, 2020

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

I. President's Opening Comments

Barbara Truncellito called the Trustee Conference Call meeting to order at 10:00 am. She announced that Virginia Fitzsimons has resigned from the Board as a result of her heavy schedule and commitments. Barbara and the entire Board commended Virginia for her exemplary work in following and reporting on the activities of the LBI Consolidated School Board on behalf of the BLTA.

The Trustees approved the minutes from the April 18, 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 479 members so far, vs. 443 at the April meeting. This includes 87 lifetime members. This is slightly less than last year at this time but a very good result given the COVID environment. We ended up with 564 members for the full year 2019.

Rich noted that there are 151 members in 2019 who have not yet renewed. If a majority of them renew, we could exceed last year's 564 members. A new constant contact message will go out to over 300 prior members from the last 5 years who have not renewed 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 noted that the revised online membership form is now available on the website, with online payment methods to make it easier to join the BLTA. The form can also be used as a link on constant contact emails. Barbara commended Kay for the great work in completing the online form. We already have members who have used it to join the BLTA.

Rich also noted that the tax rolls will be updated in June with new Barnegat Light taxpayers.

- Treasurer's Report – Bill Chernelich

Bill presented an interim financial statement as of May 9. BLTA Income year-to-date is \$10,415 (\$9,450 of dues and \$965 of contributions) and expenses were \$5,346 for an increase in the fund balance of \$5,069. The current fund balance stands at \$17,302 as of May 9.

Bill noted that our IT costs have increased as a result of adding Paypal and other online payment methods. However, expenses for the full year should be less since we will have less live meetings this summer.

- BLTA Website and Social Media – Betsy Aras

Betsy updated the group on website usage for April. Our Google Analytics report showed that our website had 1,349 user sessions, which was up 24% from March and significantly up from last year.

The Facebook Group now has 234 members, most of whom are active and read our posts. The activity level has increased as a result of the COVID sheltering. Betsy proposed language to be added to the site regarding standards and protocols for approving member posts and other comments. The Board approved the proposed language which was then added to the Facebook Group site.

Betsy noted that membership in the Facebook Group is restricted to current members of the BLTA. There are some Group members who are not BLTA members. The Board agreed that after the current membership season in September, nonmembers will be removed from the Facebook Group. Notifications will be sent in advance to any affected individuals.

- School Board Strategic Planning Committees– Barbara Truncellito

Barbara reported that the LBI Consolidated School Board has been focused on teacher labor negotiations over the last month. The engineering report for the two elementary schools is expected to be delivered in May. Minutes of School Board meetings are posted on the School Board website.

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

Barbara attended a conference call of the Board of the JCTA. The primary discussion was on progress on the fund established by the JCTA at Bank of America to provide gift cards for food to the St. Francis Food Pantry, and meals for medical workers at the Southern Ocean Medical Center. The meals are provided by participating restaurants. The contributions to the JCTA Fund are split 50/50 between St. Francis Food Pantry and the Medical Center.



The goal was to raise \$10,000 and the JCTA (together with the separate Taxpayer Associations) has already raised \$8,000 and donations are continuing to come in. The hospital has a small number of current COVID cases, but St. Francis will have needs for the next 3-6 months. The JCTA will keep some money in reserve for the hospital, but will primarily fund St. Francis going forward.

The JCTA also would like to set up a Zoom account, and has asked for a small contribution from each member Taxpayer Association to fund it. The member Associations would also be able to use the Zoom account.

III. New Business – Items for Discussion

o Borough Council – Barbara Truncellito

Barbara and other Trustees attended the May 13 Zoom meeting of the Borough Council. The Council announced that the rest rooms at the Pavilion were being built. The Council did not issue any specific guidance or procedures regarding how Barnegat Light would deal with rentals, parking, or other issues in light of COVID-19. The Board noted that we are getting many questions on these and other topics which should be directed to the Council.

The Board discussed developing a process to present questions from members of the BLTA to the Borough Council. We would use our social media vehicles to obtain questions from members and would present them in advance to the Council. Responses could be given at the meeting or directly back to us, and would be posted on our website and Facebook Group. Kay and Betsy will work on developing a form for gathering questions.

o 2020 Events and General Meetings – Rich Brodman

Rich gave a quick update on our scheduled meetings for 2020. As discussed at our April meeting, as a result of the social distancing guidelines and public meeting restrictions, the Trustees decided to postpone the May Wine and Cheese event until the Fall. Also, the June 20 meeting at the Pavilion will be cancelled. The July BLTA meeting would likely be held as a virtual event, with a combination of topics that were intended to be presented at the June and July meetings..

The Trustees discussed the format and content for a virtual meeting in July. The original topics for June and July included Freeholder Ginny Haines, LBI Flood Plane manager Sean MacCotter, and Mayor Larson. Rich updated the group on his discussion with the office of Freeholder Haines. She was not willing to do a virtual or pre-recorded presentation. Sean MacCotter was willing to do a live virtual event or to pre-record a presentation to be presented at the meeting, and the Mayor also would be on board with a virtual meeting. Both of them would also be fine with a live event if we could do that under the State social distancing guidelines.

The preferred format at this point would be to have a live virtual meeting, with Sean MacCotter making his presentation on the online platform, and then an interview with the Mayor, with questions presented in advance. A link for the meeting would be sent to all members. The Board agreed that Kay and Rich would research online platforms to determine the best fit for our meeting. The Board also agreed to revisit the idea of a live meeting at the Pavilion if the State guidelines allowed for a live outdoor meeting.



IV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM. The next Trustees meeting will be a conference call or a Zoom meeting, on June 20 at 10:00 AM.

Recorded and submitted by:

Tom Zesk
Recording Secretary
June 17, 2020