

BARNEGAT LIGHT TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

General Meeting Minutes

Bayview Avenue Pavilion

July 24, 2021

I. Barbara Truncellito, President of the BLTA:

- Barbara called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM, and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- She then reminded the audience of the contribution made by the BLTA of the benches for The Pavilion. She also discussed the meeting agenda and the process for asking questions, with two Board members holding a microphone on each side of the room.
- Barbara then introduced former BLTA President John Tennyson and pointed out the current Board members.

II. BLTA Reports

- Membership Report – Rich Brodman
Rich presented the membership report through July 23. Membership at this point is significantly above last year and in fact is higher than the end of year total for the last few years. We have 579 current members, with 49 of them being new members. The total is close to 50% of all Barnegat Light property owners.
- Treasurer's Report – Bill Chnelich
Bill was wearing his green shirt, signifying positive financials results. He presented the financial report as of June 30 and noted that our Fund balance was \$22,357, an increase of \$3,500 over last year at this time, due primarily to increased dues from the increase in membership. We received \$12,635 in dues, and an additional \$2,175 in contributions. Bill noted that there will be additional expenses for IT and future meetings between now and year end. We also will incur expenses for upgrading the membership database to improve our ability to communicate with our members.
- Website and Social Media – Betsy Aras
Betsy gave an update on the BLTA website, which has been significantly overhauled. The site has different topic page links on the front page, which provides the ability to quickly and easily find information references and answers to questions. It also has a special Monthly Update section for each month. She pointed out that there is a topic



section which describes the accomplishments of the BLTA, including the contributions we have made to the Borough for beach street bike racks, the Little Free Library (LFL) at the Post Office, benches and seats at the pavilion, and the COVID Relief Fund.

Betsy also noted that our BLTA members-only Facebook Group has grown tremendously and now has 312 members. She posts updates, photos, and relevant information on a regular basis each week and our goal is to have all of our members belong to the Facebook Group.

We also have formed a LFL Committee to organize the LFL at the Post Office on a weekly basis. The Committee members are BLTA volunteers, and Betsy asked them to stand and be recognized.

o BLTA Board Elections – Barbara Truncellito and Rich Brodman

Barbara announced that we have 2 potential new Board members who will be put up for a vote at the September General Meeting. Rich Brodman then introduced each of the Board candidates:

- Tony Dandola is an attorney who moved to Barnegat Light 2 years ago after a career in the Treasury Department in New York.
- Wendy Baker is an educator and middle school principal who has owned in Barnegat Light since 1997 and moved here permanently in 2007.

III. Wendy Kuba, Treasurer of The LBI Coalition for Wind Without Impact

Wendy Kuba is the Treasurer of the LBI Coalition for Wind Without Impact (website savelbi.org). The organization was started earlier this year and is a nonprofit, non-partisan coalition that works with government officials and industry representatives and is a proponent of a sensible approach to wind energy and alternative energy solutions. The Coalition is led by Dr. Robert Stern, an engineer and former government environmental impact researcher who managed the office in the U.S. Department of Energy that oversaw the protection of the environment as it relates to energy programs and projects. Dr. Stern has recently written numerous articles on offshore wind energy in the sandpaper.

The Coalition has two primary goals with respect to wind energy off the shore in LBI. First, they have requested that the current Atlantic Shores project be stopped until a detailed environmental impact study can be completed and evaluated. Second, they are pushing to move the turbines further out to the Hudson Call South area, which is over 30 miles offshore



Wendy gave a detailed slide presentation. Copies were available as a handout at the meeting and are also available on the Coalition's savelbi.org website. Her presentation covered the following points:

- The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is responsible for all offshore development and resources and has been granting the leases. Their initial report stated that the Turbines would be the dominant view off of the coast. Each turbine would be 853 feet high.
- The two major leased areas off of New Jersey have been awarded to Ocean Wind (primarily in Atlantic County) and to Atlantic Shores, for an area which spans from Atlantic County to Barnegat Light.
- The leased area for the Atlantic Shores project includes several hundred turbines from Atlantic County to Barnegat Light, and spans the entire coast of LBI. The area is 9 miles off the coast of Holgate and 10 miles off the coast of Barnegat Light, and up to 20 miles out for the area in between. Wendy noted that the the LBI wind turbines would be closer than most other wind farms in the East and in Europe. The leased areas off the coast of New York are 17 miles out and other leased areas are further out than that. .
- The NJ Bureau of Public Utilities (BPU) has approved 111 turbines for the southern portion of the Atlantic Shores leased area (just off of Brigantine), and Atlantic Shores will begin construction in 2-4 years. The middle and northern portions of the leased area (including most of LBI and Barnegat Light) have not yet been approved by BPU, and construction could be 5-10 years away.
- The slide deck showed other turbine projects and the distance that they are offshore. It also showed a University of Delaware drawing of the visibility of Turbines at various distances.
- Wendy discussed the economic impacts. Studies of the economic impact indicate that oceanfront property values could be reduced and there could also be negative impacts on rentals and visitors.
- She then noted some of the significant risks to wildlife, including endangered whales and Piping Plovers, whose migration path would take them across the leased area. The gearbox turbines being used by the Atlantic Shores project are larger and have a larger noise output than earlier versions that were studied by the BOEM. The slide deck has more details on the wildlife impacts.
- Wendy stated that the 111 turbines that were approved by BPU for the southern part of the leased area were approved without waiting for the completed environmental impact study. Wendy noted that the area 30-57 miles off the coast, called the Hudson Call South area, has better wind potential and would not be visible from the shore. The area is currently being bid out for leases by BOEM. The Coalition would



like the BPU to study the impacts of this area and potentially move the Atlantic Shores turbines to this area.

- The role of the Coalition is to raise awareness on LBI of this project. They have formally asked the Government (BPU and/or BOEM) to halt any development work and approvals on Atlantic Shores until the environmental studies are completed. They also asked the BOEM to consider the Hudson South Call area to replace the Atlantic Shores project. The Coalition has hired an experienced law firm (Eubanks and Associates) to pursue all legal remedies to halt the project. This firm successfully halted the Cape Wind project over environmental concerns. .
- In the Q&A section, Wendy noted the following:
 - The Law Firm works for nonprofits at reduced rates, but requires \$100,000 for their first phase. The Coalition was able to raise \$20,000 so far which is enough to get work to begin. Additional contributions are needed for them to complete this phase.
 - Interested parties can get on the Coalition mailing list (savelbi.org website) to receive updates and information.
 - The Coalition has not received any interest or assistance from either the Murphy Administration or the Ciatarelli campaign.
 - Atlantic Shores has stated that they intend to eventually fill the entire leased area with turbines, with each turbine approximately 1 mile apart. The final plan apparently is complete but has not been released yet by the BOEM.
 - The Mayor pointed out that portions of the Hudson South leased area is critical for scallopers, and it would be critical that it be open for fishing. The UK does allow fishing in their wind farms, but other European countries do not.
 - The turbine structures are being manufactured by GE and Siemens. The blades and towers have yet to be bid out. The assembly will be in New Jersey.
 - The public should get involved and attend public hearings, and consider contributing to the legal effort. The BLTA will send out notices of future meetings.



IV. Kirk Larson, Mayor of Barnegat Light

Barnegat Light Mayor Kirk Larson discussed windfarms as well as topics being considered by the Borough Council and fielded questions from the audience. He covered the following topics:

- On wind farms, he noted that Barnegat Light participated in a lawsuit 5 years ago against Ecuador Wind, a wind farm developer off of Fire Island. The case was not successful.
- He also said his business had funded a bid to acquire part of the leased areas near Atlantic City in order to test the impact on fishing but his bid was unsuccessful. He recommended that people contribute to the Eubanks law firm effort.
- The Mayor noted that the scallop industry has also hired their own attorneys to attempt to protect the scallop fishing grounds from the impact of the turbines. The scallop grounds do move as a result of weather and predators, and in fact baby scallops have essentially moved out of the local scalloping areas. Much scallop fishing is now being done off of Nantucket.
- He also commented that the US Department of Defense has an interest in certain offshore areas and may block development in those areas.
- In the Q&A session, the Mayor responded to questions on the following:
 - An audience member inquired as to whether homeowners can put a small turbine on top of their roof since a credit is available in NJ. The Mayor confirmed that there is no ordinance against this so it is currently possible to do this, subject to home restrictions.
 - Recycling rules were discussed. The Mayor reiterated that the rules are on the County website, and requested that if property owners were using the 10th street public works recycling bin they should break down any cardboard placed in the bin.
 - He discussed the proposed ordinance to alleviate flooding on the bay side by requiring new construction and significant renovations on homes west of Central Avenue to follow rules as to the height of the beginning of the house structure. The second reading of the ordinance will be done at the September Borough Council meeting.



- In his closing comment the Mayor expressed his concern that Marina property could be bought by windfarm companies and the Borough would be unable to prevent this as a result of recent legislation passed in NJ prohibiting municipalities from passing ordinances to prevent windfarm construction.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM. The next General Meeting is at 9:30 AM on September 25 at The Pavilion.

Recorded and submitted by:

Tom Zesk
Secretary, BLTA Board of Trustees
August 20, 2021