

**BARNEGAT LIGHT TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION**  
 Trustees Meeting Minutes  
 April 16, 2021

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

I. President's Opening Comments

- o Approval of Minutes – Barbara Truncellito

Barbara Truncellito called the Trustee Zoom Conference Call meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. She commented that the Spring newsletter was outstanding, and we received many good comments about it at the Borough Council meeting.

The Trustees approved the minutes from the March 13, 2021 Trustee Meeting.

II. Reports

- o Membership Report – Rich Brodman

Rich presented the current membership numbers for 2021. We have 483 members signed up for 2021, which is 20 ahead of last year's 463 at this time. We ended 2020 with 539 members.

Rich noted that the new membership postcard cost \$1,000 to print and send out. That would be equivalent to 40 new members. We currently have 32 new members so far this year, so a large portion of the cost has already been recovered by the new members who signed up after receiving the cards.

The Newsletters featuring Offshore Wind and the RODA letter were opened by 67% of those receiving it for Offshore Wind and 63% for RODA. The 'click through' rate was 52%.

- o Treasurer's Report – Bill Chernelich

Bill presented the March 31 quarterly financials, which will be posted to the website after this meeting. As of March 31, dues and contributions were less than last year by \$1,000, but a lot of checks were received after March 31 and will be reflected in the next financial statement issuance. The primary increases in expenses over last year relate to the membership card printing and mailing, and the fees related to credit cards and Paypal. However, the credit cards and Paypal were popular with members.



Bill also noted that he has filed the 2020 Federal Tax Form 990-N. In addition, the 2020 Financials Binder was sent to Phil Kahn and Jack Byrnes for Review in accordance with our by-laws.

○ BLTA Website and Social Media Report – Betsy Aras and Kay McDonnell

**FACEBOOK Data** (November 9, 2020 to January 7, 2021)

- 296 Members (*Increase of 2 members*)
- 260 Active Members
- 18 Posts
  - People asking to post items continue to be monitored and are often denied as their post question is something that the BL Borough or another entity needs to answer. An email is sent to them offering a suggestion for how they can get their question answered. However, the comments that are made to our posts have generally been positive and helpful.

**WEBSITE Data**

March 16<sup>th</sup> to April 14<sup>h</sup>, 2021

- 731 Sessions (down 38%)
- 1478 Pageviews (up 26%)
- Bounce Rate 51.03% (down 30%, which is a positive result)

Betsy noted that she has continued to update the site, making sure it is up to date with all Newsletters, Trustee meetings, and financials. She will also add information on elections. The actual monthly updates are easier now that we are not reprinting the Sandpaper articles each week.

Betsy will be adding a list of all restaurants in Barnegat Light, and has added a link on the Who Are We page to Projects and Accomplishments that the BLTA has been involved with, which will include bike racks, Pavilion benches, Little Free Library, and contributions for the Pandemic and prior hurricanes.

○ Borough Council – Barbara Truncellito

The Barnegat Light Borough Council Meeting was held live on April 14 at the Firehall. It was not as well attended as the Zoom meetings. The primary topics discussed included:

- The Borough Budget. This was the primary topic and will be voted on at the next Borough Council meeting. The tax rate went up ½ cent. New Fire Department equipment and a truck were mentioned, and the Borough is looking for donations to help fund those items.
- Water Meters have started to be activated, with the goal of all being activated by June 15. Property owners must call Borough Hall to schedule an activation for their meter.
- The Garden Club made a presentation on the new garden at the northwest corner of the old Coast Guard property near the Pavilion. A 50 x 25 foot area was approved for the garden.



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

Barbara reported on the April 5 meeting of the Board of the JCTA. The following topics were discussed:

- There was about \$4,000 remaining in the COVID relief fund. These amounts were distributed \$2,600 to the Southern Ocean Medical Center, and \$1,822 to the St. Francis Food Pantry.
- Ship Bottom is re-establishing their Taxpayers Association and should be up and running by June, although they will then need to get State approvals in place. Surf City is established and is planning to become a member of the JCTA. In addition, a new Association representing the LBT (10 small towns in Long Beach Township) is being worked on.
- \$500 was donated to the Be Bright Campaign for bicycle stickers for night riding.
- Windfarms – There was significant discussion about the proposed windfarms. A Zoom meeting is being held by the BHTA on April 9 with a panel representing Atlantic Shores, academia, and the fishing industry. The Mayors of LBI were on a call with Congressman Jeff Van Drew's office to obtain his involvement in the issue. A letter was sent by the fishing industry to Governor Murphy's office to attempt to get him to address the issues facing the shore communities. The JCTA noted that Orsted is holding public Zoom meetings and Atlantic Shores would need to do the same. The group decided that the JCTA should get directly involved in these meetings when they occur.
- The Harvey Cedars Taxpayers Association has sent a letter to the State Department of Education regarding the property tax allocation relating to Southern Regional school costs between Stafford Township and LBI. Barbara asked the BLTA Trustees if we should take up this issue. The Trustees decided to see what feedback the HCTA received, since prior efforts to resolve this have not been successful.

○ School Board – Barbara Truncellito

The Ship Bottom school sale was being challenged by Ship Bottom. The town wants to avoid a sale which would result in additional housing. The School Board hired an attorney to defend the sale.

○ Little Free Library (LFL)

Betsy and MaryAnn have established a Little Free Library Committee of volunteers in Barnegat Light to be responsible for maintaining the LFL boxes at the Post Office. They will attend to the library boxes on a rotating week schedule, and may add the Borough Hall library when Borough Hall opens. There are 8 volunteers (including Betsy and MaryAnn) and they currently have 13 weeks covered between now and August.

○ General Meetings and Speakers for 2021 – Rich Brodman

Rich Brodman updated the Trustees about potential speakers for the general meetings, which are being planned to be held outside at the Pavilion. Speakers and dates include:

- *June 19 – Jim Gutowski of the Viking Village Fishery will speak on windmills;*



- *July 24 - Ginny Haines, Freeholder, if available; or another government representative if she is not available.*
- *September 25 – Potential speakers would be local organizations, and/or organizations that we have recently made contributions to.*

Mayor Larson will also speak at each meeting. Weather permitting, the meetings will be held with the speakers on the bandstand and attendees on the lawn, as is done for the concerts. In case of rain, the meetings will need to be held inside the Pavilion as we did for the June 2019 meeting.

The Borough Council has approved the use of the Pavilion for our Wine and Cheese event, which we are planning to hold in the Fall.

### III. New Business

#### o Chairs for Pavilion - Rich Brodman

The Borough has 56 chairs to be used in addition to benches at the Pavilion. We would need more chairs in order to have separate seats for attendees at our meetings at the Pavilion. Rich proposed that we contribute enough to acquire 30 more chairs so that meeting attendees can be appropriately distanced. The chairs cost \$18 each, so a contribution of \$540 would be required for 30 chairs. The Trustees discussed this, and agreed to consider this in a vote by email, since our contribution protocol requires that contributions be presented at a meeting for consideration and discussion, and then voted on in a subsequent vote.

In a subsequent email vote, the proposal to acquire 30 more chairs for the Pavilion was passed.

### IV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m. The next Trustees meeting will take place on Friday, May 21 at 4:00 PM via Zoom. Kay McDonnell will send out the invitation.

Recorded and submitted by:

**Tom Zesk**  
**Secretary**  
**May 19, 2021**