

**BARNEGAT LIGHT TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION**  
 Trustees Meeting Minutes  
 May 21, 2021

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

I. President's Opening Comments

- o Approval of Minutes – Barbara Truncellito

Barbara Truncellito called the Trustee Zoom Conference Call meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

The Trustees approved the minutes from the April 16, 2021 Trustee Meeting.

II. Reports

- o Membership Report – Rich Brodman

Rich presented the current membership numbers for 2021. We have 564 members signed up so far for 2021, which is more than the total for the entire year 2020, which was 539 members. We finished 2019 (pre-COVID) with 564 members, so are on track to beat the pre-COVID numbers also. Rich noted that the new membership postcard was helpful, as was the ability to pay online with Paypal or a credit card.

Rich designed a new BLTA New Homeowners card, which will be put in Borough Hall.

- o Treasurer's Report – Bill Chernelich and Jack Byrnes

Jack presented the financials as of May 20. Jack and Bill noted the following:

We have hit a new high-water mark for dues at \$12,025. It appears that the reminder email sent by Rich was very effective. We collected \$2,025 in dues and \$600 in contributions following that email. Note that 25% of the receipts came online via PayPal or Stripe. Contributions above dues were \$2,150, which exceeded last year's full year total.

Technology costs were lower than 2020 when we were setting up PayPal and Stripe, but Printing & Postage was higher due to the separate mailing of Membership renewal forms in 2021.

Donations of \$500 were incurred for our donation of folding chairs for the Pavilion.



The Ending Fund Balance is \$22,000 at May 20, but this will come down as a result of remaining expenses for 2021, including in-person General Meetings, Wine & Social, technology costs, etc.

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

### **FACEBOOK Data** (April 21st to May 18th, 2021)

301 Members (*5 requests – 2 approved*)

269 Active Members

15 Posts / 30 Comments / 125 Reactions

We continue to run the Facebook page as informational with some of the posts getting comments which are generally positive and helpful.

### **WEBSITE Data**

*April 19th to May 18th, 2021*

- *Sessions: 600 (down 15%)*
- *Pageviews: 1072 (down 25%)*
- *Bounce Rate: 71.67% (up 42%)*

**May 5, 6, 7 were high visit days** and this corresponds to the Constant Contact email sent out to former members encouraging them to rejoin the BLTA.

Betsy noted that she continues to add to the **“Projects and Accomplishments”** which is accessible through the ‘Who Are We’ page. Our aim is to add the many projects the BLTA has been involved with, including *Bike Racks, Benches for the Pavilion, Little Free Library, Chairs purchased for the town to use during Pavilion activities, and the Air Purifier purchased for the Barnegat Light Post Office this past winter.*

Betsy also reminded the Trustees that a monthly update is sent to Marie for the Website, and any items for the update should be sent to her by the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the month to be included. Here is the link for the update: <https://barnegatlighttaxpayer.org/monthly-update/>

We also are looking for individuals who would like to get more involved with the BLTA and assist with the Social Media/Facebook presence. It’s always good to have back-up and someone else learning the ropes so the institutional knowledge is shared among several individuals.

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- Borough Council – Barbara Truncellito

The May Barnegat Light Borough Council Meeting was held live at the Firehall, and was attended by 30-40 people. There was a lot of discussion. The primary topics discussed included:



- The Borough Budget was approved. The tax rate went up ½ cent, which equates to a \$40 increase in property tax for the average house.
  - Water Meters must be activated by June 15. Property owners must call Borough Hall to schedule an activation for their meter.
  - The Dog Park was discussed and there was a lot of debate over a nonresident whose dog created an issue for other dogs.
- Joint Committee of Taxpayer Associations (JCTA)– Barbara Truncellito
- Barbara reported on the May meeting of the Board of the JCTA. The following topics were discussed:
- Every town is now included in the JCTA except Surf City, which 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.
  - \$19,000 was raised for the COVID Relief Fund for the hospital and the St. Francis Food Pantry. All amounts have been disbursed.
  - There was significant discussion on windfarms, but the group decided not to sponsor an Island-wide meeting.
- School Board – Barbara Truncellito
- The School Board has received a hard offer of \$15 million for the Ship Bottom LBI Grade School; however, The Ship Bottom Mayor is challenging the sale by suing the School Board and trying to get the Land Use Board to restrict future use to education purposes only. The town wants to avoid a sale which would result in additional housing and open space. The School Board hired an attorney to defend the sale.
- Little Free Library (LFL)
- The Little Free Library Committee of volunteers established by Betsy and MaryAnn has been running well and meets via Zoom periodically (next meeting June 9) to check in and assure there are no issues. They alternate weeks in monitoring and organizing the Post Office LFL boxes, and currently have all weeks covered through August.
- General Meetings and Speakers for 2021 – Rich Brodman
- Rich Brodman updated the Trustees about the speakers for the June and July general meetings, which are going to be held outside at the Pavilion (weather permitting). Speakers and dates include:
- *June 19 – Jim Gutowski of the Viking Village Fishery, who will speak on windmills and the impact on the fishing industry.*
  - *July 24 – Bob Stern, an expert on windfarms, who will speak on the non-fishing aspects of windfarms. Bob generally has charts and studies of the impacts experienced by existing windfarms.*



- *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 meetings will begin at 9:30 AM. Trustees should be there by 8:30 to help set up.

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

- Wild Apricot Database – Kay McDonnell and Barbara Truncellito

We briefly discussed the transition to Wild Apricot. As some time had elapsed since we approved the transition, the trustees requested an accounting of the costs, including start up and yearly maintenance. We will ask Kay to provide this information to the trustees.

### IV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m. The next meeting is the June 19 General Meeting, which will take place at 9:30 AM at the 6<sup>th</sup> St. Pavilion.

Recorded and submitted by:

**Tom Zesk**  
**Secretary**  
**June 9, 2021**