



BARNEGAT LIGHT TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

General Meeting Minutes

September 25, 2021

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

Barbara Truncellito called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Barbara welcomed everyone to the meeting, reviewed the agenda and the process for asking questions. The meeting will feature a speaker representing the Barnegat Light Volunteer Fire Company. Additionally, Megan Keller of the LBT Police Department is in attendance with her drug 'take back' box, and Mayor Larson will speak and entertain questions.

Reports

- Treasurer's Report – Bill Chernelich

Bill presented an update to the financials as of September 30, 2021. Dues received through 9/30 were \$12,725 (up \$1600). Donations over and above the dues were received in the amount of \$2175. Our revenue through 9/30/21 is \$15,000. Expenditures were \$8750; IT costs were down; however, printing and postage were up due to the separate mailing we did for dues this past year. We have a \$20,000 ending balance; however, we will be using some of this money this year as we update and make changes to our database – moving it into a more modern format.

- Membership Report – Rich Brodman

Membership in the BLTA is robust this year with a total of 579 households. This represents 50% of all the households in Barnegat Light.

- Election of New Trustees

Two new trustees were presented for election to the BLTA Board: *Wendy Baker and Tony Dandola* were both elected unanimously.

With the Covid-19 restrictions in place last September, two other trustees who should have been elected by the membership stay onboard, but we should now officially re-elect them to their third 3-year term. *Phil Kahn and Mary Ann Crutchlow* were unanimously elected.

Treasurer *Bill Chrnelich* has completed his 3-year term and needs to be re-elected for his 3rd 3-year term. The vote was unanimous.

- Guest Speaker – Ed Aras, Assistant Engineer of the Barnegat Light Volunteer Fire Company

Rich Brodman introduced Ed Aras as our guest speaker. Mr. Aras has been a volunteer fireman since 1965, serving various departments over the years. Most recently he spent 30 years as a member of the Red Bank Fire Department in Monmouth County before moving to Barnegat Light and joining here. Over his volunteer career with various fire companies, he has held the office of Lieutenant, Captain, and Chief. He is currently the Assistant Engineer with the Barnegat Light Volunteer Fire Company.

Mr. Aras spoke about the history of the department – how it got started and where they are today with about 40 active members answering approximately 145 calls each year. He explained the structure of the company: Firematic which includes the Fire Chief, Assistant Chief, Captain, Lieutenant, Engineer, and two Assistant Engineers; and the business part of the company includes a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Board of Trustees.

He explained the training involved to become a volunteer firefighter in the State of NJ. The Fire Police also go through training, and they assist the Fire Company during fire calls with traffic and pedestrian control. He explained how the company ‘drills’ monthly throughout the calendar year; during the summer months they drill with the First Aid Squad and with other departments on the Island.

During the recent tornado on High Bar Harbor, the fire chief (who is issued his own vehicle) was first on the scene and able to set up a command post, evaluating the scene and determining who else need to be called out to help. Many departments helped that night including Harvey Cedars, Ship Bottom, Surf City, and Stafford Township.

He spoke about our Water Rescue Team and how Barnegat Light and Beach Haven are the only two companies on the island who have this type of team so they both get called out for any water rescue emergency on the island.

They currently have two fire pumpers – one of which is brand new. They will get a stipend from the Borough and from the Township to help with the cost of the new truck. Additionally, a special fundraising campaign was conducted asking the residents to help and they are thankful for the generous response.

The Fire Police head up their biggest fundraiser each year with is the selling of t-shirts and other items every Sunday from Memorial Day to Labor Day. These items are also sold year-round through online sales.

The Ladies’ Auxiliary is also an important part of the company, supporting the firemen if needed during difficult calls including but not limited to structure fires, hurricanes, nor’easters, and most recently tornadoes. The Ladies’ Auxiliary can offer support at the fire house for residents who may be displaced from their home during an emergency. They can also offer support in the field by organizing coffee and water delivery to the scene if need be. Additionally, the Ladies’ Auxiliary organizes and runs a yearly auction – the proceeds of which benefit the fire company.

- Donations

Barbara Truncellito, on behalf of the Taxpayers’ Association, presented a \$1,000 check to the fire company to help offset the costs of their equipment.

The Taxpayers’ Association will also present a \$500 check to the Barnegat Light First Aid Squad.

Barbara Truncellito expressed her appreciation to all the first responders on this island and how we could not do without their service.

Guest Speaker: Mayor Kirk Larson

Mayor Larson thanked Ed Aras for his talk about the Fire Company and suggested to all members of the BLTA to encourage any younger people they may know to consider joining the fire company – even if they are only here during the summer months. The fire company is always in need of volunteers and getting some younger people involved is the way to keep this institution thriving.

Mayor Larson addressed the Water Meters project. The council is still waiting on numbers for what the cost of water will be. They will be presenting the first and then second read of an ordinance regarding water costs at the November and December meetings, respectively. By January they should be switched over to using the water meters, billing each homeowner independently. He encouraged homeowners to pay particular attention to their sprinkler systems and be sure to speak with the landscapers and set the sprinklers for the minimum time needed to water plants – even every other day. Otherwise, their water bill is going to add up quickly.

The dead Whale that was off 19th Street was buried 6 feet down, closer to the dunes. It was the best way to dispose of it. Towing the whale out to sea involves EPA permits. Cutting the whale in pieces for disposal in a dumpster would have been a very odorous and liquid mess. While the smell was bad for a couple of weeks, all is better now. The mayor is looking into other possible ways to dispose of future deceased whales and other sea life; however, there may not be anything better than what they did.

The council is still working on the ordinance about raising the height limit of where you can start your construction. This would only be for the homes west of Central Avenue. They continue to get advice from the Planning Board and the Borough Engineer. This will be discussed again at the upcoming October 13th Council Meeting, held at the Fire Hall on 10th street beginning at 4:30 p.m. For homes on the ocean side, they are looking into requiring retaining walls, if necessary, to prevent water from your property running off and flooding your neighbor's yard.

The mayor was asked if he had any comment on the Flood Mitigation Report put out by the Army Corps of Engineers. The mayor said that unfortunately the borough was not notified of the meeting that was held where they talked about spending \$16 million dollars to put in hurricane gates at several of the inlets including Barnegat Light. He is aware that the one they put in New Bedford, MA works great. He's not sure how they will work here and even if the funding for this will appear – he thinks it may be dependent on the infrastructure bill that is currently being discussed in Washington, D.C.

When asked about any update on the Wind Turbines, he stated that he has not heard much more news. He reiterated how Barnegat Light was one of the first towns to sponsor a lawsuit against one of the Windmill companies; however, that lawsuit was denied by a judge. He said that wherever they put them, it will affect someone and reminded folks to google abandoned wind farms to see what happens 30 years down the road when the technology is no longer needed, and these windmills just sit and rust and become an eyesore.

○ Adjournment

Barbara Truncellito ended the meeting by thanking everyone for their support this past year – enjoy the rest of 2021 and have a great winter!

Meeting was adjourned at 10:39 a.m.