

BARNEGAT LIGHT TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

Board Meeting Minutes – March 18, 2022

Attending:

Barbara Truncellito
Rich Brodman
Bill Chernelich
Betsy Aras
Kay McDonnell
Mary Ann Crutchlow
Tony Dandola
Wendy Baker

Excused/Absent:

Patty Francfort (Committee Member)
Jack Byrnes
Phil Kahn

Barbara Truncellito called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m.

Motion was made by R. Brodman to approve the February 17, 2022 Board Minutes; seconded by M. Crutchlow. Motion passed.

Reports

1. **Membership/Renewal of Dues- Rich Brodman**

B. Truncellito commented that she had paid her dues on the new platform after she received the email; she felt was very easy to do. K. McDonnell reported that since midnight (3-18-2022), there have been 53 renewals, plus 3 pending who will send checks, and 3 new members. Additionally, people have been emailing Kay with questions and she has been corresponding with them. We are also getting lots of extra donations (\$415).

R. Brodman reported that the Constant Contact email sent prior to the dues renewal has a 75% open rate to date, which is very good.

2. **Treasurer's Report – Bill Chernelich**

We've spent \$4500 so far in 2022 (mainly IT costs: Marie, Rob, upgrading to Wild Apricot). On March 31, 2022 we will have the quarterly treasurer's report that, once approved, will be uploaded to the website.

As of 12/31/2021, our balance was \$18,500. Today, our balance is \$14,000, subject to revenues not yet accounted for.

3. **Social Media Report – Betsy Aras and Kay McDonnell**

B Aras reported that she has had a one-on-one tutorial with K. McDonnell for further instructions on updating the new website platform and is getting comfortable with the new format.

It was decided that the Blog will be turned on to be seen by anyone visiting the website. Initially we will use the blog to make note of and draw attention to updates/postings made to the website. Only Board members will be able to post and make comments on the Blog.

4. **2022 General Meetings**

We need to set our meeting dates for our 2022 general meetings. Additionally, Borough Hall is looking for our dates to add to their calendar. It was decided that the 2022 General Meetings will be held outside at The Pavilion beginning at 9:30 a.m. on the following dates:

- Saturday, June 11th
- Saturday, July 23rd
- Saturday, September 17th

5. **Wine and Cheese Event** – Rich Brodman

The event needs to be held at the Firehouse social hall as we need access to refrigeration, water, etc.; the Board wants to pursue the Sunday of Memorial Day weekend, prior to the town parade. Rich will contact Kevin Mimm to get the date approved for **Sunday, May 29th from 4:00-6:00 p.m.** The parade, according to the borough website, begins at 6:00 p.m. Rich will engage a committee to work with him on this. Nametags will be used again for attendees, noting their name and street on which they live.

6. **Borough Council** – *Barbara Trucellito*

Barbara was unable to attend this past month's Council meeting. A discussion of the water meters was undertaken after reading the article in The Sandpaper from March's council meeting. Barbara reminded us that the town pushed and encouraged all residents to get their water meters hooked up, etc. – and we all did it - and now, the Borough has decided to go back to the twice a year charge for another year. The board agreed that the Council's information (*as written in the The Sandpaper article and as expressed in previous council meetings*) about the new water meters and how the residents are going to be charged has been very confusing and difficult to understand. It's been difficult to get straight answers. As the BLTA Board, we are frustrated by the poor communication. It was decided that the BLTA Board will prepare a letter to the council (on behalf of our taxpayers) asking for clarification on the water charges going forward for 2022 and beyond. The Board Members are asked to forward to Bill their questions and he will then put together a letter, which will be shared with the Board for review prior to mailing.

7. **JCTA Board** – Barbara

B. Trucellito is happy to report that Surf City Taxpayers' Association has joined the JCTA. We now have 11 taxpayer associations in the JCTA. The primary initiatives for the JCTA this year include flooding, beach erosion, safety, and first responders, and they feel they can start to make an impact as they now represent 40-50% of the taxpayers on the island.

An island wide cleanup is set for Saturday, May 7th on the beach or bay – asking every taxpayer association to participate. The BLTA board decided that we would participate and will hold ours on the ocean side, gathering at one or two spots (29th and/or 9th). An announcement about this cleanup will be sent through the website, possibly as an event asking for a RSVP. We will also provide gloves and garbage bags.

The President of the Beach Haven Taxpayers' Association wrote a letter to the Governor about property taxes as it relates to the school system. We're waiting to see if he gets a response and go from there. Barbara feels that we may be able to make better inroads on taxes on the county level but it's going to take a lot of time and energy.

8. **School Board – Sale of LBI School** – *Barbara Truncellito*

The court case from the Borough of Ship Bottom (attempting to block the sale of the Ship Bottom school by the Board of Education) was thrown out by the Ocean County judge. The school board can now go forward entertaining bids on the property.

9. **Newsletter** – *Mary Ann Crutchlow/Wendy Baker*

M. Crutchlow had a zoom work session with K. McDonnell on the new platform and how to create the online newsletter. She and W. Baker will get together next week to start putting the articles together. They are continuing to hope for early April to get the newsletter out to the membership. All board members are reminded to get their articles to M. Crutchlow ASAP.

The banner will remain the same for this newsletter. Once it's put together a decision will be made as to the length of the newsletter and whether it needs to be shortened, with articles kept aside and sent out in following months through the blog or an email. K. McDonnell reminded all that the viewing of pictures in this online newsletter will need to be accepted by the reader as is always the case when you deal with emails; however, if

the viewer has already received email from us and accepted us as a trusted source, there will not be an issue viewing the photos.

R. Brodman reminded us that we will need to send (via snail mail) about 431 newsletters to members and friends who do not have email addresses. These will be sent the same time the newsletter is emailed. The newsletter will also be immediately posted to the website so it can be viewed online by anyone.

10. Little Free Library – Betsy Aras/Mary Ann Crutchlow

The committee continues to step up and take shifts to clean and straighten the box weekly. Signups are up through October and many of them are already filled. The library is being utilized well by residents of the community. All in all, it fills a need in the community and is easily maintained.

11. New Business

R. Brodman spoke to the board about possible speakers for our upcoming general meetings. T. Dandola will assist R. Brodman with organizing and arranging for the speakers.

- For the June meeting they are looking to revisit the windmills issue, asking Bob Stern (Save LBI) to speak about his group's efforts.
- They are considering a speaker to talk about flooding (*R. Brodman may find one from the LBIF Science Saturday speakers that are presenting the last two Saturdays in March*).
- They will look for someone from the Borough to speak about Parks and Recreation improvements in Barnegat Light, including the new playground. Ed Wellington will be contacted.

Going forward, reminder emails coming from the website platform will be updated to include the price of the membership. This is being changed after a couple of complaints from BLTA members. Those members were thanked for the suggestion, it is a good one!

The next meeting of the BLTA Board is scheduled for April 23rd at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom. K. McDonnell will send out the invite for the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Aras (for Jack Byrnes)