

BARNEGAT LIGHT TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

General Meeting Minutes

July 15, 2017

- I. John Tennyson called the meeting to order at 9:35 AM with the Pledge of Allegiance
 - o John thanked everyone for coming and discussed the agenda and speakers, and the process for asking questions with two Board members having roving mikes.
 - o John introduced today's speakers (Marilyn Wasilewski, Dr. Peter Kopack, Megan Keller, and Mayor Kirk Larson). John also noted that the Barnegat Light Historical Society was looking for members, and referred interested parties to call the Society at 609-494-8578, or visit their website (bl-hs.org).
- II. BLTA Reports
 - o Treasurer's Report – Bill Chernelich
Bill presented a quick summary of activity since last month, which primarily consisted of additional membership fees and normal expenses.
 - o Membership Report – Ed Ebenbach
Ed presented the membership report. Membership is at the highest point in the last 5 years, and the membership drive is still ongoing. We have 527 current members, including 49 new members so far this year. We also have a BLTA Facebook group with 109 members currently.
 - o Constitution and By-Laws Proposed Changes – Jim Slyfield
Jim Slyfield presented a summary of the key proposed revisions to the BLTA Constitution and By-Laws. The proposed changes to the Constitution relate primarily to correcting and conforming certain provisions to be consistent with our IRS exemption under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(4), and tightening up the provisions on membership, meetings, and elections, to better reflect our current membership. The proposed changes to the By-Laws relate primarily to the role of officers, terms of trustees and officers, Board Committees, Insurance and Indemnification, and implementation of financial controls.

The changes to the Constitution were submitted to a vote and were unanimously approved by the members in attendance. The By-laws were also adopted.



Jim also discussed the process for nominating Board of Trustee members. Anyone interested should contact Jim or any current Trustee. New and renewing Board members and officers will be presented for approval at the September 16 general meeting.

III. The Referendum for the LBI School District, Dr. Peter Kopack, Superintendent of the LBI School District, and Marilyn Wasilewski, Board of Education representative for Barnegat Light

Dr. Peter Kopack and Marilyn Wasilewski presented a summary of the decision by the LBI Consolidated School District and the Board of Education to hold a referendum regarding the expansion and renovation of the Ethel A. Jacobsen School. Dr. Kopack explained the reasons why the District and Board decided to combine the LBI Grade School and the Ethel A. Jacobsen School into the Ethel A. Jacobsen School. Dr. Kopack also explained the need for the expansion and renovation of the Ethel Jacobsen School.

There will be a two-question referendum on September 26 in each town (except Beach Haven) to approve the bond issuance needed for the expansion and renovations for the Ethel Jacobsen School. The first question requests \$14.6 million for additional classrooms, expansion of the gymnasium, and offices. The second question requests \$3.8 million for HVAC and infrastructure renovations. The voters must approve the first question in order for the second question to be addressed. If the Referendum is approved, the LBI Grade School will be closed at the end of the 2018 school year and the property will be sold. There were a number of handouts at the meeting presenting a summary of the key issues, and FAQs from the School District, and a fact sheet from the BLTA. The School District handouts are available on the District website (www.lbischools.org), and the BLTA fact sheet is available on the BLTA website (barnegatlighttaxpayer.org).

After the presentation, Dr. Kopack and Marilyn Wasilewski answered questions from the audience relating to the transition plans, property tax impact, use of the proceeds of sale being applied to the bond, and a series of questions on the 42 Choice students in the LBI School District. They also discussed the need for alternatives if the referendum is not approved. Many of these questions are also addressed in the FAQ handout on the School District website. Marilyn Wasilewski closed the presentation with a statement that the additions (question 1) are critical for the Ethel Jacobsen School to be able to accept all District students.

IV. Lt. Megan Keller, Community Police Director, LBT Police Dept.

Megan Keller of the Long Beach Township Police Dept. discussed a number of topics of interest to the LBI community, including:



- Rules for bicycles (ride on right with traffic) and pedestrians (walk on left against traffic);
- Medicine drop box at the police station;
- Open houses at the Police Station in September and October;
- Signing up for Nixle.com and checking the public Police Facebook page to get updates on traffic, power outages, flooding, and for links to the Borough and LBT PD sites.
- The pedestrian crossing rules. Cars must come to a complete stop if a pedestrian is in the roadway, but pedestrians still must use caution and yield to traffic. They should only proceed if there is a break in traffic.

V. Kirk Larson, Mayor of Barnegat Light

Barnegat Light Mayor Kirk Larson discussed a number of topics being considered by the Borough Council and fielded questions from the audience.

He noted that the Borough Council discussion on the proposed increase in the height restriction (from 30' to 32') was being tabled for now and the Council will have an engineer study the issue. The restriction was originally proposed as a relief for houses on the bay side of town. At the June BLTA meeting, a number of attendees spoke on the issue and the Mayor took a straw vote, which went strongly against an increase in the height restriction. The Mayor did note that it was likely that the height restriction would be required by 2020 due to new FEMA proposed regulations.

He also discussed the following additional items:

- He presented the architect's drawing of the new pavilion on the Coast Guard property and noted that construction would start in September;
- The 13th St. beach sand cliffs are becoming an issue and beachgoers should be very cautious around them. They will likely be removed for next year, but cannot be changed now due to the piping plovers nesting there;
- The Mini-golf project is currently on hold until a State CARFRA Permit is received by the builder; this is taking longer than expected;
- The Council is looking at removing the traffic light on 10th St.;
- Water meters will be instituted in Barnegat light homes. The intent is to have them outside the home and accessible. The technology is cutting edge and provides excellent tracking information. Property owners will need to make sure their meters are accessible;



- The Council is evaluating the dog park vs. a baseball field, and is looking to reconfigure the space to have both a field and a dog park;
- The Mayor made a strong statement to the audience to make sure they do not let their flood insurance lapse, as it may be difficult to get it reinstated.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 AM.

VII. September 16 BLTA General Meeting

The next BLTA General Meeting is on September 16 at the First Aid building, and will feature Dorothy Mathis, our Postmaster in Barnegat Light; a presentation by the Barnegat Light Coast Guard Station; and Kirk Larson, Barnegat Light Mayor.

Recorded and submitted by:

Tom Zesk
Recording Secretary
July 31, 2017

DRAFT