

BARNEGAT LIGHT TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

General Meeting Minutes

June 10, 2017

I. John Tennyson called the meeting to order at 9:35AM.

- John thanked everyone for coming and discussed the agenda and the process for asking questions with two Board members having roving mikes.
- He announced a schedule change to accommodate Freeholder Virginia Haines, who will now be the first speaker.

II. Freeholder Virginia Haines Presentation with Q&A

Freeholder Haines discussed her background and areas of responsibility as a Freeholder, which include Human Services (Social Services, Women's Commission, Workforce Development), Transportation, and the Planning Department. Freeholders meet every Wednesday at 4:00 and the meetings are open to the public.

She discussed the Ocean Ride program, a bus service for seniors in Ocean County who are unable to drive to appointments and shopping. She also left information on other benefits for NJ citizens over the age of 55.

Freeholder Haines then took questions on a number of topics:

- County taxes vs. school taxes as components of the property tax bill;
- County financials, which are available online on the Ocean County web site;
- The work being done by the County on the environment;
- Rules regarding open land purchases by the County, and the possibility of the County acquiring the Ship Bottom school property;
- Federal potential budget cuts, and impact on programs in Ocean County. The County will attempt to continue the major programs (including Meals on Wheels, Ocean Ride, and Environmental programs).

III. BLTA Reports

- Treasurer's Report – Bill Chnelich
Bill presented the financial activity for the prior year, including the increase in the fund balance and the major new expense items for community enhancement (Little Free Libraries, bike racks)
 - Membership Report – Ed Ebenbach
Ed presented the membership report. Membership is ahead of last year at this time, and the membership drive is still ongoing. We have 516 current members, including 46
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new members so far this year. We also have a BLTA Facebook group with 107 members currently.

- Constitution and By-Laws Proposed Changes – Ed Ebenbach
Jim Slyfield was absent and Ed 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. There will be a vote on the changes to the Constitution at the July 8 meeting.

- BLTA Annual Survey – John Tennyson and Kim Patterson
John Tennyson and Kim Patterson presented the results of the BLTA Annual Survey. The Survey received 445 responses out of 555 invitations, a very strong response rate. A handout summarized the key responses, and more detailed response descriptions are posted on our BLTA website. The survey questions related to sports activities, the Bay Beach, summer concerts, the new BLTA-sponsored Little Free Libraries, and a few open-ended questions on Barnegat Light and our summer meetings.

As part of the survey presentation, John fielded questions on the BLTA (use of surplus, tax exemption) and the Southern Regional High School tax allocation meeting held on June 8. The June 8 meeting was sponsored by the Joint Committee of Taxpayers Associations and featured attorney Vito Gagliardi. The primary topic was a discussion of how LBI could receive a more favorable allocation of taxes per student for the High School in relation to Stafford Township. John recapped the meeting, and noted that a challenge to the current allocation would be very costly and would likely take up to 10 years. A negotiated solution would be more cost effective for both parties but will be difficult to undertake.

IV. 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 until June 14, and was being considered as a relief for houses on the bay side of town. 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.

He also discussed the following additional items:

- Construction should begin on the Coast Guard property pavilion after June 21;
- Beach erosion has not been a major issue for Barnegat Light, as we gained more beach area than we lost;
- Barnegat Light is pursuing a new grant to get rid of pine tree beetles;
- The Mini-golf project is currently on hold until a CARFRA Permit is received by the builder;
- 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.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:33 AM.

VI. July 15 BLTA General Meeting

The next BLTA General Meeting is on July 15 at the First Aid building, and will feature Megan Keller of the Long Beach Township Police Department; Steve Kennedy, an expert on pine tree beetles; a presentation on the September 26 School Board Referendum by members representing the LBI School Board; and Kirk Larson, Barnegat Light Mayor.

Recorded and submitted by:

Tom Zesk
Recording Secretary
June 20, 2017