



## BARNEGAT LIGHT TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

Trustees Meeting Minutes

May 6, 2017

---

Attending:

Ed Ebenbach  
Bill Chnelich  
Tom Zesk  
Rich Brodman  
Andy Moutenot

Excused:

John Tennyson  
Kimberly Patterson  
Barbara Truncellito  
MaryAnn Crutchlow  
Jim Slyfield  
Dottie Reynolds

- I. There were only 4 members in attendance as a result of a number of unavoidable conflicts with Board members. Therefore, we did not have a quorum and were unable to formally approve any actions. Ed Ebenbach lead the meeting, and called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.
- II. We discussed the minutes from the April 8, 2017 meeting and the four attendees unanimously approved. Two more approvals are needed to officially approve the minutes.
- III. Reports
  - o Treasurer's Report – Bill Chnelich  
Bill presented the activity from March 1. The major financial activity during that time frame was the acquisition and binding of the D&O insurance.
  - o Membership Report – Ed Ebenbach  
Ed presented the membership report through May 4, 2017. Membership is currently trending slightly behind last year at this time, but the membership drive is still ongoing. We have 41 new members so far this year, which is a very positive sign. We discussed posting a list of names at the June general meeting, which would include the names of last year members who have not yet renewed their membership for 2017, as a reminder to sign up.
  - o Open Space/Borough Council Report – Ed Ebenbach  
There was no Open Space update, but John attended the April Borough Council meeting. The bay beach was discussed and there was a commitment to upgrade the appearance of the beach as well as the grading and drainage.
  - o Joint Committee of Taxpayers' Associations (JCTA) and LBI School Board – Tom Zesk  
Tom Zesk attended the JCTA meeting on May 1. The two major topics were the LBI School District referendum on the LBI grade schools, and update on the allocation of tax between LBI and Stafford for the high school.  
One of the attendees at the JCTA (Tom Beaty) is a member of the LBI School Board and is also on the Referendum Committee. He stated that an LBI-wide referendum would



be held on September 26, 2017 to approve a proposed addition and upgrades to the Ethel Jacobsen (EJ) school (estimated total cost of \$18.4 million) as part of a consolidation of the Ship Bottom and EJ schools. If the addition is approved, Ship Bottom would proceed with a proposed closing and sale of the Ship Bottom grade school, and the proceeds would be used to offset the cost of the additions. Tom handed out a FAQ presentation issued by the School District. The FAQ stated that the estimated impact of the cost of the additions and upgrades would be approx. \$55 of additional property tax for a home assessed at \$600,000. This would be reduced by a proposed sale of the Ship Bottom school. Tom Beaty offered to have a member of the Referendum Committee speak at a Taxpayers Association meeting.

The second major topic was an update on the school tax allocation between LBI and Stafford for the high school students. There was a recent court case which held that the town of Loch Arbour could withdraw from the Ocean County School District as a result of a disproportionate allocation of tax. The JCTA members believed that this could favorably impact LBI in its efforts to get a more favorable allocation of tax from Southern Regional High School. There is a meeting with a local attorney, Vito Gagliardi, in late May or early June for the town councils, to discuss next steps.

We discussed both items at the May 6 BLTA Board meeting. The members agreed that we should have a presentation at our July general meeting on the School Board referendum, and present both sides of the issue. We will discuss the details with the full Board. On the school tax allocation issue, Ed noted that he and John would make sure that the Mayor was aware of the meeting being held in late May or early June.

#### IV. New Business – Items for Discussion

- o Criteria for BLTA member email blasts and one-off surveys – Ed Ebenbach

Ed lead a discussion of the criteria that we should use for sending out email blasts to our members to inform them of important upcoming actions, and for the rare instances when we might consider doing a one-off survey on special interest topics. The attendees were in general agreement that we should communicate to our members about issues that would be of concern to our members based on the collective view of the Board. However, we would only conduct a one-off survey on an issue in unusual circumstances, eg, if a survey was specifically requested by the Mayor or Borough Council, or a significant majority of the Trustees agreed that the matter was of sufficient importance to warrant a survey.

- o Speakers for BLTA General Meetings – Rich Brodman

Rich discussed the proposed speakers and presentations for the BLTA meetings in June, July and September. We currently anticipate having the Mayor at each meeting as we did last year. In addition, we will have presentations at the June meeting from Freeholder Ginny Haines, as well as on our annual survey and the proposed BLTA by-law



changes. At the July meeting, we will have presentations from Steve Kennedy, an expert on pine tree beetles, Megan Keller from Long Beach Township Police Dept., and the LBI School Board. At the September meeting, we will have presentations from the Barnegat Light Coast Guard, and the Barnegat Light Postmaster.

o Vice President's Review of Financials – Ed Ebenbach

Ed presented his letter documenting his review of the BLTA 2016 Financial Reports, which was done at the request of the Board in accordance with our financial control procedures. Ed's review did not rise to the level of a professional audit, but was a thorough review of the reports and underlying bank statements and supporting documentation. Ed reported that in his opinion the Treasurer's financial reporting is well organized and complete and accurately records and presents the financial picture of BLTA during 2016.

o BLTA By-Laws Proposed Changes – Update

Jim Slyfield will send a draft of the proposed By-Laws and Constitution changes to the full Board, which will reflect our discussions from the last two meetings. The Board will discuss the proposals at a meeting or conference call prior to the June general meeting, and the proposed changes will then be presented for approval to the membership at the June meeting.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15.

Recorded and submitted by:

**Tom Zesk**  
**Recording Secretary**  
**May 15, 2017**