

BARNEGAT LIGHT TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION
 General Meeting Minutes
 July 13, 2019

<u>Attending:</u>		<u>Excused:</u>	
Barbara Truncellito	Patty Robinson	Philip Kahn	
Rich Brodman	Kay McDonnell		
Bill Chnelich	Jack Byrnes		
Tom Zesk	Virginia Simmons		
Mary Ann Crutchlow	Patty Francfort (Committee member)		
Betsy Aras			

I. President's Opening Comments

Barbara Truncellito called the meeting to order at 9:36 am with the Pledge of Allegiance. Barbara welcomed everyone to the meeting, and reviewed the agenda and the process for asking questions. This meeting will feature representatives of two of our new businesses in Barnegat Light. Barbara also noted that we were excited to have a number of new members this year, and about the exciting changes in the Town over the last year.

II. Reports

- o Membership Report – Rich Brodman
 Rich noted that we currently have 551 members for 2019, which is well ahead of last year at this time. This includes 53 new members. We ended 2018 with 549 members and have already exceeded that total for 2019.
- o Treasurer's Report – Bill Chnelich
 Bill presented the financials as of June 30, 2019. During 2019, our fund balance increased from \$11,714 to \$15,492 as we collected \$10,255 in dues and additional contributions, less expenses (printing, postage, bicycle safety flyers, IT, insurance) of \$6,477.
- o BLTA Website and Facebook Group – Tom Zesk
 Tom updated the group on some new features of our website. We have just added a calendar of events which covers local events for the next few months (through the end of August), so our members can plan their weekends and not miss any events. The home page also has a Special Events section which lists the events in Barnegat Light that are upcoming in the next week or so.



Tom also discussed our Facebook Group, which is managed by Betsy Aras. It has continued to grow tremendously this year, and currently has over 200 members. He noted that we would like all our members to join the Facebook Group, and asked people to complete the questions when requesting approval so the approval process can go quickly.

III. Scott Lenox, Co-Founder and CEO of The Barnegat Oyster Collective

Scott is the CEO and Co-Founder of The Barnegat Oyster Collective, a collective of oyster farmers in Barnegat Bay. He discussed the process for establishing oyster farms, and gave a brief history of the Barnegat Bay initiative. His organization harvested their first oysters here in October 2012, but then were interrupted by Hurricane Sandy. They re-grouped and began farming again in 2014 in the southern part of the Bay, but ultimately were able to secure a number of farms near High Bar Harbor. The first farms took 2 ½ years for the oysters to be large enough to be harvested in 2017. The Barnegat Collective is now in its third year and has 12 farms in the Barnegat Bay.

Oysters come from the sea and are obtained from hatcheries. They generally take 1 ½ years to get to a size that allows them to be harvested and sent to market. They grow from nutrients that come their way – they are not mobile and do not search for food. They will hibernate in winter but only grow in the warmer seasons.

Once harvested, the oysters are refrigerated and distributed in vans to local restaurants. Although they can be bought retail at Blue Claw and Shoprite, they primarily are only available to consumers at restaurants.

Scott's organization became a collective as other potential growers wanted to farm the High Bar Harbor bay area, and did not want to go through the red tape of establishing new farms. Scott leased farm areas to them and formed the Collective, and his organization distributes the oysters grown in their farms as part of the Collective. The Collective produces 12 different oyster products.

The Collective has a video available on Amazon which details how to grow an oyster farm. Scott's email is scott@barnegatoyster.com, and the website of the Collective is barnegatoyster.com.

IV. Ewan Watson, Kitty Hawk Kites and Life is Good

Ewan Watson is the Manager of Kitty Hawk Kites and Life is Good, the two stores that took over the former Islander Store on Broadway in Barnegat Light. Ewan gave a brief history of the stores and discussed the plans for each one.

Kitty Hawk Kites was started in 1974 and has 29 stores currently. Although it has many of the same types of items as the Islander (beach accessories, gifts, souvenirs, etc.), its specialty is kites. People come from all over southern New Jersey to buy kites for kite festivals and events. They had huge lines over the July 4th weekend. Kitty Hawk Kites also runs a kite flying training session on Monday nights at the 9th St. beach. More details are available on their Facebook page. Note that the store does not have a hardware dept.

Life is Good has been around for 25 years. It will likely be open all year round.

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 discussed the wind farms being considered for offshore areas, noting that many of the areas currently being reviewed have been quiet from a fishing perspective lately. However, the area between LBI and Stone Harbor is very active and there are 2-3 boats constantly there from 10-20 miles out. He also noted that most scalloping is done 20-40 miles offshore, so that distance would be a critical issue for us.

Mayor Larson also gave an update on water meters. Contractor bids for installation are being received. The contractor bids are coming in with a very high cost as a result of the uncertainty given the number of houses and location of the meter pits. It might be less expensive for some homeowners to separately contract for their own property. The Borough would consider providing a list of contractors who do meter installations. The cost for most houses would be less than the increase in water bills for the amortization of the total contractor cost if one contractor is selected for the entire project. The Mayor said he would be interested in getting more feedback from homeowners on this, and the BLTA has agreed to work with the Borough to survey our members.

The school board consolidation issue was also discussed. Marilyn Wasilewski, the Barnegat Light representative to the School Board, noted that three towns (Long Beach Township, Ship Bottom, Harvey Cedars) have the majority of the members on the Board and have been controlling the decision on this issue, and Mayor Larson has not interfered.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM.

VII. August 10 BLTA Trustee Meeting

The next BLTA Meeting is a Trustee meeting on August 10.

Recorded and submitted by:

Tom Zesk
Recording Secretary
August 7, 2019