

BARNEGAT LIGHT TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION
 Trustees Meeting Minutes
 January 18, 2020

<u>Attending:</u>		<u>Excused:</u>	
Barbara Truncellito	Philip Kahn	All in attendance	
Rich Brodman	Virginia Fitzsimons		
Bill Chernelich	Kay McDonnell		
Tom Zesk	Betsy Aras		
Mary Ann Crutchlow	Jack Byrnes		
	Patty Francfort		

I. President's Opening Comments

Barbara Truncellito called the Trustee Conference Call meeting to order at 10:00 am. The Trustees approved the minutes from the December 14, 2019 Trustee Meeting.

II. Reports

o Membership Report – Rich Brodman

Rich noted that we have 562 members for 2019, including 59 new members. This is an increase of 13 members over 2018. We also have 931 emails in our distribution network (including 234 nonmembers), and have been communicating with our members each month via a digital newsletter.

We also have 2 new members for 2020 already. The 2019 membership database and Constant Contact distribution list will automatically rollover and the two new members will be added. The newsletter will include a 2020 membership and dues renewal section, and we will provide membership signups at the Wine and Cheese Reception and at the General Meetings. Any 2019 members who have not renewed after the June meeting will be considered nonmembers for 2020 until they renew.

o Treasurer's Report – Bill Chernelich

Bill presented the December 31, 2019 year end financial statements. Income for the year was \$10,585 and expenses were \$10,056, for a net increase in our fund balance of \$519. This was \$1,100 better than forecasted, primarily due to expenses being \$1,000 less than expected. Income is expected to be higher next year as a result of the dues increase to \$25.

o BLTA Website and Social Media – Betsy Aras

Betsy gave an update on the website and Social Media. Betsy and Kay McDonnell will be splitting up the weekly updates and other website activities. Betsy updated the group on website usage for December.

Our Google Analytics report showed that our website had 903 users, which was up significantly from 550 in December of 2018.

Over the winter, Betsy and Kay will tag some of the older archived articles so they can be searched by our readers. New articles are tagged as they are posted each week. Kay will monitor the website contact page through our gmail account, and Betsy will be the lead on Facebook.

The Facebook Group now has 214 members, most of whom are active and read our posts. Betsy will typically post 2-3 times a week. We are considering adding an Instagram page for members who are part of Instagram.

The BLTA Paypal account was added to GoDaddy as the new payment method as we renewed GoDaddy for another year. We will continue to do more research on SiteGround and other host organizations.

o School Board Referendum– Barbara Truncellito and Virginia Fitzsimons

Barbara and Virginia discussed the LBI School Board restructuring meeting held in January which determined the new officers and makeup of the Board. Colette Southwick is the new School Board President and Marilyn Wasilewski is the new Vice President.

The School Board is going to hire an independent engineer to do an assessment of the existing schools so that updated and independent information is available to the Board for future decision making regarding the school buildings and potential consolidation.

At the School Board's next meeting on January 21, the Board will propose the formation of a 35-40 person group consisting of faculty, administrators, parents, and interested residents of LBI to provide input on planning for the School Board to develop plans and priorities for the School District. This will be provided through a seminar/panel, and via committees which will focus on specific topics. Virginia has approached Colette to express interest in serving on the Academic Standards Committee.

o JCTA (Joint Committee of Taxpayer Associations)– Barbara Truncellito

Barbara noted that the Sandpaper published an article on the primary agenda items for the JCTA, and prominently featured the school tax allocation issue as one that should be re-addressed. The article was based on discussions with JCTA President Bill Hutson, relaying some views from email comments made by the JCTA Board members. However, The JCTA Board never met to evaluate and prioritize the member suggestions. Barbara and certain other JCTA Board members believed that the the full Board should have met regarding the agenda before the article was published.

Barbara noted that she believed the critical issues for the JCTA to address are flooding on the Island, and sand dunes for certain beaches. The school tax allocation issue has been addressed before and does not have uniform support from all of the LBI towns, since the tax impact on certain towns (including Barnegat Light) is minimal. The issue also has a very low chance of success in the current administration.

III. New Business – Items for Discussion

○ 2020 Events and General Meetings – Rich Brodman

Rich gave an update on the meeting and event schedule for 2020. The Wine and Cheese Reception will be held on Sunday May 24, from 4:30-6:30, right before the Memorial Day Parade. It will be at the Firehouse again. The meeting dates for the general meetings are June 20, July 11, and September 12.

The anticipated speakers are:

- June 20 at the Pavilion - Freeholder Ginny Haines and Mayor Kirk Larson.
- July 11 at the First Aid Squad Building - Sean MacCotter on Flooding, and Mayor Kirk Larson.
- September 12 at the First Aid Squad Building - Megan Keller of the LBT Police Dept., and Mayor Kirk Larson. We are also considering presentations from the Fire Department and First Aid Squad, although they are not final yet.

The Trustees also wanted to feature a panel discussion on wind farms, with Q&A, and are considering doing this as an evening informational panel discussion on a mid-week evening, possibly at the Pavilion. One option is to have representatives from the fishing industry and Government if possible. The concept of an evening informational panel would introduce a new type of program for BLTA which could be a precedent for future presentations. Other topics could be street flooding on LBI and plans to alleviate it.

○ Annual Newsletter – Mary Ann Crutchlow

Mary Ann gave an update on the newsletter. The articles are set, and 1200 copies will be printed. Barbara will lead with the President's Report. Mary Ann and Kay are writing an article on the Museum Lens, and Rich will be doing an article on the 25th St. bay beach. Rich will also write the membership report; Bill will write the Treasury Report; Betsy will write an article on our website and social media; and Dottie Reynolds will write the About Town segment. Articles are due by the end of the first week of February. The newsletter will also have a paragraph on the Little Free Library by the Post Office and in Borough Hall, and reminders about our Wine and Cheese reception and summer general meetings.

IV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:07 AM. The next meeting is the Trustee Conference Call on February 15 at 10:00 AM.

Recorded and submitted by:

Tom Zesk
Recording Secretary
February 11, 2020