



BARNEGAT LIGHT TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

General Meeting Minutes

Bayview Avenue Pavilion

June 19, 2021

I. Barbara Truncellito, President of the BLTA:

- Barbara called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM, and discussed the agenda and the process for asking questions, with two Board members holding a microphone on each side of the room. She noted that all questions would be responded to. She also introduced the members of the Board of Trustees.
- Barbara then congratulated the audience on the significant contributions (over \$7,000) made by Barnegat Light residents to the JCTA COVID Relief Fund to benefit the St. Francis Food Pantry and the employees of Southern Ocean Hospital.
- Barbara praised the work of the LBI Garden Club for their great work in planting and maintaining the new flower garden at the northwest corner of the park next to the Pavilion.
- Barbara then made a request for new BLTA Board members.

II. BLTA Reports

- Membership Report – Rich Brodman
Rich presented the membership report through June 18. Membership at this point is significantly above last year and in fact is higher than the end of year total for the last few years. We have 577 current members (including 4 new ones at this meeting), with 46 of them being new members. Rich noted that we added an option to use Paypal or a credit card to enroll online, and that has been used by many of our members.
- Treasurer's Report – Bill Chernelich
Bill was wearing his green shirt, signifying positive financial results. He presented the projected financial activity as of June 30 and noted that our Fund balance was \$22,300, an increase of \$3,500 over last year at this time, due primarily to increased dues from the increase in membership. This reflects our \$500 contribution to the Borough for chairs for The Pavilion. However, Bill did note that there will be additional expenses for IT and future meetings and events between now and year end. We also will incur expenses for upgrading the membership database to improve our ability to communicate with our members.



o Website and Social Media – Betsy Aras

Betsy gave an update on the BLTA website, making sure that everyone realized that the website has been significantly overhauled. The site has different topic page links on the front page, which provides the ability to quickly and easily find information references and answers to questions. It is updated each month and has a special Monthly Update section for each month. For example, the Environment & Weather link has articles and valuable reference information on the Offshore Windfarm Projects, as well as information on coyotes, The LBI Garden Club and environmental organizations, and weather sites.

Betsy also noted that our BLTA members-only Facebook Group has grown tremendously and now has 304 members. She posts updates and relevant information on a regular basis each week and our goal is to have all of our members belong to the Facebook Group.

III. Jim Gutowski, Viking Village Commercial Seafood Producers, on Offshore Wind Farms.

Jim Gutowski of the Viking Village Fishery gave a detailed slide presentation on the impact of offshore Wind Farms on the commercial fishing industry. His presentation covered the following points:

- The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is responsible for all offshore development and resources.
- Fishermen's Energy was formed 10 years ago to provide input from the Fishing Industry in selecting locations for windfarms. The Christie Administration was not interested in offshore wind energy, but the Murphy Administration is very focused on wind energy so Fishermen's Energy is trying again to work with New Jersey.
- Governor Murphy has a stated goal of developing 7,500 megawatts of energy from wind farms off the New Jersey coast by 2035.
- Jim went to Europe 4-5 years ago to talk with fishermen to get input from them in areas where wind turbines have been implemented. Although there was negative input it was good to hear first-hand what the issues were. He noted that he is in favor of renewable energy but there are trade-offs and the costs must be weighed against the benefits. Also, it must be done with consideration for all affected parties.
- 8 companies have leases in areas offshore in the Atlantic. Many of these have foreign ownership interests. He noted that there were no leases off of Long Island, and queried whether it was due to the influence of the property owners in the Hamptons.



- The two major leased areas off of New Jersey have been awarded to Ocean Wind (primarily in Atlantic County) and to Atlantic Shores, for an area which spans from Atlantic County to Barnegat Light. Atlantic Shores has stated that it expects to begin construction on its southern phase in 2024.
- The wind turbines may be over 850 feet high (about 5 times the height of the Lighthouse), and the blades are approximately 200 yards in length.
- Two of the leased areas off of New Jersey are called Hudson Canyon North and South, and they are critical for scallopers. The developers have said that they will be open for fishing, but Jim is concerned that over time they will be closed to scallop fishing. The UK does allow fishing in their wind farms, but other European countries do not.
- Jim noted that the first areas that were leased are not as critical for long lines, just for clammers. He reiterated his concern that there are areas within these leases which could impact scallop fishing when later phases of these areas are developed, if it is not done right. He also noted that he had concerns about the impact on fish and turtle migration patterns.
- Jim closed with the comment that the main goal of the fishing industry is to slow down the process and spend enough time to make sure that wind energy is done right.
- In the Q&A section, Jim noted the following:
 - Leases are granted by the Federal Government (BOEM) but the State grants approval to develop the leased areas once they are granted.
 - The public should get involved and attend public hearings. Hearings held so far in NJ have not been well attended. The BLTA will send out notices of future meetings.
 - Jim said he got some negative input from European fishermen regarding fish staying away from the windfarm areas.
 - The bulk of the jobs created will be during the construction phases.
 - The windfarms off of Barnegat Light will be approximately 10 miles out if the full northern part of the Atlantic Shores leased area is developed.

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 covered the following topics:



- On wind farms, he noted that Barnegat Light participated in a lawsuit 5 years ago against Ecuador Wind, a wind farm developer off of Fire Island. The case was not successful.
- Summer jobs have been hard to fill this summer on LBI, affecting restaurants, stores and other businesses.
- The water meters have all been installed and most have been activated. The Borough will contact any that have not yet been activated. The new meters will go online on December 31. The Mayor expects a reduction in total water usage once charges are based on usage.
- The lifeguard house is being fixed up and will be finished soon..
- In the Q&A session, the Mayor responded to questions on the following:
 - The Mayor clarified that we do sell bulk water to Loveladies
 - There have been complaints about fireworks on the beach, which generally happens all summer. The Mayor said he will tee this up with the Chief of Police, but suggested property owners call the direct police line, 609-494-3322.
 - In response to a request to change the morning noise ordinance to 8:00 am from 7:00 am, the mayor also agreed to tee this up with the Police Chief.
 - An attendee noted that the mast at 11th St is now in the water, and asked if there was a plan for additional dredging to embellish the beach. The Mayor said there could not be any dredging right now due to the Piping Plovers.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 AM. The next meeting is the General Meeting at 9:30 AM on July 24 at The Pavilion.

Recorded and submitted by:

Tom Zesk
Secretary, BLTA Board of Trustees
July 21, 2021