



**SUMMARY OF THE MEETING OF THE
JOINT COUNCIL OF TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATIONS OF LBI
MONDAY OCTOBER 3, 2022**

- ▶ **JCTA Best Practices Summit:** October 11 convening at 5 pm at Daddy O in Brant Beach. Planned discussion topics include taxpayer association (“TA”) board management, TA membership, participation, communication and insurance
- ▶ **Election of JCTA vice president & treasurer:** Kathleen Ries (Harvey Cedars) & Ron Fiore (Surf City) are these newly elected officers, respectively. Kathleen previously served as JCTA's treasurer.
- ▶ **Gift to St. Francis Parish to honor Barbara Truncellito:** The plaque's design received final approval. It will be installed in front of the crepe myrtle that will be planted on the grounds of St. Clare's Church in honor of our friend and JCTA president who passed away suddenly in March.
- ▶ **Collaboration with Alliance for a Living Ocean (“ALO”) All Island Clean-Up Event Saturday October 22 from 9 am – 12:30 pm:** Eight of the eleven-member taxpayer associations are setting up central meeting places in their communities. The JCTA coordinator for the event has provided detailed information to all JCTA members about forms ALO has asked to be distributed to volunteer participants, how data about trash collected are used by ALO, the suggested scope of the collection efforts, dune respect and trash pick-up.
- ▶ **JCTA survey about attitudes toward wind turbines:** We discussed the challenges inherent in constructing an appropriate survey, acknowledging that a simple survey on a complex subject is a waste of time. We focused on two questions: Would offering this survey attract a disproportionate number of people who favor one “side” or the other? Would the results of the survey be actionable?

Those in favor of an all-island survey on this topic made the following points:

- Such a survey would help us understand the awareness people have around the wind farm, how they feel about it and how well informed they are.
- Given that one town is using tax dollars to support SaveLBI's petition, it would be important to know how taxpayers feel about this action and how others in other towns would feel about that position, should the same stance be adopted. We have an opportunity through the survey to provide information to the island towns and make sure that local governments are responsibly representing their constituents.

Those who are opposed to an all-island survey on this topic stated the following:

- Selection bias occurs in every survey so we cannot be sure it will accurately capture how people on the island actually feel.
- No matter how well written the survey is, it would be impossible to craft it in a way that completely eliminates misinterpretation or what others perceive as biased questions.
- Regardless of the results, they are ultimately not going to change anything and only serve to further encourage or entrench the divisiveness that we already have on the island.

One person opined that we would get a balanced response because the green energy people are as outspoken as the SaveLBI group, so both groups would be motivated to respond to the survey. The concern about one “side” being disproportionately represented is there, but some felt that the need to understand how island people look at this project should override that apprehension. In addition, “We don’t know what we don’t know.” The survey provides an opportunity to understand more. As a result, misinformation can be corrected and town governance could benefit.

On the other hand, some were fairly pessimistic about people suddenly embracing facts, given personal experiences with those who insist on arguing a position that has already been proven to be misleading or wrong. Most people are already set in their opinions and no amounts of facts are going to make them budge.

One in the group expressed a more optimistic opinion, however, saying that while there is a small part of the population on either end, 90% of population can be influenced by facts or at least are willing to accept the facts and make their own decisions -- the survey would help us get to that, but the structure of the survey and the questions themselves are crucially important in getting us there.

For example, if the survey is short and concise, which may encourage more participation, we may not get a strong set of data that we have confidence in. Several examples of meaningful questions were given, which demonstrated the challenges of crafting useful questions and, at the same time, establishing a reasonable number of them so that people will actually want to participate. All of these concerns are important to address in order to create a survey that produces an accurate sense of where people are on this issue.

A draft of the survey will be ready next week for JCTA members’ first review. Among other things to think about, we will need to consider if the answers are usable and could we/are we willing to take action on the results.

Reports From The Priority Committees

☆ **Beach Erosion / Replenishment** The committee chair received feedback from JCTA colleagues about the petition the committee is crafting. As a result of , significant revisions are being made and a second draft is expected to be ready for review by next week and then there will be discussion of next steps. After being circulated for signatures, this petition will ultimately be sent to the appropriate government officials who are responsible for the allocation of funds.

☆ **Bicycle / Pedestrian Safety** The chair announced that it is the committee’s intention to expand this year’s successful bike safety program next year. More specific recommendations about next year’s program will be forthcoming.

Based on their experience this year, however, it is their recommendation that bike safety programs should be run and managed by the TA in each community. The TA can work with local vendors and the police and they have an inherent understanding of what program would be best suited for their communities. We agreed with committee’s recommendation that execution of bike safety programs should happen on the specific town level and there should be unified approach.

☆ **First Responder Support** The committee chair recounted a meeting that he had earlier this year with the chief of the BH Volunteer Fire Company attended by himself and few other committee members. In the meeting, it became clear to that there might be more than one

approach in the works to address the lack of volunteers in the island's fire companies. The committee chair said he intends to meet with LBT Mayor Mancini to discuss what future plans are being considered by the Township to address this on-going challenge.

☆ **Flooding** No report

☆ **Offshore Wind Farms** Issue #6 of The Offshore Wind Farm Round-Up will be ready for distribution sometime next week. People are encouraged to use the Round Up's email address RoundUpLBI@gmail.com to give feedback and to ask questions.