

BREA Meeting Minutes
December 9, 2025 at 1:00 pm
Via Zoom

Minutes recorded by Mona Rowe

Contact Information:

Brookhaven Retired Employees Association BREA

BNL Bldg. 400A

BERA Recreation/ Attention BREA Meeting

Upton, NY 11973

Present Betty Elder, Les Fishbone, Louise Hanson, Mark Israel, Bill Leonhardt, Arnie Moodenbaugh, Steve Musolino, Hue-Anh Pham, Mona Rowe, Don Sievers, Barry Siskind, Jim Lemley

Officers 2024-2026: President: Arnold Moodenbaugh, Vice President: Andy Feldman, Secretary: Laura Miller, Treasurer: Louise Hanson

At the pre-meeting, the BREA Board reviewed and approved the November 11, 2025 minutes.

BREA President Arnie Moodenbaugh called the meeting called to order at 8:01 a.m. Hawaii time.

Treasurer's report, BREA Treasurer Louise Hanson: Two CDs came due in November and were rolled over for another nine months. A third is coming due in December. We will roll that over, too. BREA could get a better rate by starting a new one, but that requires signatures from the four elected board members. However, only one signature needs to be done in person, the other three can be done electronically. Mark Israel pointed out that the difference is about \$10, so the roll overs make sense. Hanson wrote separate checks for BREA's donations to two food banks, Island Harvest and Long Island Cares. The treasurer's report was approved.

BREA's reports to BERA, BREA President Arnie Moodenbaugh: Our quarterly report has been submitted, although we were two days late. The report is mostly an update of routine items such as our financial status.

Membership, Membership Chair Betty Elder: Seven members have renewed and all are mailing checks. Mark Israel spoke to Ken White at the CAC (Community Advisory Council) meeting on December 4, 2025. White said he received nothing about BREA from HR when he retired. Elder will contact him at kwwhite2014@gmail.com. She said that Sue Wells also recently retired and also did not receive anything about BREA in her

retirement materials. Elder sent her a form. Israel reminded the group that long-time employee John Hill is BNL's interim director. We should invite him to speak at a BREA meeting and ask for his support of our organization.

Barry Siskind sent a scan of his ballot. He believes he owes dues for this year and asked if there is a way to pay electronically. Elder said there is nothing in our policy to address that. Israel added that Teachers Federal Credit Union is not doing anything like that yet. Discussion ensued about electronic deposit.

Don Sievers: Mike Paquette is interested in joining BREA. Elder knows him and will send a form.

Elder has received about 25 votes currently, some via snail mail and some via email. Election deadline is next week. All have voted for the slate of officers on the ballot.

Elder will look into new software to keep BREA's database functioning. Hanson reminded the group that Elder needs a new computer. Israel: Staples has sales. Steve Musolino: Dell sells refurbished computers.

The membership report was accepted.

Action: *Arnie or Laura will send an email invitation to John.*

Medicare open enrollment ended December 7, BREA President Arnie Moodenbaugh: Hanson said the group's discussion last month on Medicare prompted her to check on her Part D drug plan. She learned that she had been automatically put into most expensive option for 2026 and switched back to the basic option, which satisfies her requirements.

Jim Lemley said he recently moved to upstate New York. Using the Medicare system online, he found a company he hadn't heard of before. He called SQ to check and was told that they do not support that company and that if he changed to that company, he would lose the BNL benefit of \$180/month. "At least they were honest about it," said Lemley. Moodenbaugh added that New York has about eight districts and they vary in price for the same coverage in each district.

CAC report, BREA representative Mark Israel: The December 4 meeting was long because the previous two meetings had been cancelled due to the government shutdown. The next meeting will be March 2026. Interim BNL Director John Hill gave a "State of Brookhaven Lab" talk covering finances, science and operations. Israel noted that almost the entire senior management now is home grown. He also reminded that group that the CAC website posts meeting materials on its website: <https://www.bnl.gov/community/cac.php>. The December 4 meeting is not yet up [*Note: it was posted after this meeting and is now available*].

Hill was followed by Jason Remien and Brian Barth, both reporting on BNL environmental issues. Israel noted that the heaviest discussion among CAC members was on the fact that BNL will not be able to meet its 2030 cleanup goals in the official Record of Decision for contaminants in groundwater. That's because of a funding shortfall and the difficulty in finding proven cleanup methods.

Louise Hanson asked if John Hill mentioned a reduction in force. He did, said Israel. BNL has announced a voluntary separation program. Moodenbaugh said he was

contacted by an employee considering this option and wanted to learn more about medical benefits for retirees. Israel added that anyone who volunteers for this program must be approved by management because the job being vacated may not be filled for one year.

Going back to the environmental discussion, Mona Rowe noted that the radiation plumes from the HFBR tritium leak [discovered in 1997] are shrinking and will never leave the BNL property. Musolino explained that groundwater moves at about one foot per day horizontally and also migrates downward. The HFBR building is approximately 7,000 feet from the site boundary and 9,000 feet from the nearest home, which means there is a transit time of approximately 20 and 25 years, respectively. Tritium has a 12.3-year half-life. By the time the leading edge of the plume would have reached the site boundary or Shirley, it would be after two half-lives. The depth of the contaminated ground water would be below the depth of a domestic drinking water well. He noted that the concentration of tritium in the water would be below the EPA regulatory limit.

Arnie added that water was available to most areas south of BNL when SCWA mains came through a few years earlier. His family lived in the area and switched as soon as they could. DOE paid for hook ups to the relatively few who had not switched. Even then, a few held onto their wells. A small number of homes near the southeast corner of the lab did not have mains. I think some of those people may have had filter systems provided. I think the SCWA extended to them since.

Action item: For his president's message in the 2026 January/February newsletter, Moodenbaugh will include words about BREA's representation on the CAC and refer members to the CAC website for details on the December 4 meeting.

Newsletter, Editor Mona Rowe: The 2026 January/February issue of BREA news will feature photos of wildlife on site taken by Kevin Coughlin, BNL photographer.

New business: Musolino mentioned the Hulu series "Out There: Crimes of the Paranormal." The second episode, "Lights Over Long Island," is on John Ford. Retirees may remember him for his claims about UFOs.

The next meeting will be held on January 13, 2026 at 1:00 via Zoom.