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Senior and Disabled Tax Relief Committee Meeting Minutes
Location: 1st floor Conference Room, Sullivan Independence Hall
May 1, 2018 7:30 pm

I. Call to Order

Present: Mark McDermott, Cindy Perham, and Jill Vergara.

Absent: Michael Herley, Peter Tallman

J. Vergara called the meeting to order at 7:47 p.m. and took roll call.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Approval of the Minutes, April 17, 2018

1. McDermott moved to accept the Minutes from the 4/17/2018 meeting. J. Vergara seconded.
Passed unanimously

IV. Reports on Progress with Research (Note: research is ongoing. There is no expectation that research on assigned topics be complete.)

C. Perham reported to the committee that she is looking at QTAV as well as assessment limits in neighboring towns and others with similar demographics that play into their Town tax relief ordinances.

McDermott is working with the information regarding Homestead as well as evaluating the freeze exemption. With the freeze exemption, the mill rate would be frozen at a base year.

At our prior meeting, we discussed the use of the CCM report. Jenn Carpenter from the First Selectman's office said that we should ask for all the reports needed at one time for the sake of efficiency.

J. Vergara brought up that we should have Bob Mayer as an invited guest to our meetings to discuss how much the programs we have are costing us and what the cost would be to make changes to the existing programs.

V. Unfinished Business

a) Schedule public forum

J. Vergara discussed having the forum on either a weekday or a Saturday. We could do a session there from 10 am till noon with a light lunch provided.

b) Mailer and other potential methods of disseminating information about tax relief programs.

We would need to connect with Matt Wagner regarding making a mailer for those 62 and older regarding the parameters for the 2019 application process. This mailer would go out the first part of February to those 62 and older.

c) Website updates/improvements

We will also follow up with Ross Murray to verify that all links on the town website contain a link to the Senior Tax relief ordinance and Q & A for all to easily view.

VI. New Business

No new business was discussed.

VII. Public Comment

John Wynne of 144 Harbor Road talked about the Assessors interview guide and using a script to get info from all the towns about their tax relief parameters, possibly using college interns with guidance from the Assessors Department and our committee.

Nancy Legare, 241 Unquowa Road, touted the praises of the Fairfield Senior center. Her comments included the Gym (boot camp), and chair exercise, and all the Life Long Learning opportunities. Nancy also discussed the concern she and others have because of the growth of the participants of the Senior center and how they seem to be outgrowing the space. Having the pre-school in the same building has limited the space for the center. She mentioned the centers in Wallingford, New Canaan, Darien, Westport, and Greenwich, that they have much space for all their programs and room for enhancements to their offerings. Nancy said that the windows in the Senior center may have to be replaced soon, but that both an enhanced and updated Senior center as well as a vibrant Senior tax relief program are both extremely important. Discussion ensued on new places that the Senior center could move to. Can the Army Reserve property ever be an option? We will certainly keep this line of communication open for future discussions.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion by McDermott to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by J. Vergara. Unanimously passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Perham, Secretary