

RTM Senior and Disabled Tax Relief Meeting
MINUTES: 09/04/2018

Members present: Jill Vergara, Mark McDermott, Michael Herley & Peter Tallman. Rep. Herley left the meeting at 9 pm.

Member(s) absent: Cindy Perham

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Vergara at 7.34 pm

Minutes of the July 17 meeting were approved were approved 3 to 0, with one abstention.

Meeting began with a discussion of data from the Connecticut Council of Municipalities and other independent research that committee members were working on related to senior tax relief.

The three big areas of discussion centered around freezes, asset reductions and deferrals, and whether they were good strategies to improve senior tax relief.

During public comment the point was made that the state defines 80% of the median income as "affordable" for a market area.

Another comment from the audience focused in on how any changes we make to the program should be made in a measured and staged fashion.

Rep. McDermott made a motion that the committee accept in concept his proposed scenario #2 (see attached Excel file) to increase the income threshold and credit for seniors. Rep. Herley seconded the motion and it carried 4 to 0.

Rep. Herley mad a motion to remove the freeze component of the program. Rep. McDermott seconded the motion and it carried 4 to 0.

The meeting discussion continued.

Chairman Vergara stated that our Qualified Asset Test is very complicated, and that we should look into the Assessment Limit, which is used by other towns.

During public comment a resident asked if the changes being proposed should be done incrementally. Rep. Tallman said if we do that, the RTM may disregard future changes by way of saying changes were just made, we've done enough.

Another member of the public said that meanings of freezes and homestead programs are different state-to-state and that we need to be careful when analyzing them.

The date of the public forum to be held at the Bigelow Senior Center will be October 10, 2018.

Motion made by Jill Vergara to adjourn meeting. Mark McDermott seconded. Unanimously passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Tallman, Acting Secretary