

TOWN OF FAIRFIELD  
RTM SENIOR & DISABLED TAX RELIEF COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday, July 19, 2023

2<sup>nd</sup> floor Conference Room, Old Town Hall  
611 Old Post Road, Fairfield, CT  
In person and by web ex

1. Meeting called to order by Chair Cindy Perham at 7:15 p.m.
2. In attendance: Cindy Perham, Mark McDermott, Jill Vergara, Tax Assessor Ross Murray  
Absent: Hannah Gale
3. Rep McDermott motioned to approve the minutes from March 29, 2023 and Chair Perham seconded. Passed unanimously.
4. Reviewed data from the 2023 application season
  - Rep. Vergara noted significant attrition: total credit participation is currently 1,090; was 1,137 (FY23), 1,315 (FY22)
  - Participation as high as 1,656 in FY11
  - 2 participants in deferral program
  - 505 reapplications and 164 new applications
5. No discussion regarding formation of Joint Board of Finance/RTM Committee
  - Chair Perham has not heard from Board of Finance members.
  - Will invite BOF members Sheila Marmion, Craig Curley and Chris DeWitt to next RTM Senior & Disabled Tax Relief Committee meeting to be held on August 16, 2023
  - Rep. Vergara asked Mr. Murray whether he had presented the data/analysis of the program to the Board of Finance. Mr. Murray said no. She asked whether he could arrange to present program details at their next regularly scheduled meeting on September 5, 2023.
6. Discussion about goals of our committee
  - Expansion of deferral
    - o Rep. McDermott noted that it's really a cost-neutral program
    - o Rep. Vergara noted that expansion of deferral has really been an aim of multiple committees over the past 11 years.
    - o Lowering the age limit from the current 75 down to 65
      - Chair Perham noted we are the only town that she's reviewed limiting participation to those over 75
      - Mr. Murray thinks a gradual approach to lowering the age would be better— start with lowering to 70, then a few years later 65
      - Rep. Vergara worries that it may take too long to ultimately lower to 65 if not done now
    - o Mr. Murray explained some features of our current deferral program:
      - There is unlimited time to participate in deferral
      - Can switch back and forth to the different programs rather easily (annually if desired)

- No payback required if a participant switches from deferral to another program
  - Potential Appeals process with Board of Assessment Appeals. Chair Perham to reach out to Chair of BAA, Paulette Cuzzo
7. Questions to ask other towns' Tax Assessors when investigating their deferral programs:
- Do they have a deferral program?
  - What are the age requirements?
  - How many participate in their programs?
  - What's the income cap, if any?
  - Is there an asset cap, and if so, what is it?

Aiming to send notes to each other by August 16, 2023

8. Rep. Vergara motioned to adjourn, Rep. McDermott seconded. Approved unanimously.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted,  
Jill Vergara  
August 30, 2023