

Ryan Knapp, Chair
Chris Smith, Vice Chair
Judith DeStefano
Chris Eide
Jordana Bloom
Cathy Reiss

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TOWN OF NEWTOWN

Minutes of the Legislative Ordinance Committee Meeting

The Ordinance Committee met on Tuesday September 8th, 2020 remotely via Zoom. Mr. Knapp called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

Present: Mr. Eide, Ms. Bloom, Ms. Reiss, Ms. DeStefano, Mr. Lundquist and Mr. Knapp

Absent: Mr. Smith

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

Minutes: None.

Old Business

Property taxation of certain 501(c) type organizations

Mr. Knapp indicated that this item was a carry over from last term relating to the Masonic Lodge in Sandy Hook which requested we look into it. There was no clear path forward but more research is being done as to how this has been handled in other communities. He will update the group when he has more information.

New Business

Formalization of a permanent Community Center Commission

Mr. Knapp said that the Council was asked to take this up before COVID-19 put these meetings on the back burner. This is an ad hoc committee which has been a big part of getting this facility off the ground. He has looked at different models of ordinances and said that the ordinance should be written for what the role is going forward, say 10 years in the future. He has spoken to the First Selectman and is waiting to hear back from the Community Center Director about how they see that dynamic. He used Park and Rec as an example at one end of the spectrum, and the Pension Board as another. There are also the mechanical questions of terms, number of members and staggering them.

Ms. Reiss asked about how this fits in with other existing committees and the need.

Mr. Lundquist spoke to the changing role.

Mr. Knapp will speak with the Director and report back with an updated draft to discuss.

First Responder's Property Tax Abatement

Mr. Knapp discussed the request, noting the value of volunteer fire service, and the history of the ordinance which was updated in 2016. He said they deserve it and there is a value for their services, but noted that we need to get the cost impact from Bob Tait.

Mr. Lundquist expressed that this should be based on math.

Ms. Reiss will contact Mr. Tait on the cost impact.

Mr. Eide will look at comparisons from other communities.

Ms. Bloom moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:36PM, Ms. Reiss seconded. All in favor

Respectfully Submitted,

Ryan W. Knapp
Ordinance Committee Chairman

Board of Fire Commissioners
C/O Fire Marshal Office
3 Primrose St.
Newtown, Ct. 06470



Patrick Reilly
Chairman

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
TOWN OF NEWTOWN

July 31, 2020
Ryan Knapp
Knapp.newtown@gmail.com

Dear Mr. Knapp, The Newtown Board of Fire Commissioners has voted in favor of proposing a change to the current ordinance regarding Tax Abatement. The state updated and approved the statute in July 2019 to increase the max to \$1,500 until June 2021 and then starting in June 2021 the proposed max is \$2,000.

The proposed change to the ordinance is for the max dollar amount for 7 or more years of service to be \$1,500 until June 2021, and then \$2,000 for June 2021 forward. In addition, we are proposing to change the progressive brackets to the below.

Propose change to existing ordinance:

Years of Service completed	Tax Abatement Amount per year
2	\$ 250
3	\$ 500
4	\$ 750
5	\$1,000
6	\$1,300
7 or more	\$1,500
June 2021	
2	\$250
3	\$500
4	\$750
5	\$1,200
6	\$1,600
7 or more	\$2,000

The remainder of the wording of the current ordinance will remain the same. We feel as the ordinance was originally intended the tax relief will help retain volunteers for a longer period of time.

I am not completely sure of the process to get an ordinance changed so any advice would be appreciated. Below is the State Statute. My cell phone is 203-241-5206 if you need to reach out to me.

Thank you
Patrick Reilly
Chairman Newtown Board of Fire Commissioners

Community Center Committee

a) Summary of General Responsibilities: The Newtown Community Center Committee shall exist to stimulate, facilitate, coordinate and cooperate with town and other local organizations for the development of a vibrant community center. The Committee has oversight for the care, management and operations of the Newtown Community Center. This will include, but not be limited to, the Newtown Community Center Mission, policies and procedures, the business plan, staff development, and fiscal health.

Notwithstanding the above, the Committee is established pursuant to Section 2-115(e) of the Newtown Charter, and all actions thereof shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Selectmen.

b) Memberships and Terms:

1) The Community Center Committee shall consist of 9 members.

2) All members thereof shall serve at the discretion of the Board of Selectmen.

c) Subject to the provisions stated above, the Community Center Committee is empowered to appoint ad hoc committees to assist with special projects.

Our Current Vision:

- A Newtown Community Center should:
 - Act as a vibrant, multi-generational hub for all Newtown residents
 - Provide educational, recreational, artistic & creative opportunities
 - Have a reasonable model of self-sustainability
 - Engage the community
 - Encourage social interaction
 - Promote health and healing
 - Build self-esteem
 - Showcase talent

Community Center Commission – Guidelines of Roles & Responsibilities

Adopted by NCC 10/8/19

- ☐ Rules, Regulations & Rental Policies: Annually review and approve membership usage rules/guidelines and rental policies. Work with Director and their staff to maintain up-to-date language. ([Note: First year to 18 months, may need to be done more often]).
- ☐ Set & Approve Membership and Rental Fees: Annually review and approve membership and rental fees. Includes all levels and/or tiers (e.g., non-profit). [Note: First year to 18 months, may need to be done more often].
- ☐ Develop Annual Operating Budget: Review budget as prepared by department heads and Center director, recommend changes and approve proposed budget. Includes consideration of contractual services, maintenance, capital projects and staff positions. Town's Finance Department input/collaboration will be included to ensure facility is meeting town operating guidelines while also fulfilling GE grant requirements until such time as that fulfillment need ends. ([Note: First year to 18 months, may need to be done more often]).
- ☐ Programming: Work with Center staff to create and implement a variety of aquatics and dry space programming that attracts new users/members while retaining existing.
- ☐ Long-Term Planning: Annually (or as needed) review long term capital and/or strategic plan. Ensure all members and non-members' needs are being met as best as possible within operating capabilities while striving to achieve or exceed goal of revenue-neutral operating budget. (
- ☐ Marketing: Work with Center director and staff to outline and review proposed marketing plan and materials to ensure consistency and clarity in message.
- ☐ Collaborate with Friends of Newtown Community Center non-profit arm of Center to outline annual fundraising goals (e.g., scholarships, capital improvements, programming).
- ☐ Participation on other Boards/Commissions: Offer representation of the Center to other town boards/councils/committees/businesses to ensure collaboration as best as possible.

- Volunteer to create as well as help at Center events throughout the year as much as possible.
 - Assist Center director and staff to resolve any operational issues when appropriate.