

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

3 Primrose Lane  
Newtown, CT. 06470  
Tel. (203) 270-4210  
[www.newtown-ct.gov](http://www.newtown-ct.gov)



## TOWN OF NEWTOWN

### Minutes of the Legislative Ordinance Committee Meeting

The Ordinance Committee met on Tuesday May 4th, 2021 remotely via Zoom. Mr. Knapp called the meeting to order at 7:35PM.

Present: Ms. Bloom, Ms. DeStefano, Mr. Smith, Mr. Eide, Mr. Knapp, Mrs. Reiss (7:50,) Mr. Lundquist, First Selectman Rosenthal, Community Center Committee Chair Kinga Walsh, Community Center Director Matt Ariniello, and two fire company members.

Absent: None

#### Minutes:

Mr. Smith moved to approve the minutes of March 18th, 2021, Ms. DeStefano seconded. All in favor (5-0)

#### PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

#### Old Business

##### Formalization of a permanent Community Center Commission

Ms. Walsh spoke to the draft proposed by the committee which is trimmed down and included input from Dan Rosenthal.

Mr. Smith questioned the described responsibility of approving monthly operating budgets, noting that this is typically done annually with updates rather than approvals. This will be updated to reflect actual practice.

Ms. Walsh spoke to the approvals threshold, which was discussed at both \$7,500 and \$10,000. The group discussed this with expensive costs associated with a pool potentially being down and not able to wait for a quorum being the driver for selecting the higher number.

Mr. Knapp would like to see a reference to the Charter and its supremacy to clarify that dynamic in the future should the facility not remain self-sustaining. A section "F" was added to the draft.

The groups discussed elections of the Chair and Vice Chair, which would be done on new terms (annually) as is the practice with other boards. Mr. Rosenthal noted the Chair serves at the pleasure of the body. Mr. Lundquist felt that with rolling terms, each time there is a new group this makes sense.

Ms. Reiss asked if this group would be subject to FOI and follow Roberts Rules, to which Mr. Rosenthal noted the Charter and statutes cover establish they are.

Mr. Knapp summarized the remaining process. Ms. Walsh will send the draft and Mr. Knapp will forward the draft to attorney Grogins.

##### First Responder's Property Tax Abatement

Mr. Knapp summarized the process to date and noted that now that there is budget clarity, that puts many of the prior concerns about how to implement this during the financial uncertainty of the pandemic to rest.

Ms. Reiss asked how this revenue would impact the Mill Rate in the upcoming budget.

Mr. Rosenthal said that the budget is based on the Grand List at the time and this will be offset by forthcoming growth.

Mr. Lundquist read an email from Bob Tait (attached.) This additional tax cut could be handled this year and would be picked up at next year's Mill Rate. The rebate of this change is estimated at \$100K.

Ms. Reiss shared the existing figures provided in the past by Mr. Tait.

Mr. Smith noted the language is not changing, only the dollar amounts.

Ms. Bloom commented that she is supportive of the increase.

Ms. DeStefano noted that this will not impact the Mill Rate. She feels good about this after the budget which was a big concern.

The group discussed the logistics of implementation. Mr. Knapp will coordinate with Mr. Lundquist.

Ms. DeStefano moved to recommend the Legislative Council amend the existing Newtown Fire, Ambulance and NUSAR Tax Abatement Ordinance to reflect the maximum allowable under statute as proposed. Ms. Reiss seconded. All in favor, motion passes (6-0).

Voter Comment: None.

Ms. Bloom moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30PM. Ms. Reiss seconded. All in favor

Respectfully Submitted,

Ryan W. Knapp  
Ordinance Committee Chairman

### Establishment

The Town of Newtown hereby authorizes the establishment of a Community Center Commission, to consist of seven members to be appointed as hereinafter provided, and whose purpose and duties shall be as follows.

### Commission Members

A. The Commission shall consist of seven members who shall be appointed by the First Selectmen of the Town of Newtown with the approval of the Board of Selectmen and who shall serve without compensation.

B. The initial members of said Commission shall be appointed for the following terms: two members to service until XXX, two members to serve until YYY, two members to serve until ZZZ, and one member to service until AAA; thereafter, the successive terms of members shall be for a period of four years.

C. The Board of Selectmen may remove any member for cause and shall fill all vacancies.

D. The Commission shall elect a Chairman and Co-Chair from its membership and shall adopt rules of procedure for its meetings not contrary to the terms of this article. Election of officers will take place annually each January.

### Purpose/Duties

The purpose of the Newtown Community Center Commission is to oversee the Community Center's operations. Specifically:

A. To advise and support the Center's Director on areas related to membership, programming, rentals, capital improvement, fund raising, marketing, and strategic planning.

B. To oversee and approve the Community Center's annual budgets with monthly reviews, rate/fee changes, and other financial operations both short and long term to ensure the GE grant's original intent is followed.

### Staff

A. Based on the recommendation of the Community Center Director, the First Selectman shall have sole authority to employ such help as may be necessary to properly supervise, maintain, and develop those areas of the Center's programming, function, structures, and equipment, provided that the cost shall be kept within the funds available in the Community Center Special Revenue Fund.

All final staffing decisions to be approved by the First Selectman.

B. All staff employed at the community center are Town of Newtown employees and must follow/adhere to all Town policies.

### Finances

A. The funds available to the Community Center Commission from gifts or bequests, dues, fees, charges and other revenue sources shall be placed in the custody of the Financial Director of the Town of Newtown, to be held, administered and disbursed by the Financial Director as part of, and through, the Community Center Special Revenue Fund, as authorized by the Legislative Council on June 6, 2018.

B. The Community Center Commission shall review and approve the Community Center Director's proposed annual budget. Budget line-item authority is under the purview of the Director along with the Commission with Commission majority approval needed for undesignated/unanticipated costs/expenses including capital above \$10,000.00. An annual budget will be submitted for inclusion in the Town's annual budget as an exhibit for presentation purposes.

C. All accounting procedures, purchases and/or disbursements must follow/adhere to the Town of Newtown policies.

### D. Dues, Fees, and Charges

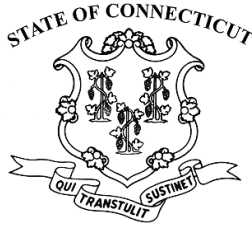
The Community Center Commission with the recommendation of the Community Center Director will establish all dues, fees and charges related to member and non-member usage of the facility and all its parts.

### E. CIP Inclusion

Major capital repairs and/or improvements meeting the threshold for inclusion in the Town's CIP plan must follow said CIP plan process.

F. In the event that a situation arises that creates conflict between this document and the Town Charter, the Town Charter language will govern.





***Substitute House Bill No. 5125***

***Public Act No. 19-36***

***AN ACT INCREASING THE PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT FOR CERTAIN FIRST RESPONDERS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Section 12-81w of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2019*):

The legislative body of any municipality may establish, by ordinance, a program to provide property tax relief for a nonsalaried local emergency management director, any individual who volunteers his or her services as a firefighter, fire police officer, as defined in subsection (a) of section 7-308, emergency medical technician, paramedic, civil preparedness staff, active member of a volunteer canine search and rescue team, as defined in section 5-249, active member of a volunteer underwater search and rescue team, or ambulance driver in the municipality, or any individual who is a retired volunteer firefighter, fire police officer or emergency medical technician and has completed at least twenty-five years of service as a volunteer firefighter, fire police officer or emergency medical technician in the municipality. Such tax relief may provide either (1) (A) for the period commencing July 1, 2019, and ending June 30, 2021, an abatement of up to one thousand five hundred dollars in property taxes due for any fiscal year, and (B) on and after July 1, 2021, an

***Substitute House Bill No. 5125***

abatement of up to two thousand dollars in property taxes due for any fiscal year, or (2) an exemption applicable to the assessed value of real or personal property up to an amount equal to the quotient of one million dollars divided by the mill rate, in effect at the time of assessment, expressed as a whole number of dollars per one thousand dollars of assessed value. Any ordinance may authorize interlocal agreements for the purpose of providing property tax relief to such volunteers who live in one municipality but volunteer or volunteered their services in another municipality.

Approved June 28, 2019



Ryan Knapp &lt;knapp.newtown@gmail.com&gt;

## Form submission from: Contact Ryan Knapp

4 messages

**Patrick Reilly via Newtown CT** <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>

Mon, Jul 27, 2020 at 9:03 PM

Reply-To: Patrick Reilly <patreillybofc@gmail.com>

To: Knapp.Newtown@gmail.com

Submitted on Monday, July 27, 2020 - 9:03pm  
 Submitted by anonymous user: 173.245.52.195  
 Submitted values are:

Your Name: : Patrick Reilly

Your e-mail address: [patreillybofc@gmail.com](mailto:patreillybofc@gmail.com)

Subject: Newtown Fire, Ambulance, NUSAR Tax Abatement Ordinance

Message:

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 a 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

Substitute House Bill No. 5125

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Substitute House Bill No. 5125

Public Act No. 19-36 2 of 2

abatement of up to two thousand dollars in property taxes due for any fiscal year, or (2) an exemption applicable to the assessed value of real or personal property up to an amount equal to the quotient of one million dollars divided by the mill rate, in effect at the time of assessment, expressed as a whole number of dollars per one thousand dollars of assessed value. Any ordinance may authorize interlocal agreements for the purpose of providing property tax relief to such volunteers who live in one municipality but volunteer or volunteered their services in another municipality.

Approved June 28, 2019

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

<https://www.newtown-ct.gov/node/41063/submission/116961>

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**Ryan Knapp** <knapp.newtown@gmail.com>

Mon, Jul 27, 2020 at 9:23 PM

To: Paul Lundquist <lundquist.paul@gmail.com>

Hi Paul,

A request has come in that we consider an amendment to an ordinance. Could we get this on a future agenda to consider charging the LC ordinance committee?

Thank you,

-Ryan

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Patrick Reilly via Newtown CT <[cmsmailer@civicplus.com](mailto:cmsmailer@civicplus.com)>

**Date:** July 27, 2020 at 9:03:29 PM EDT

**To:** [Knapp.Newtown@gmail.com](mailto:Knapp.Newtown@gmail.com)

**Subject:** Form submission from: Contact Ryan Knapp

**Reply-To:** "Patrick Reilly" <[patreillybofc@gmail.com](mailto:patreillybofc@gmail.com)>

Submitted on Monday, July 27, 2020 - 9:03pm

[Quoted text hidden]

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**paul lundquist** <lundquist.paul@gmail.com>

Fri, Jul 31, 2020 at 11:51 AM

To: Ryan Knapp <knapp.newtown@gmail.com>

Hi Ryan,  
Apologies for the slow response, I've been out of pocket for a few days. I'm posting an agenda today for our 8/5 meeting and will include this.

Paul

[Quoted text hidden]

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**Paul Lundquist** <plundquist.newtown@gmail.com>

Fri, Jul 31, 2020 at 12:02 PM

To: Ryan Knapp <knapp.newtown@gmail.com>

Hey, just wanted to add that our action, as you said, would simply be to refer this to the Ord Cmt. If you think Patrick Reilly or anyone else from the Board of Fire Commissions would like to present anything to the LC prior to our action, we can certainly accommodate this. I don't think it's critical, but I could reach out to them to check. I think I'll push it out to our 8/12 meeting instead, to give them more than just 3-4 days notice if they'd prefer to speak to it. Thoughts?

Paul

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **paul lundquist** <lundquist.paul@gmail.com>

Date: Fri, Jul 31, 2020 at 11:54 AM

Subject: Fwd: Form submission from: Contact Ryan Knapp

To: <plundquist.newtown@gmail.com>

[Quoted text hidden]



Ryan Knapp &lt;knapp.newtown@gmail.com&gt;

**tait**

2 messages

**Robert Tait** <robert.tait@newtown-ct.gov>  
To: Ryan Knapp <Knapp.Newtown@gmail.com>  
Cc: Dan Rosenthal <dan.rosenthal@newtown-ct.gov>

Tue, May 4, 2021 at 9:01 AM

Hello Ryan,

Regarding the volunteer credit. The tax collector would need any new information on that by the first week of June in order to get it on the bills going out.

You could initiate 100% of the considered change without any change to the 2021-22 budget. The credit appears on the mill rate calculation page in the budget book. That page has some inherent flexibility in it. For instance, we do not budget for any increases in the grand list during the fiscal year we are budgeting for. Most likely any increases to the grand list, in 2021-22, due to new construction would cover the increased cost relating to any change in the volunteer credit.

Any new authorized increase in the volunteer credit would show up on the 2022-23 budget mill rate calculation sheet.

Thanks,

Bob

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**Ryan Knapp** <knapp.newtown@gmail.com>

Tue, May 4, 2021 at 12:46 PM

To: Cathy Reiss <reiss.newtown@gmail.com>, Judit DeStefano <juditnewtownlc@gmail.com>, Christopher Eide <chriseide4newtown@gmail.com>, Chris Smith <chrissmith.newtown@gmail.com>, jordana bloom <jordanabloom.newtown@gmail.com>, Paul Lundquist <Plundquist.Newtown@gmail.com>

FYI

[Quoted text hidden]



*Ryan W. Knapp*  
Legislative Council  
Town of Newtown