

Ryan Knapp, Chair
William DeRosa, Vice Chair
Chris Gardner
Tom Long
Charlie Gardner
Jeff Capeci

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TOWN OF NEWTOWN

Minutes of the Legislative Ordinance Committee

The Ordinance Committee met on Wednesday June. 29th, 2022, initially in Meeting Room 1, but moved to the Council Chambers of The Municipal Center to accommodate members of the public. Mr. Knapp called the meeting to order at 7:05PM.

Present: Mr. DeRosa, Mr. Charles Gardner, Mr. Long, Mr. Knapp, and four members of the public.

Absent: Mr. Capeci, Mr. Chris Gardner

Minutes: Mr. Charles Gardner moved to approve the minutes of Feb 15h, 2022, Mr. Long seconded.

Mr. DeRosa noted that he was not present but they seemed comprehensive.

All in favor (4-0)

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Tony Keating, Oak Ridge, Newtown - Said they found out late and there is a lack of awareness of these meetings. He has confidence the committee is doing what is best.

Old Business

Consideration of an Amendment For Local Additional Veterans' Tax Exemption Program

Mr. Knapp reviewed the process for members of the public. He spoke to what was discussed at the last meeting regarding adding the language to adjust levels modeled from Senior Tax Abatement and read the draft. He noted the fiscal year should be 2023-24 instead of 2022-23.

Mr. Long reviewed his conversation with the Tax Assessor (notes attached.) He explained that the filing period would start Feb 1 and go until September 30th.

Mr. Knapp said that it is good to raise awareness that these programs can be used in conjunction with others such as the senior tax abatement.

Mr. Charles Gardner asked if this could be counted twice in a home owned by two veterans? It was also asked if this would apply to motor vehicles.

Mr. Knapp noted that we will have to ask the Tax Assessor and look at the enabling statute.

Mr. Long noted that the enabling statute is very complicated as to how it defines things. The statute does reference property.

Mr. DeRosa commented that he is glad we are raising the income levels and is glad to do what is best for our veterans.

Mr. Charles Gardner suggested changing "for the fiscal year" to "beginning in the fiscal year" in two parts of the draft. Mr. Knapp agreed.

Mr. Long will speak to the Tax Assessor to answer questions.

Mr. Knapp said the next step is to send the draft to the Town Attorney for legal review.

Mr. Charles Gardner moved to send the draft Veterans' Tax Exemption Program with the changes discussed this evening to Legal for review, Mr. DeRosa seconded. Motion Passes (4-0)

Voter Comment: Mr. Keating commented that he would like to thank the committee for their service.

Ms. Long moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:35PM. Mr. Charles Gardner seconded. All in favor

Respectfully Submitted,

Ryan W. Knapp
Ordinance Committee Chairman

FOLLOW-UP

- Reach out to Assessor
- Kathy Brown – 270-4240

Qualified applicants will receive at \$10,000 assessment reduction from their real estate assessment or a 10% real estate assessment reduction (whichever is greater) before taxes are calculated for the July tax bill.

Our action by October will impact tax bills people receive in July 2023.

- Number of people in program in 2015 and has there been a falloff
 - In 2015 there were 171
- # of people impacted
 - In 2021 there were about 80
 - A lot of people are older, passing away, moving out of state
- Amount/cost to town on our grand list – Has this shifted
 - About \$1 million of the grand list
 - An sample of assessed property at \$186,310 – 10% (\$18,631) equals new assessed value of \$167,679
 - The reduction of the assessed property by \$18,631 equals a tax reduction of approximately \$645.56 ($\frac{18,631}{\$1,000} \times \text{mill rate of } 34.67 = 645.56$)
- Determine eligibility for our own benefit
 - DD214
 - State has provided War Years
 - Been on active duty not necessarily in combat
 - Now it is anyone who comes out of the service since the Iraq War
- Can someone apply for other tax abatements such as the Senior Abatement, Disabled, Low Income Housing and Fire Ambulance Underwater Rescue, Farm Buildings
 - As many as they are eligible for.
- Approach with language that automatically increases at some amount such as \$10k – Peg to state statute
 - Yes, tie automatic increase to state movement.
- OR Give a resolution to council to reset the amount now.
- For October grand list that will be applied in 2023(?)
 - Filing period is February 1st through September 30th
 - Deadline of October 1st for the next calendar year

Chapter 208. Taxation

Article V. Supplemental Veterans Property Tax Exemption

[Adopted 10-7-2015[1]]

[1]

Editor's Note: This ordinance also repealed former Art. V, Supplemental Veterans Property Tax Exemption, adopted 4-14-2004 (Ord. No. 64A), as amended.

§ 208-16. Amount of exemption; income limits.

A.

Any veteran entitled to an exemption from property tax in accordance with Subdivision 19 of § 12-81 of the Connecticut General Statutes shall be entitled to an additional exemption, provided that such veteran's qualifying income does not exceed \$~~41,200~~48,100 for a single veteran or \$~~45,000~~56,400 for a married veteran for the fiscal year 2022-23. Qualifying income levels are subject to change upon resolution by the Legislative Council, which may base such changes on recommendations to the Legislative Council from the office of the First Selectman. Current modified income levels and corresponding maximum available tax credits shall be made available to the public in the office of the Tax Assessor. The exemption, in the greater amount of \$10,000 or 10% of the assessed value of the property, shall be applied to the assessed value of an eligible veteran's property.

B.

Effective for the assessment year commencing October 1, 2015, and each assessment year thereafter, the additional exemption from property tax permitted by Connecticut General Statutes § 12-81g(b) for veterans and their spouses pursuant to the provisions of Subdivision 20 of Connecticut General Statutes § 12-81 is hereby authorized for those persons who meet the eligibility requirements of said sections.

§ 208-17. Exemption for surviving spouses.

Any veteran's surviving spouse entitled to an exemption from property tax, in accordance with Subdivision 22 of § 12-81, shall be entitled to an additional exemption, provided that such surviving spouse's qualifying income does not exceed \$~~41,200~~48,100 for the fiscal year 2022-23, or the current qualifying income level set by resolution of the Legislative Council in subsequent years. The exemption, in the greater amount of \$10,000 or 10% of the assessed value of the property, shall be applied to the assessed value of an eligible surviving spouse's property.

§ 208-18. Administration.

The Assessor of the Town of Newtown shall administer the veteran's tax exempt program as set forth in C.G.S. § 12-81f, as amended by Public Act 03-44, and C.G.S. § 12-81g, as amended by Public Act 13-224.