

**Senior and Disabled Tax Relief Committee Meeting
Minutes for July 9, 2013**

Present: Sheila Marmion, Tom McCarthy, Eric Newman, and Carol Way
Guest: Donald Ross, Tax Assessor Absent: Bill Domeika

I. Call to Order:

Representative McCarthy called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. The committee began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Approval of Minutes

Bill Domeika had taken the minutes for the June meeting and was available to review those minutes with the other members of the committee.

III. Presentation by Tax Assessor and Review by Committee Members

Representative McCarthy citing the 2000 census data, noted that at the time there were roughly 4300 people living in Fairfield between 65 and 70 years of age, citing other economic data he noted that roughly 40% of Fairfield residents over the age of 65 had income greater \$75K/year. On that basis, he concluded that 1500 would be a reasonable assumption as to the number of seniors who would meet both the age and income requirements for the proposed enhanced deferral option under consideration. In spite of the size of the potential pool it was pointed out that the actual number of participants for the Town of Darien (with an enhanced deferral) was roughly the same as Fairfield's current deferral program (16-17). It was noted that in Fairfield figures, 258 had fallen into the cracks of our program. Either their credit was less than their credit in previous years, or they were grandfathered in a less generous deferral. It was agreed that it was appropriate to have "grandfathered" seniors who had participated in the prior credit program.

Don Ross reviewed of the numbers that had participated in the new credit program for 2013 and noted that the aggregate amount of credit had come in well under the original estimate for the new program due to attrition. Don Ross filled us in on the development of the software program for the revised tax relief and he told us of some who had in the past been eligible for a \$1,000 (past minimum amount) and with the new formula now received less. Perhaps this should be addressed.

There was a discussion of the maximum amount that could be deferred in a new, proposed deferral program and the need to review with Attorney Lesser and First Selectman Tetreau any proposed deferral program before presentation to the L & A Committee possibly in August. There was an expressed hope that a new deferral program might be presented to the RTM in September with a possible vote in October.

IV. Opportunity for Public Input

There was no public in attendance.

V. New Business

The only new business was the prospect of presenting a new deferral program to committees and then to the RTM. All of this would take into consideration Connecticut's Office of Policy and Management decision in connection with social security levels once again, and Eric Newman stated that any program that is passed should include all partners vetted in legal civil unions.

Motion by Sheila Marmion and seconded by Eric Newman for the following text changes to Article III of the Fairfield Tax code:

If a tax payer's initial year of filing was for an odd-numbered grand list year, re filing will occur for an odd numbered grand list year. If a tax payer's initial year of filing was for an even-numbered grand list year, re filing will occur for an even-numbered grand list year." Any taxpayer age 75 or older at the end of the preceding calendar year and meeting the eligibility requirements of § 95-8 and having qualifying income not exceeding \$80,000 may elect to apply for a deferral of up to 50% of the gross tax levied on applicable property each year in which the tax payer or the surviving spouse/civil partner, continues to meet such eligibility requirements.

Passed Unanimously

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol J. Way, Secretary