

APPROVED FEBRUARY 16, 2016

**Town of North Haven
Senior Property Tax Freeze Advisory Committee
Conference Room #1
North Haven Town Hall
18 Church Street, North Haven, CT**

**Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 9, 2016 4:00 PM**

Committee Members:

Donald Clark
Sandra Foley
Stephen Gifford
George Guertin
Sherman Katz
Deborah Moore
Regina Najarian
Joseph Solimene
Joseph Villano

Town Personnel:

Michael Freda, First Selectman
Edward Swinkoski, Finance Director
Gary Johns, Assessor
J. Stacey Yarbrough, Town Clerk/Tax Collector
Jennifer N. Coppola, Outside Town Counsel

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by First Selectman Freda at 4:03 PM.

He thanked everyone for serving on this Committee, which is charged by the Board of Selectmen to make suggestions for establishing an asset limit(s) and related eligibility requirements for inclusion in a proposed ordinance creating a property tax freeze program for eligible seniors.

It is anticipated that the Committee will meet on Tuesdays, February 16th, February 23rd, and March 1st with the goal of delivering final recommendations in a written format to the Board of Selectmen at the Thursday, March 3, 2016 Board of Selectman meeting.

1. Election of Chairman and Secretary of the Committee:

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Upon a motion by Joseph Villano and seconded by George Guertin, Sherman Katz was elected Chairman of the Senior Property Tax Freeze Advisory Committee by unanimous vote in favor thereof (9-0-0).

Upon his election, Mr. Katz assumed the role of Chairman and conducted the meeting.

Upon a motion by Sherman Katz and seconded by Regina Najarian, Deborah Moore was elected Secretary of the Senior Property Tax Freeze Advisory Committee by unanimous vote in favor thereof (9-0-0).

2. Discussion of an asset limit(s) and related eligibility requirements to be recommended to the Board of Selectmen for inclusion in a proposed Ordinance which will provide property tax freeze relief to elderly homeowners residing in North Haven to be recommended by the Board of Selectmen to the Town Meeting:

The Committee initiated a discussion about their charge and reviewed ordinances from other towns.

Some of the questions raised by the Committee included the following which will be discussed further:

- A. What should the asset limit(s) be, if any?
- B. What should the list of assets include?
- C. Should there be a limit on the home value?
- D. Should years of North Haven residency be a factor?
- E. What is the maximum number of homes eligible?

Gary Johns indicated that there are currently 389 taxpayers eligible for the current credit program, but that includes seniors who are 65 years and older, and the proposed ordinance is for seniors 70 years and older, so the number will be smaller.

- F. What is staff input?

Gary Johns indicated that he would like to see an ordinance which makes the eligibility requirements clear, concise, enforceable and not too cumbersome for Town personnel and seniors to work though. An affidavit, at the very least, would be required.

- G. Should there be a penalty for misrepresenting one's eligibility? If so, what would that be?

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H. Does the proposed ordinance have a sunset provision?

Yes, through the 2019 Grand List.

I. Should the Committee look at the people are who are residing in the house?

J. Follow up questions for the next meeting –

What is the median home price?

What are the guidelines for eligibility for the Town's home heating oil program?

3. Discussion of Next Meeting of Committee:

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, February 16, 2016 at 4:00 PM in Conference Room #1 of North Haven Town Hall. A notice and agenda will be posted in Town Hall and distributed to the members of the Committee.

4. Adjournment:

Upon a Motion to Adjourn by Stephen Gifford and seconded by George Guertin, the meeting adjourned at 5:11 PM by unanimous vote in favor thereof (9-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,
Deborah L. Moore
Secretary