

ELDERLY COMMISSION MEETING
August 22, 2005 at 11:30 am
Town Hall

Meeting Minutes of August 22, 2005:

- I. Meeting called to order at 11:41am by Chairman
- II. Minutes from June 27, 2005 meeting approved. Motion made by Karen Boutin, seconded by Cheryl Littlefield.
- III. Attendance: all present
Claire Badstubner (Chairman), Carol Madore (Tax Assessor), Elizabeth Burns (Municipal Agent), Catherine Drouin (Vice-Chairman), Karen Boutin, Cheryl Littlefield, H. Stuart Woodard
- IV. Elderly Tax Relief:

Betsy updated the group regarding CT General Statute, Section 12-129n (“not to exceed 60 days”) from the last Board of Selectman (BOS) meeting. A “Tax Relief Committee” will be appointed (most likely consisting of the current Elderly Commission members) and will be made up of 5 members. The board will have 60 days from the public forum (9/15) to present a tax relief program to the BOS to vote on. The committee will officially be appointed at the 9/20/05 BOS meeting. Although the Elderly Commission is doing the forum on tax relief, it will be the responsibility of the Tax Relief Committee to develop the program and present it to the BOS.

The flyer regarding the public forum (9/15/05) was distributed/posted via: local newspapers, town hall and annex, senior center, September town newsletter and Cox cable local events channel. The flyer can also be found on the town’s website. It will also be posted at the Post Office, Fire Dept, Libraries, Big Y, Geisslers’ and Brooks Pharmacy by various committee members. Publicity on the forum is complete.

Betsy and Carol will be meeting to prepare a presentation for the forum. Questions to anticipate may be:

- income levels
- defining “deferral”, “lien” – what about interest
- “will any of this hurt my credit?”
- Questions regarding Reverse Mortgages may be asked
- “approximately how much will I benefit?”

Betsy reiterated that the forum is an opportunity for the public to ask questions and for the committee to gather feedback on the level of interest/participation. Once the committee proposes a tax relief program to the BOS, it was explained that they

could say “no”, table it for future consideration, or say “yes” (which would bring it to the Board of Finance).

Brief discussion among members regarding deferral versus credit and liens on properties ensued to clear up questions and any confusion. Carol explained the issue of liens and also that it is important for the public to be fully informed in regards to all options and what personal/financial impacts those options might have on them.

The group began discussing comparable towns’ tax relief programs. Portland’s deferral program was discussed, however, some points were unclear so Carol will be contacting them for clarification on their program. Somers was also looked at which lead to a discussion on eligibility requirements in terms of residency period in town. It was decided, as a group, that the comparable towns’ programs will be looked at with more detail following the 9/15 forum, as the group will have more information from the public at that time which will better direct discussions to develop East Windsor’s program.

Some of the eligibility issues the committee will further discuss following the forum are:

- how long a person has been a resident of EW (consecutive years?)
- what will the waiting period be
- should the person apply for the state first – and a town program will follow?
- Should asset testing be done?
- How to simplify the process to avoid any burden of processing redundant paperwork.
- Should a certain dollar amount be considered across the board?
- Should the eligible income amount be raised?

Carol reviewed the costs for the state program for EW, appx. \$86,400.00, with 170 applicants. Carol mentioned that if these funds were matched and capped, EW may be okay for a couple of years until the mill rate changes.

Goals for 9/26/05 meeting:

1. review forum results
2. discuss comparable towns’ programs further

Meeting adjourned at 12:52 pm. Motion to adjourn by Karen Boutin, seconded by Cheryl Littlefield.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Pellegrini
Recording Secretary