

Tax Fairness Committee
February 17, 2017
Minutes

The Tax Fairness Committee met on February 17 at 8:00am in the Town House Select Board Room. Present were members Chair Jonathan Keyes, Reinier Beeuwkes, Nancy Cronin, James Phelps, and Walter Birge. Also present was Michael Lawson, Select Board liaison.

Mr. Lawson explained that the Tax Fairness Committee hearing will be before the Select Board because it was supported by the Finance Committee at the 2016 Town Meeting. He said that he will check with the Finance Committee before this year's Town Meeting. He said that he will have the Town Manager state that the Town Assessor has indicated that his office will be able to handle the administration of the exemption without hiring any new staff.

Reinier said that he will talk with the Town Assessor about the exemption application.

It is likely that a Special Election will be held in early June at which acceptance of the exemption by the voters can be on the ballot. Mr. Lawson said although there will be a short time before applications would have to be filed (The Town Assessor said that would have to be by September 1.), it would be best to start the process right away. When the election is being scheduled the Select Board could make it clear that applications would be accepted before September 1. The Hugh Cargill recipients and the Tax Relief recipients should be notified about the new exemption.

The presentation at Town Meeting should also include how homeowners could apply for it. Mr. Keyes said that the presentation should include the cost of the program to the average taxpayer. Mr. Lawson also said that it should include the cap on the exemption, the maximum amount of money that could be used to fund it ($\frac{1}{2}$ of 1% of the levy).

Ms. Cronin will get the latest version of the Sudbury application form and the filing instructions and send it to Committee members.

Ms. Cronin asked whether the Committee would be willing to speak in favor of Article 49, the proposal of Charles Phillips of the Concord Housing Foundation for a fee on new construction to be set aside for the purchase of affordable housing by the Concord Housing Finance Corporation. Mr. Keyes said he would speak in favor of it at Town Meeting as an individual, not for the Committee

The next meeting will be held on February 24 to review the slides of the presentation to be given at the Select Board meeting on March 6.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Cronin, Clerk