

**Tax Fairness Committee
Minutes
August 6, 2019**

The Tax Fairness Committee met at 8:00am on August 6, 2019 in the Select Board Room. Present were members David Karr, Reinier Beeukes, Walter Birge, and Nancy Cronin. Also present were Michael Lawson, Select Board liaison, and John Hickling, Finance Committee liaison.

The minutes of the July 19 meeting were approved.

David noted that the cost of the senior exemption this year was \$31,016. Mike said that was well below the limit of .5 of 1%.

At the last meeting the committee decided to use Method #3 to calculate the senior tax exemption. Method #3 would apply the exemption first, followed by applying the statutory exemption (usually \$1,000). That might mean that the taxpayer wouldn't be eligible for the state income tax Circuit Breaker; however their tax would be lower than with the Circuit Breaker. That means that the Town would be paying more, and the state would be paying less. It also means that not everyone who benefitted this year would next year after these changes.

Mike said that the financial impact on the Town is quite small.

Nancy said that a suggestion has come up as to whether recipients of the senior exemption should allow the Town right of first refusal on their property whenever they were going to sell it. This might allow the Town to purchase more affordable homes. It was decided that this provision should not be added at this time.

David said he will prepare a letter to the Select Board.

It was decided to meet with the Select Board on September 23. Mike summarized what the committee should tell the Select Board at their meeting: First, a quick summary of the Town's experience with the senior exemption in 2019, some problems with its implementation, request to make it permanent as in Sudbury, the exemption does not significantly impact Town finances.

The next committee meeting will be on September 6.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10.

Respectfully submitted:

Nancy Cronin
Clerk