

Senior Citizen Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 10 January, 2018 @530p

Council Members Present:

- Chris Goguen, Chairman
- Pam Fine
- Chris Barrett
- Bob Curtin (non-voting)
- Bob Zwolinski
- Marjorie Generazzo
- Julie Mallet (non-voting)
- Linda Nacarra (non-voting)
- Patricia Campbell
- Dave Mayerson (non-voting)

Subcommittee Reports and Discussion

Finance Subcommittee

- Overall Tax Impact of 41.5 C proposal (Senior Exemption) was presented
 - Summary passed out for review (Ray)
 - Highlights:
 - 284 Lynnfield residents qualified
 - To be eligible, the resident must have a ownership interest in the property
 - Average increase to each taxpayer of \$129/year to fund the exemption
- Taxpayer Reaction was discussed:
 - Chris Goguen considered the general taxpayer reaction to the 41.5C
 - ~ \$10/month more for each tax bill
 - Chris Barrett thought the general reaction would be positive, since it's helping seniors
 - Seniors who are not eligible would likely be the most bothered by 41.5C
 - Another observation was made that the Lynnfield senior population is probably peaking, so as it levels off in the future, the overall effect of the 41.5C would be reduced.

- 41.5C Cap/Staging In was discussed:
 - Should Lynnfield institute a cap?
 - Should the cap be gradually increasing that starts at \$200K then increases to \$300K -> \$400K -> \$482K? This would allow residents to build a level of comfort with the program

- Increase Age of Qualification (Pat Campbell)
 - Now 70
 - Needs a town vote to lower to 65
 - Suggestion to move to 75
 - Pat Campbell) noted that 80 is a good start, as that is typically when seniors begin to need tax relief

- Discussion on whether SCAC members can vote on the 41.5C; does this constitute a conflict of interest? Follow up noted.

- Chris Barrett asked what voter approval is needed - town meeting warrant - town wide vote; follow-up - must check with town Counsel.

- 41.5C as a Home Rule Petition was discussed; this would add to the complexity since the state legislature must be involved.

- Going with 41.5C as-is would make it possible for town-wide consideration to take place in April; a decision to stage it in would take longer.

- SCAC members were asked about going with law as-is:
 - Pat Campbell noted there is an interest group forming in town to support it
 - General reaction from SCAC was that this is a good and popular proposal and should be pursued.

- Implementation Ideas:
 - Get acceptance of 41.5C at town election
 - Ease in at 5% (by statute)
 - Use February to build an implementation plan
 - Go back to town meeting with a proposal to increase rate from 5% to ?
 - Include a cap; or, use the town meeting to back into a cap.
 - Educate taxpayers using media once a plan is in place

Recreation Subcommittee

- Held a brainstorming session to come up with ideas for activities:
 - Pickleball tournaments (Glen Meadows)
 - Child/Senior Bowling @KIngs on 31-Jan
 - 7 folks signed up
 - 4 lanes for our use
 - Working on developing an intergenerational program
 - Robotics

Health and Safety Subcommittee

- Compiled a list of services available to Lynnfield's senior residents and handed out to SCAC members
- Pat Campbell noted that a plan for emergencies was needed for various senior communities within town (Center and Essex Villages, Sunrise, Ross Drive) and proposed forming a committee to look into this specifically.
- Town shelters should all have working generators in-place in case of power outages.
- Bob Curtin noted that response to emergencies is often event-specific and may therefore vary.
 - Special concerns were raised about handling pets during an emergency. It was noted that the Red Cross does not accept pets in its emergency management operations.
- Chris Barrett took a moment to thank Bob Curtin for the many contributions he has made to Lynnfield.

Housing and Transportation Subcommittee

- Bob Zwolinski presented the costs for a new passenger van to be used for senior transportation:
 - \$20-30K for the van
 - \$12-15K for a chairlift
 - Standard class C operators license sufficient for the driver
 - Recommended to the selectmen that the town purchase the van, fund a driver, prioritize its use for medical appointments and establish a fee schedule (with a needs-based waiver).

Subcommittee Follow-Up Items:

Finance

- Call Town of Reading to find out how many people qualified for 41.5C. Reading placed a \$1M cap on qualification
- Determine if all 284 Lynnfield seniors eligible for 41.5C own property
- Bob Curtin will check with Trudy and town Counsel to determine if SCAC members can vote on SCAC
- Bob Curtin to check with town Counsel on what type of voter approval is needed for 41.5C:
 - town meeting warrant?
 - town wide vote?
- Talk to town Counsel about whether 41.5C changes for Lynnfield constitute a Home Rule Petition.
- Use February '18 to build a 41.5C implementation plan

Housing and Transportation

Develop and propose a plan for ride service using the new 6-8 passenger van:

Include:

- Cost of van
- Cost of driver
- To determine what the service area and fee schedule should be, develop a plan that encompasses all the major medical, hospital, and doctors' offices in the Lynnfield area.
 - Track mileage from the center of town.
 - Consider trips to MGH, etc on Tuesdays and Thursdays

Health and Safety

- Bob Curtin to talk to Fire Chief Mark Tetrault about emergency preparation items discussed.

Volunteering Opportunities in Lynnfield

Pat Campbell and Chris Goguen noted there is interest from seniors in performing volunteer work.

- How does SCAC identify volunteer opportunities and advertise them around town?

Meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm

Next meeting scheduled for Thursday 15-Feb-2018 @530p at the Lynnfield Senior Center

Minutes taken by Bob Zwolinski