

Senior Citizen Tax Relief Committee  
Durham, CT

Meeting Minutes  
December 13, 2006

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The Senior Citizen Tax Relief Committee met at the Durham Public Library at 7:30pm on Wednesday, December 13, 2006.

Committee members present were: Charles Bogen, Ron Capozzi, Liz Conroy, Martin French, Carolyn Wallach and Charles Mik.

Members absent were: Howard Kelley.

Also present: Bill Bloss, Guilford.

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Ron Capozzi called the meeting to order at 7:35pm. The agenda and minutes were approved unanimously.

There was no Public Comment.

**Bill Bloss** Bill Bloss of Guilford attended our meeting to give us information on the Elderly Tax Relief Program that is currently in use in Guilford. He had worked on the committee that developed the plan and is also currently chairman of the Board of Education in Guilford.

He noted that the committee in Guilford had three goals:

- To avoid pitting seniors against the education budget
- To keep seniors in town to help stabilize taxes as well as enrich the town through demographic diversity
- To be fair.

Bill also noted that the options towns have to raise tax dollars and give tax relief are restricted by the state. He also mentioned that there was resistance among seniors throughout the state to deferment programs.

Guilford came up with a tax freeze plan that takes into consideration age (seniors and disabled citizens,) length of residency and income level. Basically, citizens who meet the criteria have their taxes frozen until the property leaves their possession by any means (sale, death, etc.) It is also possible for people to move in and out of the plan as circumstances warrant. Income is based on adjusted gross income from one's federal tax

return for impartiality and to minimize the administrative burden on the tax collector's office. There is a cap on the total dollars that can be applied to the program. In Guilford this is one half of one percent of their budget. (In Guilford the school and town budgets are combined.) Bill stated that the tax collector in Guilford was initially very concerned about the additional work required to administer the plan but has since found it to be very easy and not very time consuming. No additional staff has been required. The plan has a very high participation level.

The entire committee was very favorably impressed with the plan as Bill described it. We closed our discussions considering how we might fold the current abatement plan into a plan like this so that taxpayers who are receiving relief now do not lose any benefit in transition to a new plan. Bill has given us each a detailed handout regarding the plan. This is also available on the Town of Guilford website.

Discussion will continue at the next meeting about how this might work in Durham and how we can measure whether or not it will have the desired impact on our citizenry.

Our next meeting is scheduled for January 8, 2007 at 7:30pm downstairs in the library.

Respectfully submitted,  
Liz Conroy  
Secretary