**TOWN OF MONROE**
**FEHPS SUBCOMITTEE**

**October 18, 2016**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lipeles at 2:00 p.m. and was held in the Monroe Senior Center

Present: Chairman Enid Lipeles, Ken Kellogg, and Phyllis Kansky Rich Laskey, Assessor was also present.

This meeting was held to provide a presentation to seniors on the new changes to the elederly tax relief program.

Mr. Kellogg explained that the committee provided these changes to the Tax Collect, Tax Assessor, Board of Finance, Town Council and the Town Attorney in an effort to change the current ordinance, which must be changed by January, 2017 in order to become effective for the February application process for elderly tax relief. He also informed the residents in attendance that their will be a full public hearing on these changes.

Mr. Kellogg gave background information on the need for the review of the current ordinance indicating that changes had not been made since 2007-2008. He explained the numerous meeting the FEHPS Subcommittee held reviewing the Ordinance and the changes to the Ordinance resulting from these meetings.

He provided information on the scope of the program; information on the State Program, the Town freeze (phasing out with only 4 residents on program; and the current Town Deferral Program (which after 15 years Town forecloses on property—no one currently on this program).

Mr. Kellogg explained the changes to the Town credit program which represents a 9.3% increase in total credit – changes in benefit as well as increase in cap.

Mr. Kellogg explained the FEHPS recommended changes to the Town Deferral indicating an agreement would have to be drawn up with the Tax Collector (similar to reverse mortgage)/ Interest rate of 3%; a required lien on property ; requiring town be paid back with interest once property is sold, transferred, etc.

Questions were entertained from those residents attending:

Mike Sohon
Perry Drive
He asked who would benit from this program. He was concerned about the extremely low income of some of these residents and with the deferment of up to 75% of taxes. He also had a question on the equity in the home. Is there a requirement to have equity in this program. Ken: no requirement.

Richard Orr
40 Woodlawn Road
There is an advantage to being married but no additional credit for more people living in the house. Ken: if your already getting a reverse mortgage you may not be allowed. Depends on the lender –who can only see the proposed increase in the town credit.

William Diamond
39 Pine Tree
Due both people that live in the home have to be 65. Ken: The legal tax payer has to be 65, if it's a spouse and your filing jointly its okay. Otherwise you would be entitled to a proportional share.

B Byran
32 Cross Hill Road
Hafd a question about outliving the reverse mortgage. Ken: if you get to the point of 49% of the market value you wouldn't be able to continue on the reversal but you can get Town credit.

She also question her taxed vs. her home owners insurance. Ken explained assessment is 70% of the market value giving the example of $100,000 house value is assessed at 70,000. When she indicated her house had not been included in reval – Mr. Lasky explained that the 2014 reval was statistical and she should go on his website to look at her assessment and also invited her to come in.

Gordon Cleland
65 Beechtree Lane
He directed his questions to the Tax Assessor indicating he wanted to talk about taxes and when he could file an appeal. The Tax Assessor explained he could appeal every year.

Michael Sohon
Perry Drive
When is the value assessed. Ken: Each application period will review and look at the credit assessed value of that property. For the credit program you can apply once every two year period. For the deferral each year.

William Diamond
39 Pine Tree
I have Veteran's Tax Exemption – can you combine them. Exemptions come off assessed value – does not diminish this program at all.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Phyllis Kansky
Secretary