

**EAST HAVEN TOWN COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2014**

In accordance with Chapter III, Section 6 of the East Haven Town Charter, the East Haven Town Council held a public hearing meeting Tuesday, February 4, 2014, at 7:00PM at the East Haven Senior Center, 91 Taylor Avenue, East Haven, CT 06512.

Chairman Richard Anania calls the meeting to order at 7:02PM.

Item #1

Roll Call for Public Hearing #1- 12 present – 3 absent (Gravino, Palladino and Riolino). A quorum is present.

Item #2

To conduct Public Hearing #1 regarding an “Ordinance authorizing transfers aggregating \$40,000.00 for the East Haven Police Department.”

Public comment:

- Donna Richo- 67 Charnes Drive, East Haven, CT- Ms. Richo asks Police Chief Brent Larrabee if any of this overtime has to do with the DOJ Agreement.
- Police Chief Brent Larrabee says no, this is not; this is just for the regular budget.

Item #3

Adjournment of Public Hearing #1.

Councilman Fred Parlato makes a motion.

Councilman Ken Mckay seconds the motion.

Voice vote: all in favor- none oppose- none abstain. Motion carries.

Item #4

To conduct Public Hearing #2 regarding an “Ordinance Expanding and Authorizing Property Tax Exemptions for Veterans Receiving Financial Assistance for Specially Adapted Housing Under Title 38 of the United States Code.”

Public comment:

- Donna Richo-67 Charnes Drive, East Haven, CT- Ms. Richo asks if this is a total exemption from taxes.
- Town Attorney Joseph Zullo says yes, this is a total exemption for real estate on a principal residence.
- Ms. Richo asks if this is a Connecticut State Statute.
- Attorney Zullo explains that this was passed by the Legislature a number of years ago and only a handful of Towns have taken advantage of it. Specifically, it's Towns where there is a request for it. He explains that he indicated to the Council that it would be statistically rare for us to have more than one household at any given time taking advantage of it.
- Ms. Richo asks what the qualifications are.
- Attorney Zullo explains that the qualifications to obtain this exemption are that you must be permanently and totally disabled as a result of service in the armed forces. Not only must you be permanently and totally disabled, but the disabilities that you suffer from must be particularly horrific. It would have to be loss of a least one limb, usually it is the loss of both arms, legs, or a combination of both, severe burns, loss of eye sight etc. Not only must you be permanently and totally disabled with these injuries but you must obtain a grant from the Secretary of Housing to have your house modified or retrofitted to be able to better maneuver around your house. So you have to have the disability, apply for the grant funding and obtain it and the grant money has to have been used for the house you are presently living it. The number of applications in 2012 nationwide was 1,205, so again, based on that number it would be statistically rare for us to have more than 1 person.
- Ms. Richo asks what the estimated tax loss would be.
- Attorney Zullo says looking at the average home in East Haven it would be on average \$3,500 per one.
- Ms. Richo says they should consider how they may replace the funds missing, like areas where the budget could be cut back.
- Cindy Giammatti- 23 Farm Meadow Road, East Haven, CT- Mrs. Giammatti states that her husband is a veteran who is totally and permanently disabled from ALS, otherwise known as Lou Gehrig's disease. Her husband can no longer speak, eat, breathe, walk, talk, etc. She cares for him in their home 24 hours a day, he is bed ridden and he can only blink his eyes. She explains that they have applied for this grant and were awarded it for his service to this Country. She explains that ALS is a service connected disability. They are living on a fixed income; the grant was awarded to them after hefty work on her part. It took many months, close to a year to obtain this grant to modify their home so that it could be made safe and livable for her husband. He is mentally with it and

knows what is going on. The doorways were not wide enough to accommodate him, the bathroom wasn't big enough for him to shower or get into, there is an emergency exit for him to get out in the event of a fire, there is a lift on the porch for him so that he could be lifted away from the house in the event of a fire. There have been numerous changes made to the house to accommodate his illness. His service to the Country should be rewarded. What they go through day to day is horrific and there are many veterans who are going through this. She found out there was a way for total tax exemptions to help them out and she pursued it. She spoke with the Mayor and she spoke with the Town Assessor in order to move forward with this. The numbers are extremely small, very few people take advantage of this and it is a very hard process and hard to get approval. She asks the Council to think about this and honor her husband in this way.

- Arthur DeSorbo- 494 Silver Sands Road, East Haven, CT- Director of Administration and Management for the Town of East Haven- Mr. DeSorbo reads a letter from Mayor Joseph Maturo Jr. encouraging the Council to authorize this exemption. (See attached).

Item #5

Adjournment of Public Hearing #2.

Councilman Joseph Santino makes a motion.

Councilman Mckay seconds the motion.

Voice vote: all in favor- none oppose- none abstain. Motion carries.

Item #6

To conduct Public Hearing #3 regarding an "Ordinance authorizing the re-allocation of \$170,000.00 dollars of capital improvement funds to purchase a new front end loader for the Public Works Department."

No public comment.

Item #7

Adjournment of Public Hearing #3.

Councilman Santino makes a motion.

Councilman Henry Butler III seconds the motion.

Voice vote: all in favor- none oppose- none abstain. Motion carries.

Item #8

Roll Call for Hearing Committee-12 present – 3 absent (Gravino, Palladino and Riolino).

Item #9

Hearing Committee report to the full Town Council and recommendation of action on Public Hearings #1, #2, and #3.

Councilman Robert Sand makes a motion.

Councilman Joseph Badamo seconds the motion.

Roll call vote: all in favor- none oppose- none abstain. Motion carries.

Item #10

Adjournment of Hearing Committee.

Councilman Santino makes a motion.

Councilman Badamo seconds the motion.

Voice vote: all in favor- none oppose- none abstain. Motion carries.

Meeting is adjourned at 7:19PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Danelle Feeley, Clerk, East Haven Legislative Town Council