

**SMITHTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
PUBLIC HEARING**

December 9, 2014

Held in Joseph M. Barton Bldg.

Public Hearing called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Christopher Alcure, President of the Board of Education.

Members present:

Christopher Alcure	Grace Plourde
Joanne McEnroy	Matthew Morton
Gladys M. Waldron	
Theresa Knox	
Louis Liguori	

Also present:

James J. Grossane, Ed.D. Superintendent
Karen Ricigliano, Asst. Supt.
Jennifer Bradshaw, Asst. Supt.
Andrew Tobin, Asst. Supt.
William Bushman, Ph.D., Asst. Supt.
Eugene Barnosky, Lindsay Crocker, Esq., Board Counsel
Maureen O'Connor, District Clerk

I. Opening Ceremony - conducted by Mr. Alcure

Mr. Alcure explained the purpose of this hearing is to receive public testimony/input on the proposed Veterans Tax Exemption. Mr. Alcure stated the rules and procedures for conducting this hearing.

II. Overview of the Proposed Veterans Tax Exemption- presented by Mr. Tobin.

Question(Q): Ms. Plourde- statewide how many districts have adopted this exemption.

Answer(A): Mr. Tobin- does not have that current information however in September over 70% had not adopted.

Q: Mr. Liguori- does this program reimburse like the STAR program

A: Mr. Tobin- it does not

Q: Mr. Alcure- is the decision by the board tonight irrevocable

A: Mr. Tobin- as the law was originally written the decision was not irrevocable however the governor recently signed legislation that would allow for a decision to be repealed

Q: Ms. McEnroy- is the figure of \$6000 used in the presentation the average home assessed value.

A: Mr. Tobin-yes, according to the town assessor.

Q: Ms. McEnroy- is this exemption in place of or in addition to other exemptions already in place.

A: Mr. Tobin- it is in addition to.

Q: Ms McEnroy- is there an income cap for veterans to qualify

A: Mr. Tobin- no

Q: Mr. Alcure- can the board defer a decision on this exemption and put a vote out to the community

A. Ms. Crocker- technically yes but the commissioner has advised against it because the final decision is ultimately the board of education regardless of the outcome of the community vote.
Mr. Barnosky- the commissioner has condemned advisory referendums using taxpayer funds

Q: Ms. McEnroy: since this will be applied in addition to STAR would districts who opt in receive less STAR reimbursement.

A. Mr. Tobin- it would be highly unlikely that the exemption would eat into the actual STAR rebate.

Q: Mrs. Waldron- asked to clarify that this exemption would be a reduction in assessment reduced not the actual school taxes being reduced.

A. Mr. Tobin- this exemption would be a reduction in a qualified taxpayers assessed value.

Q. Mrs. Waldron- is there a ballpark number from the assessor's office of how much assessed value the district would lose?

A. Mr. Tobin- approximately \$260,000 loss in assessed value.

Q. Ms. Plourde- do you anticipate that other exemptions currently reimbursed by the state would get shifted to the non qualified taxpayers similar to this exemption

A. Mr. Tobin- does not think so but does not know for sure

Q.-Mrs. Knox- are the current exemptions provided through the county and town reimbursed by the state?

A. Mr. Tobin- no they are not

Q. Mrs. Knox- does the school district provide any other exemptions currently

A. Mr. Tobin- yes, senior citizens with limited income, physically disabled, fire and ambulance, these too are non-reimbursable

III. Audience Participation

1. Robert Foster spoke in opposition to the board adopting the exemption.
2. Kevin O'Hare spoke in support of the board adopting the exemption.
3. Ken Dolan spoke in support of the board adopting the exemption including the Gold Star parent exemption.
4. Pam Farino spoke in support of the board adopting the exemption.
5. Sharon Boeri spoke in support of the board adopting the exemption.
6. Pat Murray spoke in support of the board adopting the exemption.
7. Bryan Boudreaup declined comment.
8. Louis Natale spoke in support of the board adopting the exemption.
9. Al Krauth spoke in support of the board adopting the exemption.
10. John E. Nicolosi declined comment.
11. Ira Schwartz spoke in support of the board adopting the exemption including the Gold Star parent exemption.
12. Sam Irwin spoke in support of the board adopting the exemption.

IV. Adjournment – The Public Hearing was closed at 7:50p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen O'Connor
District Clerk