



City of Methuen, Massachusetts

Veterans Affairs Committee

OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Searles Building 41 Pleasant Street Room 308 Methuen, Massachusetts 01844
Council Office Telephone (978) 983-8510 Fax (978) 983-8975

Joel Faretra, Central District City Councilor
Jessica Finocchiaro, At Large City Councilor, Committee Chair
Michael Simard, West District City Councilor, Veteran

Methuen City Council – Veterans Affairs Committee Meeting

Held on Thursday, February 17, 2022 at 7pm Via Zoom Web Conference

Meeting Minutes

1. *Roll Call- all present*
2. *Acceptance of the Agenda- unanimous*
3. *Election of chair- both Councilor Simard and Councilor Finocchiaro nominated each other. Councilor Simard declined the nomination, Councilor Finocchiaro accepted. Vote to elect Councilor Finocchiaro as chair was unanimous.*
4. *Clause 22H adoption to council-*
 - a. *Paul Jensen , Veterans Service Officer for Methuen, stated that when the council approved many parts of Massachusetts General Law to give tax breaks to disabled veterans and Gold Star Families, clause 22H was not part of those resolutions. Clause 22H gives a full tax exemption to the Gold Star families.*
 - b. *Councilor Finocchiaro stated how Massachusetts General Law pertaining to tax exemptions is 41 pages long but read Clause 22H for the committee:*
 - c. *“Real estate to the full amount of the taxable valuation of real property of the surviving parents or guardians of soldiers and sailors, members of the National Guard and veterans who: (i) during active duty service, suffered an injury or illness documented by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or a branch of the armed forces that was a proximate cause of their death; or (ii) are missing in action with a presumptive finding of death as a result of active duty service as members of the armed forces of the United States; provided, however, that the real estate shall be occupied by the surviving parents or guardians as the surviving parents' or guardians' domicile; and provided further, that the surviving parents or guardians shall have been domiciled in the commonwealth for the 5 consecutive years immediately before the date of filing for an exemption pursuant to this clause or the soldier or sailor; member of the National Guard or veteran was*



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- domiciled in the commonwealth for not less than 6 months before entering service.”*
- d. Councilor Simard and Faretra both agreed that as written, clause 22H should suffice to be brought to the council as is. Councilor Faretra was hoping it could be brought to the first March meeting for a vote.*
 - e. Mr Jensen mentioned that clause 22H would impact two families in Methuen. He also brought up that the city of Arlington has created a cheat sheet to help veterans and the like navigate what exemptions and benefits that they are entitled to. He will share that with the committee at a later date.*
- 5. Adding other members from the veterans community-*
- a. Councilor Faretra brought up the question on who to invite to join our committee. He mentions Ed “Hoppy” Curran and a representative of the VFW and the American Legion. He stated that it doesn't have to be a set member, just that each organization sends a representative to each meeting.*
 - b. Councilor Simard mentioned how he would like to see us add a disabled veteran, specifically a younger person who was injured in the Iraq war. Mr Jensen states that he will help the committee get in touch with veterans in the community.*
 - c. Councilor Finocchiaro mentions how she wants the veterans community to know they are all welcome to attend these meetings and express their concerns.*
- 6. Set meeting schedule- the committee decided that they will convene next month inviting those new members stated above and will then meet quarterly. The committee all agreed that we can meet in between those quarterly meetings as issues arise or if there is an event that needs planning.*
- 7. Adjourn-motion to adjourn at 7:21pm. Vote unanimous.*

Minutes provided by: Clr. Faretra

Meeting Minutes Approved via: unanimous vote 10/27/2022