

**MINUTES OF WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC HEARING
JANUARY 10, 2012 7:20 PM LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER**

**ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 30-10C AND SECTION 30-41B OF THE
CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD, TOWN OF
WEST HARTFORD PENSION PLAN**

Public Hearing called to order at 7:22 p.m.

President Slifka: We will open the 7:20 public hearing. This is an ordinance amending Section 30-10C and 30-41B of the Code of Ordinances of the Town of West Hartford, Town of West Hartford Pension Plan, could I have a roll call please Ms. Labrot?

Present: Councilors: Adler, Cantor, Captain, Davidoff, Doar, Hall, Kindall and Slifka

Councilor Casperson was absent.

President Slifka: Thank you Ms. Labrot. We have a presentation from the administration. Mr. Van Winkle?

Mr. Van Winkle: Mr. Ledwith is here to give the presentation.

Mr. Ledwith: Good evening. Before you for your approval are amendments to section 30-10C and 30-41B of the Town of West Hartford Pension Plan. Periodically we are before the Council with these types of amendments that we would characterize as "housekeeping issues." These are two of those types of issues. In order to maintain our tax qualified status, we need to adopt these changes that are required by the Pension Protection Act and the Heroes Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax Act, in the first amendment, Section 30-10C, if a plan participant dies while performing military service, with respect to which he or she has reemployment rights, the participant is considered to have been actively employed by the town at the time of death, for purposes of determining whether vested benefits are payable under the terms of the plan upon his or her death. In the second amendment, Section 30-41B, which relates to eligible rollover distributions, we needed to clean up the language and add language Section 408(a), 403(b)'s and Roth IRA's as options to that language. So again, both of these amendments are changes that we're required to make to maintain our tax qualified status and have no material impact on our Pension Plan whatsoever.

President Slifka: Thank you Mr. Van Winkle. Are there questions from Council at this time? None? Ok, Mr. O'Brien would you mind checking the sign up sheet list? Are first speaker is Robert Milne.

Mr. Milne: Robert Milne, 3 Osage Road in conjunction with numerous testimonies for two years regarding the abusive practices of unfair assessments in this town, the matter before us is now a symptom of that problem. As you begin to favor wealthy taxpayers in

this town, with giving them favorable assessments, the lack of revenue collected from an appropriate assessment, under a fair assessment practice, ultimately gets paid by someone else in this town. I showed you examples of this burden shifting and in some cases increasing assessments as much as 200% on certain areas of town particularly the Elmwood section and if you live in Elmwood, you need to listen to what I'm saying. It makes no sense to continue these unfair assessment practices to shift the burden, keeping the mill rate high to pools of property that are at higher risk of collection. Then to go through all the cost of administering it, collection, charging fees going through this exorbitant amount of time – when is it at some point in time that the Council is going to wake up, and understand clearly that a fair assessment system would help mitigate some of these circumstances. I would think living in this town, should in many ways, be of a common interest to all of us. Independent of this council, independent of the management of this town, this town is a wonderful town to live and raise your kids, family, work, play or whatever. It's that people step up get behind a fair assessment system, and again to bring a stop to these collateral issues of over assessing low end properties over assessing properties of personal property, and vehicles, just to turn around and put them at high risk as to collection and then having to pay fines, and interest and collections. This issue becomes in many ways counter productive and not in the best interest of public policy.

President Slifka: Thank you Mr. Milne. The next speaker is Linda DiNapoli.

Ms. DiNapoli: Good evening, I agree with Mr. Milne in principle on what he said before. However, I think this is really nickeling and diming the public. I can think of a lot of places ..see this brain trust here can find to cut back on fees and not services, I might say. I don't want to go through another period during this election year where you are going to sock it to us after the elections. I want to know prior to that time, the items that you are thinking of cutting rather than increasing. I think the people of West Hartford deserve to be told that in advance not after the fact when people are comfortably seated in their new positions on the Council. Thank you.

President Slifka: Thank you Ms. DiNapoli. That concludes the sign up sheet. Is there anybody who did not sign up who wishes to speak to the subject matter of this public hearing? Seeing none, is there anything from Council at this point? Mr. Davidoff?

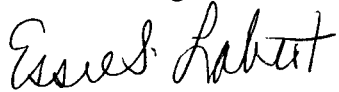
Councilor Davidoff: Thank you Mr. Mayor. I just want to get clarification from Corporation Counsel. The reason that we are raising the fee from two to five dollars is the State of Connecticut runs a program where your registration is not renewed if you are delinquent in property taxes. And they charge us a fee of two dollars to be part of this program, and they have raised that fee to five dollars, so we are not going to absorb that fee to participate in the program. The delinquent taxpayer is going to absorb the increase of three dollars to the five, is that correct?

Mr. O'Brien: That is correct, yes.

Councilor Davidoff: Thank you Mr. O'Brien.

President Slifka: Thank you Mr. Davidoff. Anything else from Council? Ok there's nothing further from the Administration, we will close the Public Hearing.

Public Hearing closed at 7:26 p.m.



Essie S. Labrot
Council Clerk

APPROVED AT JANUARY 24, 2012 TOWN COUNCIL MEETING