

Town of Brunswick
Finance Committee Meeting
October 19, 2023
Assessing/Re-valuation/Property TAX Notes

Tim Gill, Principal, Runyon Kersteen Ouelette, CPAs, reviewed the auditor's role, timeline, and process.

Julia Henze, Finance Director, presented details of the budget process.

Taylor Burns, Town Assessor, demonstrated use of the assessing data base.

Branden Perreault, Deputy Finance Director, reviewed Senior Tax Rebate Program.

All documents can be found at:

https://www.brunswickme.org/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/_10192023-3034?html=true

Questions/Answers:

- What can be done to improve and speed up handling of small transactions within the School Department? It is up to the School Dept to manage and speed up these transactions but the Town is ultimately responsible and the Finance Dept will see that it is handled.
- When will the audit be completed? Hopefully, by the end of November.
- Are the audit findings made public? Yes.
- Are any recommended changes made public? Yes, in a management letter which is on line. When corrections are made they are not included in the management letter for the following year. The FC also reviews the audit as does the full Council. We regularly have a very clean audit and high bond rating.
- What percentage of those eligible have applied for the Senior Tax Rebate Program? It's difficult to get exact numbers but there has been a 74% increase in applications since last year.
- Can we decrease the qualifying age from 68 years to 65 years and, if so, can we increase the amount appropriated in the budget? Yes and Yes. The FC will bring to the TC for action.
- Why don't citizens vote on the whole town budget. The Town Charter adopted in 1969 vests that responsibility in the elected Councilors.
- What is the amount of total taxes to be raised? That is determined by the budget. We only raise the amount required by the budget.
- Can we compare the residential and commercial markets? Only in a broad sense. There are a lot of variables in the commercial market especially.
- Can the Town set a maximum increase for the School Dept? Council Leadership has already begun meeting with the School Board to discuss budget matters.
- Does the amount of taxes we each pay depend on the budget? Yes
- Should we discuss tax exempt entities? Yes, at a future FC meeting.
- Are local option taxes possible? Not unless state law changes.

- How can you compare property valuations? By viewing individual property cards, by street name. There are other ways as well. Please contact the Assessor's office.

Additional links:

Julia's presentation on budget and tax rate

<https://www.brunswickme.org/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Item/1589?fileID=28378>

Branden's presentation on Brunswick's Property Tax Assistance Program - State Data

<https://www.brunswickme.org/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Item/1591?fileID=28388>

If you would like to receive Jean Powers' newsletter, <i>Voice of the Brunswick Taxpayer</i> , please send your email to japowers@comcast.net
