

**AD HOC REPORT
S.A.V.E.
(Seniors Adding Valuable Experience)**

Honorable Mark D. Boughton, Mayor
Common Council Members

MAY 21, 2008

Councilwoman Colleen Stanley called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. In attendance were committee members Councilman Seabury, Councilman Visconti, Councilman Esposito, and Councilwoman McMahon. Councilwoman Teicholz, ex-officio; Atty. Laszlo Pinter, Corporation Counsel; Dan Garrick, Asst. Director of Finance; Susan Tomanio, Director of Elderly Services; Ginny Alosco-Werner, Director of Personnel; Colleen LaHood, Tax Assessor; Helen Miller, Chair of the Commission on Aging; Michael McLachlan, Chief of Staff; Mayor Mark D. Boughton; Ted Cutsumpas, Community Services Coordinator; and Patti Cohen-Hecht, Executive Director of The Volunteer Center were also present.

Councilwoman Stanley stated the call of the meeting was to discuss the SAVE Program proposed by Mayor Boughton, the petitioner.

Mayor Boughton stated that the proposed program would enable seniors to qualify for a property tax credit in the amount of \$600 after performing 100 hours of community service to the City or one of the qualifying nonprofits. This program would be in addition to the already existing tax relief programs offered to residents. A grant has been secured in the amount of \$14,000 for The Volunteer Center to administer, solicit job descriptions and deploy volunteers. Approximately 50 to 75 individuals would be accepted into the program the first year. He noted that Mr. Cutsumpas, Community Services Coordinator, has conducted extensive research into similar programs adopted by other municipalities.

Ms. Cohen-Hecht stated that The Volunteer Center looks forward to creating a community of service.

Discussion followed regarding the rotation of jobs, qualifications, minimum age of 65 to participate, liability insurance issues, union issues, placement issues and medical waivers.

Ginny Alosco-Werner and Ms. Hecht discussed the intake process. Ms. Hecht discussed the development of a handbook and placements with agencies accustomed to using volunteers and some of their requirements.

The Director of Elderly Services, Susan Tomanio, stated that she has seen a lot of interest in the program.

The draft ordinance was reviewed and a few minor changes were proposed. Mayor Boughton stated that he would like this item brought back to the Common Council in June and volunteers in place in August, 2008.

Councilman Seabury moved to recommend adoption of the ordinance for the SAVE Program, that after study and investigation deems a fiscal impact of up to \$45,000 and in accordance with the content of the ordinance. Second by Councilman Visconti. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

Councilman Seabury moved to adjourn at 7:47. Second by Councilman Visconti. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Stanley, Chairwoman

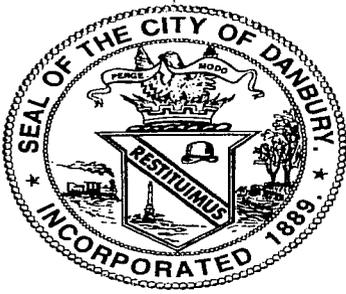
Gregg Seabury

Fred Visconti

John Esposito

Louise McMahon

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ORDINANCE
CITY OF DANBURY, STATE OF CONNECTICUT
COMMON COUNCIL

Be it ordained by the Common Council of the City of Danbury:

THAT Chapter 18 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Danbury is hereby amended by adding Section 18-12.3 which section shall read as follows:

Sec. 18-12.3. Senior volunteer tax relief.

(a) *Purpose.*

In order to promote the goals of scientific, educational, literary, historical, governmental, charitable and non-profit entities located in the City of Danbury by drawing on the skills, knowledge and experience of its senior citizens, the city hereby establishes a program of tax relief for qualifying seniors who choose to give of their time, talent and energy by volunteering to provide services to such entities.

(b) *Qualifications and benefits.*

Beginning with the grand list year of 2008, qualifying senior citizens who volunteer to provide a minimum of one hundred (100) hours of services to scientific, educational, literary, historical, governmental, charitable and non-profit entities located in the City of Danbury, which entities own property exempt from taxation pursuant to the provisions of section 12-81 of the Connecticut General Statutes, shall be eligible for a tax credit in accordance with the further provisions hereof. In order to qualify for the benefits of this senior volunteer tax relief program, taxpayers must own real property in the City of Danbury or be liable for the payment of taxes thereon, pursuant to Section 12-48 of the Connecticut General Statutes and must occupy the property as a principal residence. In addition, taxpayers must not have received qualifying income during the calendar year preceding the fiscal year for which a tax benefit is claimed in excess of an amount which shall be twenty-two thousand, seven hundred dollars (\$22,700.00) greater than the limits as established and adjusted pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes, subsection 12-170aa(b). For purposes hereof, "qualifying income" shall have the same definition as provided in subsection 18-12(b) hereof. Qualifying taxpayers who participate in this program shall be entitled to a tax credit of up to six hundred dollars (\$600.00), provided that said taxpayer satisfies the conditions of subsection (c) hereof as well as the conditions of section 18-12 of the Danbury Code of Ordinances. An application for benefits offered pursuant to state tax relief programs for elderly homeowners may be accepted by the Danbury Tax Assessor as an application for benefits hereunder.

(c) *Program implementation.*

The Director of the Department of Elderly Services or their designee shall be responsible for coordination of services under the senior volunteer tax relief program. The Director shall prepare application forms and create lists of scientific, educational, literary, historical, governmental, charitable and non-profit entities located in the City of Danbury for which qualifying taxpayers may choose to volunteer. With the assistance of the Danbury Tax Assessor, the Director shall prepare application forms to be completed by taxpayers qualifying for benefits hereunder who wish to participate in the senior volunteer tax relief program. The Director shall match volunteers with entities for which the volunteers wish to provide services.

Services provided by qualified senior volunteers shall be documented by the entities for which they work and a record of the hours worked by each shall be submitted to the Director no less frequently than once per month. Subject to the limits established herein or in section 18-12, all hours worked shall be credited toward the tax liability of the senior volunteer at the rate of one hundred and fifty percent of the then applicable hourly minimum wage of the State of Connecticut.

Following the close of each calendar year the Director shall provide information to the tax assessor regarding the hours of work provided by qualifying volunteers under the senior volunteer tax relief program. Based on the information provided, The Danbury Tax Assessor shall apply the applicable credit to each taxpayer's account.

(d) This program may be terminated at any time with or without cause in the event it is in its best interest to do so.