

First Selectman's statement to RTM prior to action on Tax Deferment 4.20.20

Mr. Moderator:

I appreciate the opportunity to add a few words to the recommendation I have already conveyed to the RTM, that it elect the 3 month deferment of tax and sewer bills, as the best way to provide maximum relief to Waterford taxpayers and sewer customers.

As I indicated in my letter, the rate reduction program provides very modest financial benefit to most who would be affected and would be cumbersome to manage administratively. So I believe the 3 month deferments are the best alternative AND should be extended to all (except the special category of landlords) WITHOUT the necessity of demonstrating hardship by an application, for the following reasons:

I am pleased to share with you that I have reached out to Dominion, which has confirmed they will be paying their ENTIRE annual tax bill in July, which, combined with the escrow revenue, assures us we have adequate funds to operate during the deferment period.

I would submit to you these extraordinarily difficult times for our residents and businesses dictate that we share our town government's good fortune with as many in Waterford as possible. I do so for the simple reason that while everyone may not necessarily reach OPM's guidance of a 20% decline in recent income, virtually NO ONE has been spared some sort of adverse impact by the pandemic. Whether in the form of financial hardship, health issues for family or friends, radical alteration and how they function each day or just plain life altering stress levels, EVERYONE has been hurt by COVID-19.

The revenue will be there after the deferment and we can weather the delay in receiving these funds. I will also be encouraging all who can pay in July to do so and would ask you to do the same and I believe large numbers will do just that.

Let's pass on the benefit of our positive revenue cash flow to all taxpayers without exception and without making people jump through hoops to get something our town can afford to offer without condition. It's the right thing to do and the way we look out for one another here in Waterford. I thank you and the RTM for your time and consideration and for your service to our great Town. My team will be available to answer any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Brule, First Selectman

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