

Tax Study Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 18, 2021, 7:00 pm

Via Zoom

Roll Call

- Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Connie Rankin
 - All members present: Connie Rankin, Jodi Cerminara, Molly Brown, Sabreena Miller, Carolyn Laquatra, Ron Bedison, Sam Sesti, Justin Greenawalt, Christine King
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Approval of Minutes

- Discussion on content of previous week's minutes
 - Motion by Jodi Cerminara to approve minutes; second by Molly Brown
 - Aye: Jodi Cerminara, Molly Brown, Sabreena Miller, Carolyn Laquatra, Ron Bedison; Sam Sesti, Justin Greenawalt, Christine King
 - Nay: Connie Rankin
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Presentation by Leigh Carroll

- MIT thesis on Inner-Ring Suburbs, with a focus on Bellevue
- Presentation was focused on challenges and opportunities related to demographics, policy, diversity, as it relates to inner-ring suburbs
- Lack of strategy for coalition building across race and class; policies tend to have exclusionary impacts even if that is not the intent; social needs are not a consideration
- In light of social hierarchies, need exists to reframe what "success" is; ask the question "who are we planning for?" or "whose Bellevue/Avalon is this?"
- Questions:
 - How closely does Avalon reflect Bellevue?
 - Is there a way to know how black students would be affected?
 - What are the negative implications of the increase in EIT?
 - Is there a way to make policies less divisive?
 - How does city of Pittsburgh manage their low millage and higher EIT?

Review and Discussion of New Issues

- Potential increase in millage for next year of 3.2.
- Experience of realtor/anecdotal evidence of preconceived notions of homebuyers in quality of Northgate. Are people getting the value out of their property taxes.
- Approx. 13% of residents are non-white, yet 30-35% of students are non-white
- Even when mortgage is complete, homeowners still have property tax payments. Lower tax may help ensure older people can stay in their homes.
- What is the percentage of seniors on a fixed income?
- According to information from the Federal Reserve, homeowners have over 40 times more net worth than renters. Additionally, what tax relief already exists for seniors?
- Future of EIT and exclusion? Both would remain steady/consistent once passed.
- Discussion of potential document for the public with links, information, definition of terms? Suggestion of forming a subcommittee to create this document.
- Census and demographic data will be shared for next week's meeting.

Public Comment

- Kaitlin Braun, 36 N. Howard
 - Agrees that renters pay property tax through their rent, and believes they will be disproportionately taxed if EIT is raised

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn by Carolyn Laquatra; second by Christine King
- Votes:
 - Aye: Unanimous
 - Nay: None
- Meeting was adjourned