

Around LI

HEMPSTEAD TOWN

Cold War vets' \$75G tax exemption OKd

Hempstead Town Board members approved an increased tax exemption for Cold War-era veterans for up to \$75,000 on their property taxes.

Town Board members voted last Tuesday to increase the exemption, accounting for up to a 15 percent reduction for nearly 1,800 eligible veterans.

Hempstead officials voted last year to make the tax exemption permanent for Cold War-era veterans, defined as those on active duty between Sept. 2, 1945, and Dec. 26, 1991.

New York State raised the maximum exemption last year from \$54,000 to \$75,000 to allow local municipalities to boost exemptions, said Mike Caputo, spokesman for the office of the Receiver of Taxes.

Receiver of Taxes Donald X. Clavin Jr. drafted legislation last year with Councilwoman Erin King Sweeney to eliminate a 10-year sunset clause on exemptions.

The tax exemption also includes surviving spouses who have not remarried and who maintain their primary address in the Town of Hempstead.

Residents can go online to Hempsteadny.gov/tax-exemptions for applications.

— JOHN ASBURY

BROOKHAVEN TOWN

Municipal pact to save on salt, drainage

The Brookhaven Town Highway Department has entered into an intermunicipal agreement with the North Patchogue Fire District to repair drainage and purchase salt and sand.

Officials said the district will reimburse the highway department for the purchase of salt and sand in addition to drainage and signage manufacturing, pothole repair and sweeping on a per-case basis.

“Working together, the goal of this program is to identify opportunities where a Town-Special District partnership



BARRY SIOAN

Bike maneuver flat-out tricky

BETHPAGE. Don't try this at home: Jason Barlow, 34, of Levittown executes a tabletop, an aerial maneuver on his bicycle, at the Town of Oyster Bay Skate Park on Monday.

makes sense and delivers real financial savings to our mutual constituency,” Brookhaven Highway Superintendent Daniel P. Losquadro said in a statement.

Highway officials said the agreement furthers Brookhaven Town's goal of promoting efficiency with villages and special districts.

“We look forward to working in conjunction with the Town of Brookhaven Highway Department,” district manager Joseph Badala said in a statement. “The department last month entered into a similar agreement with the Setauket Fire District.

— DEON J. HAMPTON

HUNTINGTON TOWN

2 groups get grants for gang prevention

Two local youth organizations have been awarded state

grants as part of gang prevention efforts on Long Island.

The Huntington Town Youth Bureau is receiving a \$135,000 state grant. The bureau is part of the Communities And Schools Together (CAST) program, a community intervention initiative for at-risk youth in fifth through ninth grades in the Huntington and South Huntington school districts. The goal is to keep them from joining gangs. CAST participants and their families receive outreach and case management.

The Tri Community and Youth Agency, a nonprofit community group that supports youths in Huntington, South Huntington and Cold Spring Harbor, is also receiving \$100,000 in state funding as part of the CAST program. The agency administers the CAST program for the town. Another \$49,000 in funding was reallocated to Tri Community and Youth Agency, according to a staffer for

State Sen. Jim Gaughran (D-Huntington), who announced the funding at a news conference last week with town Supervisor Chad Lupinacci.

“MS-13 is a force of evil that has taken too many lives and wreaked havoc on our communities,” Gaughran wrote in an emailed statement. “As legislators we have an obligation to provide the necessary resources to root out gangs and protect our public. This state aid will help fund community programs that prevent at-risk youth from joining gangs by providing safe alternatives, a critical aspect to stemming the proliferation of gangs and gang violence.”

Gaughran added that the CAST funding will be used to help hire a coordinator and two full-time youth and family specialists to provide outreach, case management, referrals and violence prevention.

— SOPHIA CHANG

NISSEQUOGUE

Trustees vote on \$2.1M spending plan

Nissequogue Village trustees will vote today on a \$2.1 million budget for 2019-2020 that freezes property taxes.

The village property tax rate would remain at \$22.45 per \$100 of assessed value. “I think we’re in good shape,” Mayor Richard Smith said.

The village would spend \$1.1 million on public safety, up slightly from last year, with police spending, the budget’s largest single-line item, rising from \$756,485 to \$769,613. Village police officers work part time, but the department is staffed 24 hours a day.

— NICHOLAS SPANGLER

WESTHAMPTON BEACH

Village's plan hikes spending by 1.37%

Westhampton Beach's newly adopted \$10.8 million budget for the 2019-2020 fiscal year will be 1.37 percent higher than the previous year's spending plan.

The village's board of trustees voted 5-0 at its regular meeting Thursday at Village Hall to adopt the budget after no public comments were made during the budget hearing. The tax rate will remain the same as the previous year's nearly \$10.7 million budget at 2.99 percent per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

Westhampton Beach Mayor Maria Moore said Friday that the budget had no significant cuts among village departments. Expenditures in the budget were slightly higher than the previous year due to retirement payouts for several recently retired employees, including the village's highway superintendent and building inspector. However, the budget fell beneath the state's 2 percent tax cap, Moore said.

Money for water-quality improvement projects — such as catch basins and permeable pavers on Main Street for its improvement plan and a design for the village's planned sewer system — had also been set aside under reserves in the budget.

“This budget is great because we were able to stay under the tax cap and provide services residents are used to receiving,” Moore said.

— JEAN-PAUL SALAMANCA