**RESOLUTION OF THE**

 **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ VILLAGE BOARD**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ OR TOWN OF \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]**

**PURSUANT TO REAL PROPERTY TAX LAW §466-A TO HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A LIFETIME TAX EXEMPTION FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND AMBULANCE WORKERS**

WHEREAS, it is in the interest of the residents of the \_\_\_\_\_ Fire District/Village/Town to recruit and retain volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers to provide emergency services to the District/Village/Town; and,

WHEREAS, the Real Property Tax Law §466-a was amended in 2022 to provide local governing bodies, including villages, towns and fire districts, with the authority to provide real property tax exemptions, subject to limitations, to volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers for, among other things, recruitment and retention purposes; and,

WHEREAS, Real Property Tax Law §466-a provides that 10% of the assessed value of a property owned, or co-owned, in the village/fire protection district/fire district by a volunteer firefighter or ambulance worker may be exempted from the village/town/fire district’s taxes for the remainder of their life if the volunteer firefighter or ambulance worker meets, in accordance with the law, the criteria set forth in **EXHIBIT A**, attached hereto; and,

WHEREAS, the village/town/fire district proposes to provide an exemption of 10% of the assessed value of a property owned, or co-owned, in the village/fire protection district/fire district by a volunteer firefighter or ambulance worker for the remainder of their life if the Exemption Criteria set forth in **EXHIBIT A**, attached hereto, are met; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed Service Requirement to receive the exemption is set forth in **EXHIBIT A**, attached hereto, and such Service Requirement is more than twenty (20) years in accordance with the law; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed process for certification of a volunteer’s status as an enrolled member, and the proposed process for certification of a volunteer’s status as meeting the Service Requirement, is set forth in **EXHBIT B**, attached hereto, and such processes are in accordance with the law.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ORDERED**, that the village board/town board/board of fire commissioners of \_\_\_\_\_\_ village of/town of/fire district will hold a public hearing on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 2023 at \_\_\_\_\_pm at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_[address]\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, New York, to consider the proposed lifetime exemption of 10% of the assessed value of property owned, or co-owned, in the district by volunteer firefighters or ambulance workers that meet the criteria set forth in **EXHBIT A** and are certified in accordance with the processes set forth in **EXHIBIT B**, and to hear all person that are interested in the adoption of such tax exemption;

**[for towns and villages only]**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED AND ORDERED** that the village clerk/town clerk shall cause a notice, specifying the time and place of the hearing, to be posted on the village/town sign-board and website.

**[for fire districts only]**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED AND ORDERED** that the Fire District Secretary shall cause a notice, specifying the time and place of the hearing, to be posted on the Fire District sign-board and website at least fifteen (15) days but not more than twenty (20) days, before the hearing in accordance with the notice requirements set forth in Town Law §175-c;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED AND ORDERED** that the Fire District Secretary shall provide, in a timely fashion, a notice, specifying the time and place of the hearing, to the Town of \_\_\_\_\_\_, to be posted on the Town sign-board and website at least fifteen (15) days, but not more than twenty (20) days, before the hearing in accordance with the notice requirements set forth in Town Law §175-c.

**EXHIBIT A**

**EXEMPTION CRITERIA**

Real Property Tax Law §466-a provides that 10% of the assessed value of a property owned, or co-owned, in the village/town/fire district by a volunteer firefighter or ambulance worker may be exempted from the village/town/fire district’s taxes for the remainder of their life if the volunteer firefighter or ambulance worker meets, in accordance with the law, the criteria below:

1. The volunteer is an enrolled active member of an incorporated fire company or voluntary ambulance service that serves the town or village in which the village/fire protection district/fire district is located and is so certified as an enrolled active member, as determined by the village/town/fire district, by the authority having jurisdiction for the incorporated fire company or voluntary ambulance service; and,
2. The volunteer has met the Service Requirement determined by the village/town/ fire district and is so certified, as determined by the village/town/fire district, by the authority having jurisdiction for the incorporated fire company or voluntary ambulance service; and,
3. The volunteer resides in the town or village which is served by the incorporated fire company or voluntary ambulance service; and,
4. The property subject to the exemption is the primary residence of the volunteer; and,
5. The portions of the property that are not used exclusively for residential purposes, but are used for other purposes, shall be subject to taxation, and only the remaining portions shall be entitled to the exemption.

***NOTE: The municipality granting the exemption chooses how to define “service”. We suggest that one definition be utilized by all municipal entities in the county(s) or where the fire district, fire protection district or village is located.***

**[SAMPLE]**

(Note that these are not provided for in statute, but must be defined)

**SERVICE REQUIREMENTS**

The service requirement upon which the exemption can be granted shall be more than 20 years of active membership, including credit for past service.

Active membership is defined as a volunteer who is subject to call for a firemanic, emergency medical, or other operational assignment which is covered by the VFBL (fire) or the VAWBL (ambulance), and who:

1. has attended \_\_\_\_\_\_\_[total or percentage] calls in a calendar year, and
2. has attended \_\_\_\_\_\_\_[total or percentage] drills in a calendar year, and
3. has attended \_\_\_\_\_\_\_[total or percentage] trainings in a calendar year, and
4. has attended \_\_\_\_\_\_\_[total or percentage] other required agency functions in a calendar year, and
5. has not experienced a gap in their service of more than \_\_\_ [we suggest ten (10)] continuous years except in the case that the volunteer experienced debilitating injury/disease/illness that prevented them from serving.

**PAST SERVICE**

Credit for past service in a fire company or fire companies, fire department or fire departments, or voluntary ambulance service or voluntary ambulance services, or any combination thereof, will be granted if such service occurred in any state, territory, or province of the United States, Indian reservations, and Canada, and the past service meets the current service requirements for an enrolled member of the fire company, fire department, or voluntary ambulance service of which the individual is a current enrolled member.

***NOTE: The resolution may be finished at this point, but we suggest adding an additional restriction on the number of years in the past that will count toward the past service credit. This will prevent an individual who claims to have served a long time ago, proof of which would be hard to validate, from receiving the credit.***

Credit for past service will only be granted for such service that occurred, in aggregate, within the last \_\_\_\_ [select an amount that is equal to, or more, than your service requirement. We suggest you put twenty-one (21) to thirty (30) years] calendar years.

**EXHIBIT B**

**CERTIFICATION PROCESS**

Certifying a volunteer’s status as an enrolled member.

A volunteer shall be certified as an enrolled member when such individual has been elected or appointed pursuant to the bylaws of the fire company, fire department, or voluntary ambulance service, and in the case of a fire company or fire department, such elected individual is approved by the authority having jurisdiction over said fire company or fire department pursuant to New York law.

Proof of such appointments, elections, and if applicable, approvals, shall be presented to the village/town/fire district in the form of a written letter, or certified list, signed by the Chief Operational Officer and/or Secretary of the corporation to the village/town/fire district.

Certifying a volunteer’s status as meeting the service requirement.

A volunteer shall be certified as meeting the service requirements when such individual provides proof to the village/town/fire district in the form of a written letter, or certified list, signed by the Chief Operational Officer and/or Secretary of the corporation in which they are a current enrolled member that certifies that the individual has met the service requirements as defined by the village/town/fire district.

**CERTIFICATION FORM FOR LIFETIME EXEMPTIONS**

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, being the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_[fire company/fire department/voluntary ambulance service] hereby certify to the village/town/fire district, pursuant to Real Property Tax Law §466-a, that the individuals listed below are enrolled members, as defined by the village/town/fire district, of this \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [fire company/fire department/voluntary ambulance service], and have met the service requirements for the lifetime exemption as defined by the village/town/fire district, including active membership of more than twenty (20) years, which includes credit for past service.

 . Secretary

**RESOLUTION OF THE**

 **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ VILLAGE BOARD**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ OR TOWN OF \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]**

**PURSUANT TO REAL PROPERTY TAX LAW §466-A TO PROVIDE
TAX RELIEF TO VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND AMBULANCE WORKERS FOR LIFE**

WHEREAS, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ town/village/fire district Board of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Town of/Village of/Fire District having duly convened this date for the purpose of holding a public hearing to take public comment on the proposed lifetime tax exemption for volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers pursuant to the provisions of Real Property Tax Law §466-a; and,

WHEREAS, the \_\_\_\_\_town/village/fire district Board has held the public hearing on the proposed tax exemption for volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers and has considered any comments made by members of the public.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ORDERED**, that the \_\_\_\_\_\_ town/village/fire district Board of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Town of/Village of/Fire District hereby grants a tax exemption of 10% of the assessed property value of property in the town/village/fire district owned, or co-owned, by a volunteer firefighter or ambulance worker, provided that the exemption shall only apply to volunteers that meet the Exemption Criteria and the Service Requirements as set forth in **EXHIBIT A**, and provided that the exemptions shall only apply to volunteers that are certified in accordance with the certification processes set forth in **EXHIBIT B**, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED AND ORDERED** that the village clerk/town clerk/ fire district Secretary shall cause copy of this resolution is to be filed with the Town/Village/County Assessors [in a joint fire district, to the assessors of the applicable towns, counties, and villages]; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED AND ORDERED** that the village clerk/town clerk/ fire district Secretary shall cause copy of this resolution, along with the Certification Form For Lifetime Exemptions, to be distributed to every fire company, fire department, and voluntary ambulance service located within the village/town/fire district, and to any resident by request.

Note: **EXHIBIT A** and **EXHIBIT B** should be copied above and placed here to serve as the exhibits for the final resolution.