

Citizens League
St. Paul Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) Task Force
August 16, 2017 Meeting #11

The last live gathering of the Citizens League's Saint Paul Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) Task Force was on Wednesday, August 16. After 11 public meetings, and lots of digital activity, the group is close to completing its report with recommendations focused on the question: Should the city create and implement a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)/Services In Lieu of Taxes (SILOT) program for tax-exempt entities?

The Citizen's League report will be delivered to the Saint Paul City Council, 3:30 p.m., Wednesday, September 6. The main point of the document, which will exceed 100 pages, will be reflected in the statement leading the Recommendations section:

The Task force recommends that the City of Saint Paul initiate discussions with owners of tax exempt properties in order to design and implement a PILOT/SILOT initiative for Saint Paul.

As detailed in this report, this initiative can take many forms, but the important point is for the City and owners of tax exempt properties to agree on a voluntary initiative that meets the needs of the City and the ability of tax exempt property owners to participate.

The 11th meeting was called to allow the committee to approve the amended draft report that will detail the research, findings, conclusions and recommendations of the group.

The Citizens League's process depends on consensus, but diversity of thought is encouraged and respected. Several votes along the way indicate there is divergent thought on some concepts that will be included in the report. The minutes of each meeting, as well as a section for a Minority Report, will shed light on all of the discussions and will ensure all of the committee members' views will be represented in the final report.

The agenda for the final meeting on August 16 called for discussion and votes on several issues, including: the Introductory Statement (seen above); the concept of Ear-marking voluntary payments; language spelling out the position of five Saint Paul-based private colleges, a large sub-group of tax exempt property owners in the city; the Role of the State, particularly as it relates to the Legislature's work regarding property taxes and local government aid; and, some technical amendments and clarifications of language.

Citizens League staff will finish writing the final draft of the task force report and recommendations by Wednesday, August 23. Committee members who wish to submit minority comments have a deadline of Friday, August 25.

The final report of the Saint Paul Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) Task Force will be posted on the Citizens League website, <https://citizensleague.org/what-we-do/policy/pilotsilot-project/>, following approval by the Citizens League Board of Directors. That meeting is set for September 11. The board's agenda will include a review to ensure the task force followed the Citizen League's process.