

1 **TOWN OF EASTON, MARYLAND**  
2 **Easton Town Hall**  
3 **14 S. Harrison Street**  
4 **Budget Workshop**

5 March 24, 2014

6  
7 **PRESENT AT CONVENING**  
8

9 Mayor Robert C. Willey  
10 Councilmember Kelley K. Malone  
11 Councilmember Pete Leshner  
12 Councilmember Leonard E. Wendowski  
13 Councilmember Megan M. Cook  
14 Council President John F. Ford  
15

16 **IN ATTENDANCE**  
17

18 Also in attendance were the Town Manager Mr. Karge, and Town Clerk Mrs. Ruf.  
19

20 **CONVENING**  
21

22 President Ford called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. and led those present in the Pledge of  
23 Allegiance.  
24

25 **MAYOR'S OPENING COMMENTS**  
26

27 Mayor Willey stated that the budget is currently balanced but it includes \$618,000 that is needed to  
28 fund the capital requests.  
29

30 **Police Department**  
31

32 Present were: Chief Spencer, Deputy Chief Waltrup and Management Assistant Jessica Plugge.  
33

34 Chief Spencer stated that Easton Police Department has worked hard to prepare their budget within the  
35 constraints. He stated that their requests are very close to last year's figures in the operating and capital  
36 budget. Chief Spencer asked the council to please restore \$10,416 in the capital budget to buy vests.  
37 He stated that they will get a 50% refund back for their purchases from Federal Government.  
38

39 The Town Manager stated that speed camera money can be used to purchase the requested trailer.  
40

41 Capt. Waltrup discussed overtime. He stated that 66% of their overtime budget has been spent. He  
42 stated that every effort has been made to change schedules and cut back manpower on special events.  
43 Capt. Waltrup stated that they have changed schedules with detectives for court appearances.  
44

45 Mr. Wendowski suggested boiling the budget down to a summarization.  
46

47 Chief Spencer advised that one of the recruits has not been successful. He discussed the benefits of  
48 starting officers with an increased starting salary.  
49

50 Chief Spencer discussed the LEOPS plan and how the officers perceive it.  
51

52 At 7:09 p.m., Chief Spencer, Deputy Chief Waltrup and Ms. Plugge departed.  
53

54 **Building Code Official**  
55

56 At 7:17 p.m., Mr. Don Richardson was present to discuss the proposed budget of his departments.  
57

58 President Ford questioned the contractual services for the adjusted budget. Mr. Richardson stated that  
59 99% of that money won't be spent due to the delay in the hospital building.  
60

61 Mr. Richardson discussed the \$28,000 request for electronic permit issuing. He stated that it improves  
62 the technology side adding some components to our current system. He stated that it will help with a  
63 customer satisfaction standpoint.  
64

65 Mr. Karge discussed an online system with HTE with a secure server and the Click-To-Gov software.

66 Electrical inspections were discussed. Mr. Richardson advised that First State Inspection is the current  
67 electrical inspectors for the town of Easton although MDIA does have a few that have not been closed  
68 out.

69  
70 Mr. Richardson asked that the plotter for \$24,000 be included in the budget. He stated that the budget  
71 has been held identical for a number of years. Mr. Richardson stated that the majority of costs are  
72 offset by revenue.

73  
74 Discussion occurred regarding Professional Services (2410). He stated that a great deal of attorney's  
75 fees were incurred last year. Mr. Richardson stated that he expects the same expense for Professional  
76 Fees next year.

77  
78 Mr. Richardson stated that they inspected 166 rental homes last year and saw some of the worst homes  
79 in Easton. He stated that there are currently 2473 registered rental units in Town.

80

81 At 7:49 p.m., Mr. Richardson departed the meeting.

82

### 83 **Parks and Recreation**

84

85 At 7:50 p.m., Mrs. Lorraine Gould, Director of Parks and Recreation was present to discuss the  
86 proposed budget of her department.

87

88 Mrs. Cook asked what she has not purchased this year that was allotted in last year's budget. Mr.  
89 Karge stated that there may be a computer replacement in last year's budget.

90

91 Mrs. Cook asked what promotional activities are. Mr. Karge stated that it could be posters or  
92 brochures.

93

94 Mr. Leshar asked why the Rails-to-trails signs are reclassified. Mr. Karge stated that it is due to the  
95 cost of the item.

96

97 Mr. Karge clarified that the Parks and Recreation Department is not losing any employees in their  
98 department and their staff is fully funded.

99

100 At 8:05 p.m., Mrs. Gould departed the meeting.

101

### 102 **Finance Officer**

103

104 At 8:06 p.m., Mrs. Callahan, Finance Officer discussed her department's proposed budget and  
105 changes.

106

107 Mrs. Callahan asked if there are any questions.

108

109 Mr. Karge stated that there is the addition of an employee for the front office at a near entry level  
110 salary.

111

112 Mrs. Cook asked what is included in the professional fees. Mr. Karge stated that there are legal fees  
113 that can't be allocated elsewhere.

114

115 Mr. Karge discussed the IT position. He stated that it is not an entry level but not high level position.  
116 He stated the position would be to help with routine kind of repairs and maintenance.

117

118 Mr. Leshar asked if the abatements are included in the budget.

119

120 Mr. Karge discussed how the State breaks down personal property assessments as incorporated,  
121 unincorporated, railroad and manufacturing. Personal property is all property that is not real estate by  
122 law.

123

124 Mayor Willey discussed a potential exemption of taxes.

125

126 Mr. Leshar discussed the rationale for PILOT for Easton Utilities.

127

128 The partial restoration of Highway User Taxes was discussed.

129

130 Mr. Karge discussed the IT position, customer support in front office, and the idea of putting a town  
131 engineer on staff.  
132 Mayor Willey discussed personal property tax for Aphenia. He stated that with the budget shortfall, he  
133 may consider restructuring of the bond to get a more favorable rate and additional capital. Mayor  
134 Willey stated that it is not his intent or desire to raise taxes.

135  
136 Mayor Willey stated that the actual budget is a significant decrease over last year's budget.

137  
138 At 8:45 p.m., Mrs. Callahan departed the meeting.

139  
140 **ADJOURNMENT**

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142 At 8:51 p.m., upon motion by Mr. Leshar seconded by President Ford and carried unanimously,  
143 President Ford adjourned the workshop meeting.

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146 \_\_\_\_\_  
147 Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk