

# Talbot County Taxpayers Association, Inc.

P.O. Box 438  
Easton, MD 21601-8907

March 3, 2010

Mayor Robert Willey  
Town of Easton  
14 S. Harrison Street,  
Easton, MD 21601

Dear Mayor Willey:

We realize that Easton is facing a very difficult budgetary problem as we move towards fiscal year 2011. We believe that you, your staff and department heads will work diligently to produce a balanced budget. There will be hard trade-offs and priority adjustments, and some painful cuts in services will likely be needed.

Our Association, especially the group of our members who live or own property in Easton, wants to understand in detail the needs of your departments and the cost of the services you wish to provide. We would like to work within the Town Charter provisions for public participation in order to evaluate the decisions you will be making. We will publicly support your decisions where we agree and comment on those where we have questions. While you may not agree, we believe our involvement will add more credibility and possibly better public support for the difficult budget decisions you will have to make.

To do this we would like to coordinate with you on the following.

- Our representative(s) will attend the hearings you hold according to Art. VI, Sec. 4 of the Charter. Please provide us with reasonable advance notice of the dates, times and places for these hearings.
- If you brief any Council members on the budget before it is officially released to the public, we would like to have our representative(s) attend. Certainly if there will be three or more Council members involved, we expect proper notification according to Maryland's Open Meetings Act.

We believe that the budget message, according to Art. VI, Sec. 5 and Sec. 6 of the Charter, is a very important document. It provides the public with critical information by which they can assess the proposed budget and better understand the year-to-year revenue and expenditure changes, any changes in financial policy, and inherent trade-offs, cuts, or increases in services. We would like to have a copy of this document, including the required statement of pending capital projects for the next four fiscal years, as soon as it is ready, but no later than May 2 (60 days before the beginning of the next fiscal year, according to Art. VI, Sec. 4).

We hope we can work together for the benefit of all Easton taxpayers.

Mayor Robert Willey

Page 2

Please provide the coordinating information we requested to us at P.O. Box 348, Easton, MD 21601-8907. In order for us to provide timely information to our members, would you have your response to us by March 15. If you would like to discuss our request or have any questions about it, please contact our Easton Board Member, Mr. Charles F. Bohn, at 410-822-4688 or our President, Mr. Edward J. (Ted) Doyle, at 410-745-3077.

Respectfully,

Talbot County Taxpayers Association, Inc.

Cc: Easton Town Council

Mr. Steve Nery of *The Star Democrat*