

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

5 April 7, 2019

6
7 **PRESENT AT CONVENING**
8

9 Mayor Robert C. Willey
10 Councilmember Alan I. Silverstein
11 Councilmember Donald M. Abbatiello
12 Councilmember Ron E. Engle
13 Councilmember Megan M. Cook
14

15 **IN ATTENDANCE**
16

17 Also, in attendance were the Town Manager Mr. Richardson, Finance Officer Mrs. Carol Callahan and
18 Town Clerk Mrs. Ruf.
19

20 **CONVENING**
21

22 Acting President Engle called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led those present in the Pledge of
23 Allegiance.
24

25 Mr. Engle stated that this is the first of two sessions of the budget.
26

27 **Mayor's opening comments.**

28 Mayor Willey stated that the budget is balanced although there will be the added expenses due to
29 COVID-19. Mayor Willey asked all departments not to spend monies until needed. Mayor Willey
30 stated that much of the state shared revenues have not made it to the Town yet and this budget is really
31 lean. Mayor Willey stated that due to the recent events, it is not business as usual.
32

33 **Administration.**

34 **Executive:**

35 request \$1,059,627 proposed \$937,177

36 Mr. Richardson, Town Manager stated that Administration encompasses several executive
37 departments; town council, clerk, mayor, manager, IT and the elections. He stated that we believe we
38 can proceed and make what is proposed for the next fiscal year. Mr. Richardson stated that at this time,
39 the request for an additional IT staff member has been cut. Mr. Richardson stated that the capital
40 project is being decreased throughout the departments. Mr. Richardson stated that 14% of the increase
41 in the budget is for personnel which includes additional staff and OPEP and healthcare costs. He
42 discussed eliminating the grade step table with EPD which should help with recruiting. Mr. Richardson
43 stated that CIGNA has committed to 4.85% increase. Mr. Richardson stated that several accounts have
44 been consolidated into a single account to allow better record keeping moving forward.
45

46 **Finance:**

47 request \$1,138,814 proposed \$1,113,429

48 The Finance office had little changes.

49 An added staff member will address the auditors' concerns for segregation of duties.

50 Mr. Abbatiello discussed the software update for the finance department. Mr. Richardson stated that
51 this is the second half of the funding for that expenditure. The current software was put in place in
52 1998.

53 **Planning and Zoning:**

54 request \$590,491 proposed \$515,09

55 Mr. Thomas was present and stated that the Planning and Zoning budget is straightforward although
56 there was a capital request for a vehicle which has been cut and in the operating budget, \$30,000 from
57 \$98,000 was left for professional services which in the past year, included a portion of the impact fee
58 study. Mr. Thomas stated the professional services is for the Planning Commission to institute a
59 greater level of design control in the design process which would show a more detail level of
60 submissions. Mr. Silverstein suggested those services be done in-house. Mr. Thomas stated that the
61 professional services assistance is what he preferred to be added back.
62

63 **Municipal Buildings:**

64 request \$260,243 proposed \$259,043

65 Mr. Richardson stated there is a request for a new staff member to manage buildings and facilities. He
66 stated that there are currently private services for maintenance and management of those buildings. Mr.
67 Silverstein asked if there will be a cost savings. Mr. Richardson stated there will be.
68 Mr. Abbatiello asked for clarification for the land acquisition line item. Mr. Richardson stated it is for
69 the land on Bryan Drive near Public Works.

70

71 **EPD.**

72 request \$7,914,451 proposed \$7,506,575

73

74 Chief Spencer and Lt. Greg Wright was present from the Police Department. Chief Spencer thanked
75 the Mayor and Council for the steps taken with the COVID-19 Pandemic.

76 Lt. Wright stated that with COVID, things have changed. He stated that the budget is a reflection of
77 seeing how to do things more efficiently. Lt. Wright asked that the \$51,000 cut from the operating
78 budget recurring maintenance be reinstated as that line item is for the contracts, they have in place such
79 as the RMS system they do reports on, the Axon Taser system and the Lexipol contract policy process
80 system. Lt. Wright stated that those contracts have been signed so they can use the resources they have
81 to work efficiently.

82 Discussion of Red-Light Speed Camera monies was discussed.

83 Mrs. Cook asked if overtime seems to still be a big issue. Lt. Wright stated that it is for special events
84 that require officers to complete tasks as well as court appearances.

85 Mr. Engle asked how many vehicles they plan to dispose of. He stated none.

86 Mr. Richardson stated that the Department is limited to 34 vehicles.

87 At 7:13 p.m., Chief Spencer and Capt. Wright exited.

88

89 **Building Department.**

90 request \$1,059,627 proposed \$937,177

91 request \$541,820 proposed \$537,570

92

93 Mr. Diem, Building Code Official was present at 7:14 p.m. He stated their budget is a \$99,745 increase
94 over last year; \$95,495 increase 5,070 over last year. Did not bother training and third-party
95 inspections. Mr. Diem stated they can live with cuts. First-State Inspections are doing electrical
96 inspections and would like the to do mechanical inspections. He stated that they continue to reach out
97 and bring everyone together such as with the yearly bar-b-que. Mr. Diem stated that permits continue
98 to rise growing at 5.5% each year. The only schedule of fees that was revised was for deck permits
99 from \$45 to \$75. He stated they have no capital budget requests. Mr. Silverstein stated that the
100 department is working hard to make things happen and they are doing a great job.

101 At 7:19 p.m., Mr. Diem exited the meeting.

102

103 **Fire Department.**

104 Request \$355,005 proposed \$363,658

105

106 Mr. Tim Knotts, President and Mr. Rick Stacey, Vice President were present for discussion regarding
107 the Easton Fire Department's budget.

108 Mr. Richardson stated that the carry forward is from the training facility from the two prior fiscal years
109 as well as a carry forward for a renovation of station 60. Mr. Richardson stated that the Fire
110 Department is operating on a small generator that only opens the bay doors and the concept is to power
111 that entire building.

112 Mr. Richardson stated that what remains in the budget is fixing repair of ambulance doors and
113 electrical with supplemental dollars going to the kitchen renovation project. He stated that funding
114 level for LOSAP and quarterly incentives is intact as is turnout gear and hose fund.

115

116 Mayor Willey stated that tomorrow's budget meetings will commence at 3:00 p.m.

117

118 At 7:35 p.m., Mr. Stacey and Mr. Knotts were present on behalf of the Fire Department.

119

120 Mr. Knotts thanked the Town what they have done in the past years and where they are now. He stated
121 that most of the figures have to do with maintenance and care of the building. Mr. Richardson stated
122 the Fire Department will give up the message board and the generator was cut but we may be able to
123 find a surplus for the building.

124 Doors need to be upgraded. Electrical needs to be upgraded. Some from 1960. Change out the internal
125 features.

126 Mr. Knotts discussed \$50,000 for the kitchen renovation. He stated that they intend to take space from
127 the radio room. He discussed the current mold and mildew problem. Mr. Knotts stated that this would
128 give the members a place to congregate. recently purchased a lot of turnout gear. He stated that new
129 members are staying although they have had a few leave for personal life changes.

130 Discussion regarding fundraising occurred as well as the need to replace Engine 63 in 2022.
131 Mr. Knotts stated that they would like turnout gear reinstated if possible.
132 Mr. Knotts and Mr. Stacey departed the meeting at 7:50 p.m.
133 Discussion occurred regarding Talbot County's financial contribution.

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135 **ADJOURNMENT**

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137 Acting President Engle adjourned the budget workshop at 7:50 p.m.

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141 Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk