

February 2010

Dear Residents :

Everyone by now has received their 2010 Real Estate Tax Bill. As I mentioned last month the tax increase you see IS NOT a result of the City of Eastlake raising taxes. The voters approved two new income tax levies in November, one for the Willoughby Eastlake schools and one for the Library. The increase in your taxes is a result of those two levies being approved by the voters.

The year 2010 for our city can best be described as challenging. We are hopeful that our economy will pick up and more residents will return to work. Our city's revenue is very dependent on the 2% employee income tax and when people are not working the revenues decrease sharply. We are projecting about the same revenues in 2010 as we had in 2009. The budget for 2010 is very tight and we are going to manage the city very conservatively and project that revenues will equal expenses. The challenges we face are a mandatory 3% wage increase for all employees per the union contracts, a 4.5% increase in health insurance, a large increase in our workers compensations costs and skyrocketing overtime costs in our police and fire departments. If not for the fact that we paid off the large amount of stadium debt last year we would be facing necessary cuts to balance the budget. In Eastlake's budget over 70% of the budget is related to employee costs such as wages, benefits, and retirement costs.

Our Service department has received the Sewer Camera Truck that we ordered last year. This is a nice addition to the department and it will save the city thousands of dollars in costs over the years. We had to pay for outside companies to camera our sewer lines to pinpoint a blockage and now we can do the work ourselves. This will also benefit our residents as we assist them in finding out where the blockage is and whose responsibility it is to fix the problem.

The bids to repair the pool are in and I am hopeful that Council will have approved the awarding of the contracts by the time you read this article. The funds to fix the pool have already been set aside. The skating park is open at Classic Park and we are now renting skates on Friday, Saturday and Sunday for \$ 2. Please come out and join other residents at the ice skating rink.

Mayor Ted Andrzejewski

Eastlake, Ohio