

ARTICLE NO. 3

MAY 7, 2013 PROPERTY TAX VOTE to RETAIN CITY SERVICES

This is the third in a series of three articles from Oakwood City Council and the Oakwood Citizen Levy Committee discussing the city of Oakwood's plan for retaining city services and keeping Oakwood the finest Dayton area community in which to live, work, raise a family and retire. The first two articles are available on the Oakwood website (www.mvcc.net/oakwood).

As we all know, Oakwood is the premier residential community in the Miami Valley. We have this distinction because of our beautiful neighborhoods, unmatched public safety, public works, recreation and leisure offerings, excellent schools and library, and because of our citizens. We take pride in and understand what it takes to keep Oakwood unique. Here are just a few examples of the benefits of calling Oakwood your home.

- We have the fastest response time in the region to any police, fire or emergency medical call and we respond to every call with highly trained professionals.
- We have very low crime and very low fire loss, the lowest in the region.
- We have qualified paramedics and EMTs on-duty at all times to respond to any medical emergency. Our response time is less than two minutes – unparalleled in the area.
- We have the best maintained streets, sidewalks, public trees and landscaped boulevards anywhere.
- Although most of our housing stock is over 70 years old, our homes and properties are better maintained than in any other city around and our home values prove that.
- Our city parks, public pool, community center and public natural areas are first-class.
- Our overall community ambiance is truly second to none.

Decade after decade, Oakwood remains the community of choice for those seeking the very best in residential living. It's a value proposition well understood by our citizens. Because of citizen commitment and community pride, we remain the finest place to live and have always received the necessary resources it takes to keep Oakwood special.

On May 7, Oakwood citizens will be asked to approve a 3.75 mill property tax. This is the first property tax increase for city services since 1991. Over the past 22 years, Oakwood has been able to provide the finest city services and to maintain our beautiful community without raising taxes. In fact, we lowered property taxes in 2008 with the expiration of a 5.5 mill tax. We were able to do this by prudently using estate tax revenue. That revenue source is now gone, hence the need for a replacement tax.

The 3.75 mill issue will generate about \$1.0 million annually, about 1/3 of the revenue we lost due to elimination of the Ohio estate tax and other state cuts to local government. It will cost the owner of a \$200,000 home about \$230 per year. The expired 2008 tax issue saved that same property owner about \$72 per year.

Besides the revenue enhancement portion of the multifaceted plan to address our financial shortfall, the previous articles addressed the cost cutting that has taken place over the past few years. Most notably,

- ✓ The city cut expenses each of last four years and is making additional cuts this year.
- ✓ The city reduced staff by 10% over the past few years, eliminating ten fulltime positions.

Historically, Oakwood has been blessed with good management, supportive citizens and elected officials who have been prudent in the use of taxpayer dollars. While no one wants to ask citizens to pay higher taxes, actions taken by the Ohio Legislature have reduced Oakwood's revenue stream by about 20%. Some of that loss has been overcome through cost efficiencies and belt tightening but that alone can not solve the problem. The solution also requires replacement revenues for the city to continue providing our citizens the unique and unparalleled services we all enjoy.

We trust that understanding these facts and the desire to maintain Oakwood as the premier residential community, our citizens will vote YES on May 7.

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