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February 17, 2009

**TO: BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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POSTING, BOROUGH MANAGER,  
BOROUGH CITIZENS, PRESS**

**SUBJECT: STATE OF BOROUGH – 2008<sup>9</sup>  
ARTICLE X, SECTION 1029 (3) OF THE PA  
BOROUGH CODE**

**GERALD W. GROSS  
MAYOR**

# Mayor's Report 2009

## State of the Borough

As in 2008, the budgeting of taxpayer dollars has become even more important for the future needs of our borough. The yearly and long term fiscal planning is necessary to ensure the financial and structural health of our borough. Many boroughs comply with the GASB 34 (General Accounting Standards Board), which addresses the recording of capital assets and infrastructure. I have been stating for years, that at least 5 year plans plus the costs should be developed by all the committees of council and the manager. The GASB 34 provides a clear picture of cost; it also provides information to plan for equipment maintenance and insurance. There will be an inventory of all municipal owned buildings, grounds, parks, motor vehicles, equipment, water lines, sanitary sewers, as well as storm sewers. With this accounting it will prevent the shoot from the hip attitude we seem to have year in and year out. It will give us better control of our long and short term needs. These standards will allow a more focused vision and direction for the future. I believe this type of capital planning can be incorporated in one of the new programs in our under-utilized computer system and could be updated regularly.

With a capital budget, borough council can lessen the effects of budget shock for our borough and its residents. No one likes the big budget item that shows its face at the 12 o'clock hour. With this plan the borough will be able to chart out a course of action that would lead us through a more reasonable decision making process.

The PSAB has provided boroughs with a Capital Budget Requirement Survey, which is more timely and critical to the economic success of our community. They have heard from boroughs being forced to decline needed capital expenditures, reduce repairs to municipal facilities and decrease equipment purchases. Sadly, we find ourselves staring into the fear of the next twelve months and avoiding the following sixty months. As I have been saying and now the PSAB is recommending that our borough must have a plan, not just for today but for the next five years.

I will repeat myself, council, “you need to act in the borough/residents’ best interest and not your own. As a Borough Council Member, you took an oath of office, to a responsibility that takes time, dedication, energy and a love for our town. You may think that a sense of community should just happen – actually, it requires a lot of effort and hard work!

I would also like this council and manager to pay attention to its own performance, managing it and improving it. This should create a better, more responsive, more efficient government for our citizens. It will take a greater technical system to fix our current situation. It will require you, as the leaders of the West Easton Council, to be driven and dedicated. We’ve got to reconnect with our citizens to the higher calling of what our work in public service represents. I believe we all need to show integrity and start acting with accountability. Start by being honest with your citizens. Give them truthful, unbiased, real information on how you are performing. You will start to gain citizen trust. You need to begin focusing on performance and results.” (Mayor’s Report 2008)

There are numerous reasons why the Borough of West Easton encourages its citizens and businesses to recycle. They include a broad range of environmental stewardship concerns, as well as practical interest in local economic opportunities and development, including: cost savings, extended landfill lifespan, resource conservation, energy conservation, economic development, pollution prevention,

greenhouse gas emissions reductions, and fostering a sense of community involvement and responsibility.

However, there is still a lot that is not getting recycled - meaning money and resources that are getting wasted for our borough. It saves money on household trash bills to recycle. Recycling's true value comes from preventing pollution and saving natural resources and energy, not landfill space. Still, it's important to note that recycling is largely responsible for averting a landfill crisis. Did you know it takes 500 years for just one aluminum can to decompose in a landfill and recycling that one aluminum can saves enough electricity to light a 100-watt bulb for 3½ hours? It takes 60% less energy to recycle steel than it does to make it from raw materials. Making recycled newspaper saves 40%, recycled plastics 70%, and recycled glass 40% savings in energy accordingly. There are grants, for example, The Municipal Recycling Performance Grant. This grant can be awarded to our municipality for our recycling effort. This grant award increases as the municipal recycling rate increases. Let's continue to make a solid effort to keep our community clean and green. Check your following newsletter for more facts and tips to carry forward this venture.

Additional comments:

1. Sewer Studies: We are moving forward, doing all the requirements the Easton Joint Sewer Authority required of us.
2. Computer System: The manager must start justifying the purchase of this system and expand the use of its capabilities. The time is now.
3. Public Safety: Police contract is in its second year of a three year contract. From all feedback and results our borough residents and officials are very satisfied with this service.

Cost: 2009: \$128,275.43/yr @ \$10,689.62/month  
2010: \$134,689.20/yr @ \$11,224.10/month

In 2008 the Easton Police Dept. answered 422 calls for service; this averages 35 calls per month. This did not include daily patrol schedules. They made (6) investigations of more serious crimes - (3) robberies, (1) home invasion, (2) fraud cases. These actions required detectives for investigation. All cases were finalized with no further cost.

4. Fire: As Mayor, I am very proud to have our Safety First Volunteer Fire Company representing the borough and our public safety needs. Safety First VFC is always first class with their equipment, leadership, and dedicated personnel that serve and protect our community. We all appreciate their allegiance to fire safety and rescue for all of the citizens of our borough as well as their ability to consistently respond to mutual aid calls in surrounding areas.
5. Refuse: Our three year contract with Waste Management is in its second year.

Cost: 2008 - 2010: \$130,366.20/yr @ \$10,863.85

Garbage: \$107,915.28

Recycling: \$22,450.92

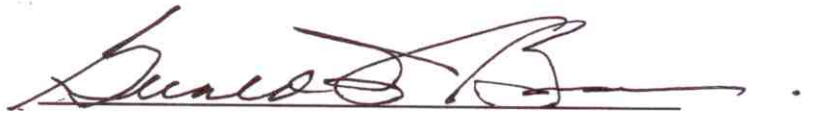
As you can see a well run recycling program cost much less and it is why I stress we utilize it more thoroughly.

My final thoughts, many organizations might consist of a group of individuals like ours or it may just be you and one or two trusted allies – it depends on your specific goals or situation. However, do not underestimate the value of being part of a team. It's crucial for your success over the long term. People who go the Robinson Crusoe path invariably under-achieve and end up frustrated and miserable. While we do not want our borough to be hopelessly dependant on

every agency and/or company for our survival (and thereby would make ourselves completely vulnerable), we do need to get to a point where we can “let go” of certain concerns and trust in the people who have proven themselves. Working alongside those who genuinely want to be part of the success for this borough is both empowering and liberating. So for this year, 2009, let’s work on gaining some momentum in this area.

As the recession takes its toll on our borough families, the cost of doing nothing far exceeds the price of our actions to solve the issues that come before us. Together, we can and must meet our economic challenges while continuing to improve the quality of life for our citizens and keep our sights on our long-term vitality.

Pursuant to Article X, Section 1029(3) of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, The Pennsylvania Borough Code, I am announcing to you and your representatives my State of the Borough Report for 2009.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerald W. Gross", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gerald W. Gross, Mayor