

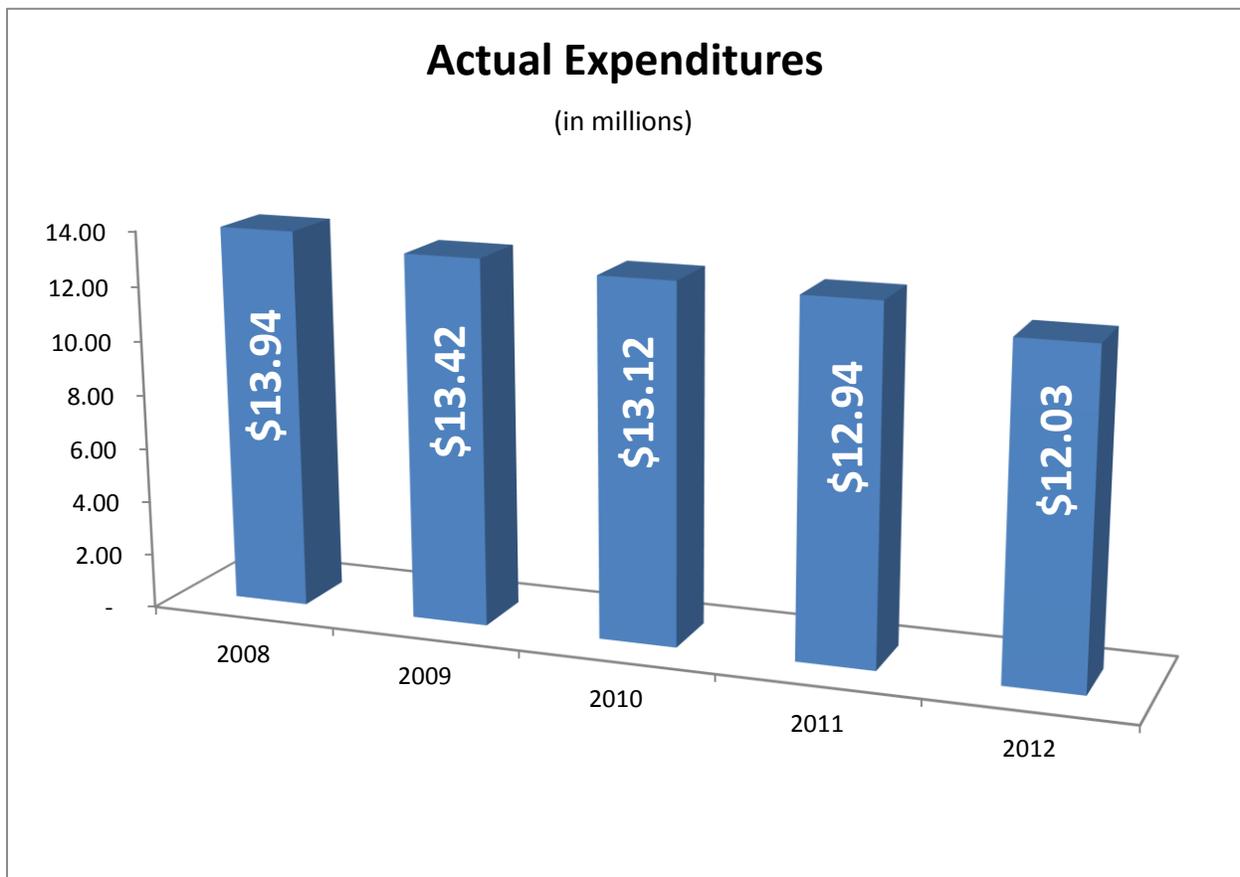
ARTICLE NO. 2

MAY 7, 2013 PROPERTY TAX VOTE to RETAIN CITY SERVICES

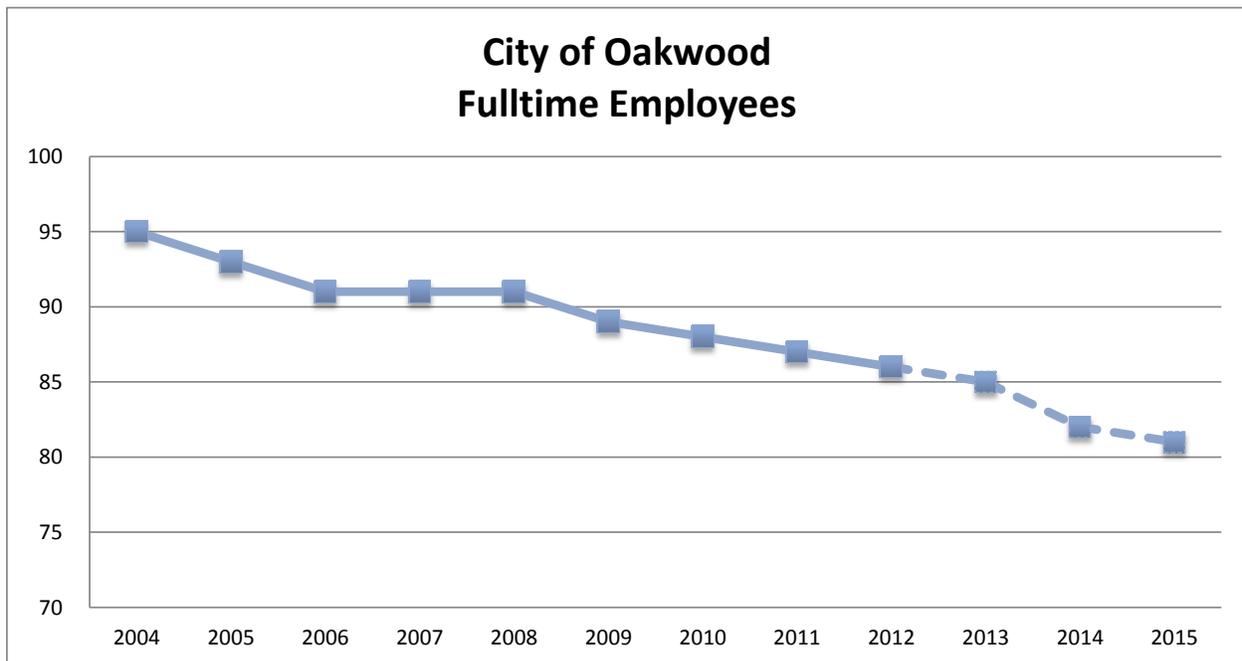
This is the second in a series of three articles from Oakwood City Council and the Oakwood Citizen Levy Committee discussing the plan for retaining city services and keeping Oakwood the finest Dayton area community in which to live, work, raise a family and retire.

In June 2011, Oakwood leaders were confronted with a financial challenge created when the Ohio Legislature eliminated the Ohio estate tax. The tax had been a source of revenue to pay for local public services for over 100 years. Of the total estate tax collected, 80% was returned to the community in which a person lived at their time of death. For Oakwood and many other Ohio suburban bedroom communities, the tax represented a major portion of the financial resources needed to provide police, fire & EMS services and to maintain streets, parks and other public infrastructure.

In anticipation of the possibility that the estate tax would be reduced or eliminated altogether, four years ago Oakwood leaders began cutting expenses and seeking ways in which to retain our comprehensive services yet do so with fewer financial resources. Our cost cutting during that time is clearly reflected below. 2012 spending was about \$1.9 million less than it was in 2008.



With personnel costs representing about 65% of the city budget, a primary focus has been on reducing personnel without impacting service levels. As the graph below shows, we currently have 10 fewer fulltime employees than in 2004, about 10% of our workforce. The Graph also shows that we are projecting to further reduce the number of city employees.



In addition to reduced personnel expenses, we have lowered spending in numerous other ways. A list of examples totaling over \$1,000,000 in cost cuts is posted on the Oakwood website.

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 expiration of a 5.5 mill tax. We were able to do this by prudently using the estate tax revenue. In addition to covering some normal operating expenses, the estate tax also allowed the city to complete essential facility maintenance and improvement projects at our two primary service delivery centers – the Public Safety/Administration building and the Public Works Center – and to purchase the Old River athletic fields. All three of these major community investments were completed without incurring long-term debt. Remarkably, our city has no long-term debt. We have always operated within our means and our goal is to continue doing so.

The 3.75 mill issue will cost the owner of a \$200,000 home about \$230 per year. The expired 2008 tax issue saved that owner about \$72 per year.

Article No. 3 will explain in more detail the importance of the 3.75 mill property tax and will highlight all that makes Oakwood a very special community.

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