

WEST MAUI TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION'S

# THE VOICE

*"Coming together, uniting West Maui as ONE Voice"*

PO Box 10338 ♦ Lahaina, HI 96761 ♦ [www.WestMaui.org](http://www.WestMaui.org) ♦ [WMTA@maui.net](mailto:WMTA@maui.net)

Newsletter of the West Maui Taxpayers Association, June, 2013

## **PRESIDENTS MESSAGE** By Don Lehman

As the Maui County Council wraps up the annual budget process, there is both good and bad news. The bad news is that the property tax rates will increase for all but one classification. WMTA feels that this is simply NOT the time to increase taxes with a still fragile economic recovery. The good news is that the tax increases are relatively small, ranging from a low of 5 cents to a high of only 25 cents per \$1,000 of net taxable assessed valuation.

The most interesting aspect of the budget process was the initial proposal by the Council's Budget & Finance Committee Chair, Mike White. Council member White proposed no increases to the tax rate for any property classification, with the exception of the traditionally very low 'homeowners' classification which would increase only to the extent necessary to cover any additional funding given to nonprofit organizations. WMTA applauds this very bold move by Mr. White. WMTA does not question the authority of the Council to support nonprofits, but WMTA feels any increase in that funding should be borne by the interests most likely to be able to vote to approve the Council's generosity-homeowners! This is the kind of discussion that should be part of every budget process. WMTA sends our kudos to Mike.

Please note that there is a new feature to the WMTA newsletter: the 'Transportation UPDATE' by Bob Pure. As president of Lahaina Bypass Now! (LBN), Bob established himself as the resident authority on Department of Transportation (DOT) issues for West Maui. LBN has been discontinued, but Bob has brought his expertise and experience to WMTA and will continue his role as transportation and DOT guru as Vice President of WMTA. We thank Bob for his willingness to continue to serve West Maui. WMTA has incorporated several of the LBN issues into our WMTA Goals and Objectives. Please visit [westmaui.org](http://westmaui.org) to see the latest list of issues WMTA feels are most important to West Maui.

I would also call your attention to the letter from former WMTA President Ron Kawahara. At a recent annual meeting of the Noelani Homeowners Association, Ron went into some detail to explain why individual owners should support WMTA in addition to the support given by the Association. His letter is an expansion of those remarks. The key message is that WMTA is a voice for many who are not often represented, and are not even able to vote as they are not residents. A key point is that if your property is producing income, WMTA membership is a tax deductible expense.

If you are a property owner in West Maui, we respectfully suggest that membership in the WMTA is perhaps the wisest investment you can make. Absentee owners especially benefit from WMTA membership as we bring attention to issues and testimony which they physically are unable to do themselves as efficiently as we can on their behalf.

In this issue of The Voice, we want to recognize and extend a big mahalo to our current HOA, AOA and resorts who are WMTA's biggest supporters through their membership.

### **Level 1 Annual Dues Given: \$1,000 - \$3,000**

(Listed in alphabetical order)

- AOA Kaanapali Shores
- Kahana Village LLC
- Napili Kai Beach Resort
- Napili Lani Owner's Association
- Noelani AOA
- Puamana Community Association

### **Level 2 Annual Dues Given: \$500-\$999**

(Listed in alphabetical order)

- Pineapple Hill
- Plantation Estates
- Puna Pointe 1
- Puna Two Owners Association
- Royal Kahana AOA

I must note that the number of associations supporting WMTA has been much larger in the past. WMTA understands that West Maui properties face some serious financial challenges, but we sincerely believe WMTA membership is a good investment of owner dues as a better West Maui benefits all. And a better West Maui remains the primary purpose of WMTA. Please do your part to help by joining WMTA. Go to [www.westmaui.org](http://www.westmaui.org) for more information and membership forms. Thank you.



President, WMTA

**WEST MAUI HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL CENTER FOUNDATION UPDATE**

By Joe Pluta, President, West Maui Hospital and Medical Center Foundation

As requested from Mr. Hoyle, WMHMCF sent him the organizational docs for the West Maui Hospital and Medical Center Foundation Inc. as a possible contender for consideration to be the applicant under his new plan to finance and develop the West Maui Hospital and Medical Center complex.

According to West Maui Hospital Certificate of Need Holder, Brian Hoyle, President of Newport Hospital Corporation on May 17, 2013, he is "still working on financing...and Upon receipt of a written financing commitment for the complete development of the West Maui Hospital, we will proceed with land acquisition and all governmental approvals/entitlements needed for this project. NHC will not need an equity partner for the land acquisition or development of the West Maui Hospital and Medical Center."

**WEST MAUI IMPROVEMENT FOUNDATION UPDATE** By Joe Pluta, President, West Maui Improvement Foundation

WMIF, a nonprofit 501 c 3 with Public Charity Status 170 (b)(1)(A)(vi).

*The Mission of the WMIF, with Public Charity designation 501-C-3 from the IRS, is to improve the West Maui Community by receiving and expending funds for the erection and maintenance of public buildings and services as well as community facilities such as our West Maui Hospital and Medical Center. The WMIF is restricted from direct political campaigning and lobbying or raising funds for those purposes.*

Thanks to your generous donations we have done what was previously declared impossible. Our West Maui Hospital project has had many "starts" and "stops." That is not unusual it seems because nearly every major project planned for development in 2010-2012 has been set back completely or stopped due to the economic catastrophes which occurred during that time. We were down, but we are "not out!" We know that our life saving mission is one which must withstand any and all obstacles because our lives and those of our visitors are literally at stake with an unacceptable level of risk without our success. While our Need and justification has been proven, the financing strategy remains. The Certificate of Need Holder declared that he is in the 6th year of this project and is currently working on a financing package for the entire project and has not disclosed the details as of May of 2013.

The WMIF is keeping its office and staff dedicated to assisting efforts we know have to be taken for Land Use approvals on the new hospital site, and associated governmental compliance issues. We know that our goal is to see the West Maui Hospital and Medical Center become a reality. In order to do that and keep options open and channels of communication strong, we must continue to support our professional staff and administrative fixed costs. To that end, we are synergizing with the West Maui Taxpayers Association, Inc. and the West Maui Hospital and Medical Center Foundation Inc. to optimize potential efficiencies with the Certificate of Need holder.

Tax Deductible Contributions can be sent to "West Maui Improvement Foundation, Inc." PO Box 10338, Lahaina, HI 96761. Our U.S. Tax I.D. is EIN 99-0275775 - Public Charity Status 170 (b) (1)(A)(vi) Any amount you send will help. Time is of the essence. Malama Pono ame Mahalo!

**West Maui Improvement Foundation Donation  
IRS EIN 99-0275775 NON PROFIT 501C (3)**

West Maui Taxpayers Association continues to collaborate with the West Maui Improvement Foundation in its efforts to bring a hospital to West Maui. Please read the hospital update above by Joe Pluta, WMTA Treasurer/President Emeritus, as well as President of the West Maui Improvement Foundation. If you can give a gift, no matter the amount, it would be greatly appreciated.

Donor Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ ST: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Check here to have your name kept private in publications and acknowledgements.

Check here to have your e-mail address added to our "WMIF E-Alerts" List

**Payment Info:**

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Check Enclosed  
Payable to **West Maui Improvement Foundation**  
**Amount:**  \$25  \$50  \$365  Other \$\_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card (fill out information to the right.)

**Mail Checks, and Send Comments to:**  
West Maui Improvement Foundation  
PO Box 158 • Lahaina, HI 96761  
Phone: 808-661-7990  
Visit [www.WestMauiHospital.org](http://www.WestMauiHospital.org)

NWS13-06

**CHARGE MY CREDIT CARD –  
ALL INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR CREDIT CARD DONATIONS:**

**CARD TYPE**  Visa  MasterCard

**Amount:**  \$25  \$50  \$365  Other \$\_\_\_\_\_

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ ST: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_



## Transportation UPDATE by Bob Pure

The next Phase of the Lahaina Bypass, which will connect to the first Phase and become a true "bypass" is scheduled to be completed in the month of June. There are a series of construction and safety inspections currently underway and, barring any unforeseen problems, June is looking very good.

I have suggested to the DOT that they put up very clear signage on each end of the Bypass alerting motorists that the Bypass route will "bypass" all of Lahaina town so motorists will easily and quickly understand which road they want to take.

Landscaped median strip on the highway between Lahainaluna and Aholo: needs work and proper maintenance.....looking very shabby.....I have contacted the DOT and they have assured me that they are currently in the process of soliciting bids for a landscape contractor to maintain the beauty of the median strip. That contract should be for one year. At that time, that entire strip will be turned over to the County Dept. of Public Works for ongoing upkeep and maintenance.

Kapalua Airport: as you know, Island Air will no longer be servicing Kapalua as of May 31st. They will be purchasing larger 72 seat aircraft that will not "fit" the Kapalua runway so they will only be flying out of Kahului in the future. I have contacted the Executive Vice President of Hawaiian Airlines to discuss possible options Hawaiian would have in providing 40-50 seat turboprop service to Honolulu. In the conversations that we have had, I have been assured that Hawaiian is definitely interested in the Kapalua market.

Originally, Hawaiian's thinking was to supplement Island Air's service to Honolulu by offering service to Lanai and Molokai but now with Island Air pulling out, that thinking will be changed. As of right now, Hawaiian has already committed to two turboprops for Kapalua and they will now add a third. All will fly to Honolulu. These planes will have to go through a lengthy FAA approval process to certify them for Kapalua, but Hawaiian is confident they will be flying sometime before the end of the year. They said, at some point, they will be making a public announcement about their Kapalua service.

Those are the transportation highlights as of today. We'll keep you in the loop.



Aloha From:  WEST MAUI TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION

*Congratulations to the Graduates of  
Lahainaluna High School and  
Maui Preparatory Academy*

**MEMBERSHIP & TREASURERS REPORT** By Joe Pluta, Treasurer/President Emeritus, West Maui Taxpayers Association

The WMTA budget for the FY 2013-2014 year is prudently pegged at approximately \$26K. We exist on this meager budget at this time without an executive director and sharing fixed office and administrative expenses with our office partners and affiliates. It's been said that the Best things In Life are Free and that the Best things in Life are NOT Free...which seems to be a catch 22 situation. The article attached by past WMTA president Ron Kawahara illustrates why membership is a wise investment for you. Please continue to support WMTA membership and encourage your friends to join us. Mahalo.

**Personal Message from Former WMTA President Ron Kawahara** By Ron Kawahara

The impetus for the formation of the WMTA in 1974 was simply that West Maui contributed more than 60% of the real property tax revenues to Maui County. In turn, West Maui received less than 20% of the benefits. There were numerous infrastructure needs that went unanswered because of the small voting population and geographical distance. Another way of putting it is that West Maui had no political clout – for the most part, our decision makers resided in central Maui.

The importance of the WMTA cannot be overstated. One small example is that when I was President of the WMTA we undertook the herculean task of building a Napili Fire Station. At that time our community was rated a fire protection class 10 (unrated – the worst possible rating). Simply put, we were paying the highest insurance premiums of any area on Maui with the possible exceptions of small communities such as Hana. We lobbied long and unsuccessfully for the fire station. However, we were advised that a fire station in Napili was low on the list and that other communities deserved a higher priority. In addition, we were told that it would take more than 10 years to even address our need for a fire station. Fortunately, the WMTA Board, after much deliberation, decided that waiting 10 years was much too long and decided to do it ourselves, despite a lot of naysayers. The volunteer Board members lobbied nearly every condominium project and business for donations. The late Uwe Schulz was our volunteer architect. Our pitch was that if we were able to construct a fire station our protection class rating would drop to a 6. This meant that the savings in the insurance premiums would be recovered in 4 – 6 years. Well, we did it! In fact, the protection class dropped eventually to 4 with savings of well over 50% in insurance premiums.

We also took under our wings the fledgling Lahaina Town Action Committee headed by Theo Morrison who is now the Executive Director of the Lahaina Restoration Foundation. This organization was eventually spun-off with the LAC focusing on marketing Lahaina town and the WMTA focusing on infrastructure improvements.

If my recollection serves me, we also lobbied extensively during my entire tenure on the Board for the Lower Honoapiilani Road improvements; the Lahaina bypass highway; flood control projects and I'm sure many others that escape my memory. Charlie Nalepa was the ED at that time and the lower road improvements was always his biggest frustration.

I guess I'm writing this article because the WMTA needs financial help. I realize that people are not naturally joiners of community service organizations even though they know in some hazy fashion that they benefit from the work of others. This is not an indictment of our citizens, but a normal reaction to our stressful financial, work and family demands. There just isn't enough time to do everything. Well, we can all be a part of creating a better environment for our small community by becoming members of the WMTA. The annual fee is modest. More members mean more clout with the administration and council members!

Budgetary constraints means that we cannot afford a full-time Executive Director, administrative help, office expenses, insurance, utilities, etc. My educated guess is that the WMTA needs at least \$150,000 in annual donations to make a meaningful and sustained impact for our Ohana. Currently, your volunteer Board members do all the heavy lifting. Please help with your membership.

**West Maui Taxpayers Association**  
**MEMBERSHIP FORM - IRS EIN 99-0160368 NON PROFIT 501C (4)**

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ ST: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Check here to have your name kept private in publications and acknowledgements.

Check here to have your e-mail address added to our "WMTA E-Alerts" List

\$ _____ <b>MEMBERSHIP</b> <input type="checkbox"/> I am a member and renewing my dues <input type="checkbox"/> I <b>am not</b> a member but would like to join	<b>Membership Levels</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Individuals \$50.00/year <input type="checkbox"/> Families \$100/year <input type="checkbox"/> Businesses \$100/year <input type="checkbox"/> AOA – email <a href="mailto:wmta@maui.net">wmta@maui.net</a>
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\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **DONATION: In addition to my membership, here is an ADDITIONAL DONATION**

*Memberships effective for one year upon receipt of membership dues payment.*

**Mail Checks, payable to "West Maui Taxpayers Association", to:**  
West Maui Taxpayers Association PO Box 158 • Lahaina, HI 96761

NWS13-06

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**June , 2013**

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Email: [WMTA@maui.net](mailto:WMTA@maui.net)

Look for us on



and Twitter!



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for links.