

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Being good stewards of the public trust and promoting financial integrity are important goals in Dinwiddie County. The following broad policies set forth guidelines against which budgetary performance can be measured and proposals for future programs can be evaluated. The policies help to ensure that the County manages its funds in a fiscally responsible manner.

Objectives of Financial Policies

- To contribute significantly to the County's ability to insulate itself from fiscal crisis and promote long-term financial stability.
- To focus on the County's overall financial picture, while linking long-term financial planning to daily operations.
- To enhance financial credit ability by helping to achieve the highest possible credit and bond ratings.

Financial Planning Policies

Balanced Budget

The County shall prepare and approve an annual budget in compliance with sound financial practices, generally accepted accounting principles, and the provisions of the Code of Virginia which control the preparation, consideration, adoption, and execution of the County budget. The budget shall control the levy of taxes and the expenditure of money for all County purposes during the ensuing fiscal year. The County budget shall be balanced within all available operating revenues, including fund balance, and adopted by the Board of Supervisors at least seven days after an appropriately advertised public hearing is held and before July 1 of the upcoming fiscal year.

Long Range Planning

The County shall assess the long-term financial implications of current and proposed operating and capital budgets by annually preparing a three-year cash flow projection for the General Fund, Capital Projects Fund, and the Debt Service Funds.

In order to meet debt ratio targets, to schedule debt issuances, and to systematically improve the County's capital infrastructure, the County shall develop a ten-year Capital Improvement Plan which is reviewed and updated at least annually. Capital improvement projects funding options will be evaluated on a project-by-project basis. The County will attempt to determine the least costly and most flexible financing method for all new projects. As a general rule, the Capital Improvement Plan should not require an annual transfer from the unassigned General Fund balance of more than 5% of current general fund revenues to fund the pay-as-you-go portion of the current year of the Plan.

Asset Inventory

The County shall annually inventory and assess the condition of all major capital assets in conjunction with the preparation of the County budget and the Capital Improvement Plan.

Investments

The Treasurer has the constitutional responsibility to invest County funds in accordance with the applicable sections of the Code of Virginia which guide investment of public funds. The Treasurer, however, may restrict investments beyond the limits imposed by the Code if such restrictions serve the purpose of further safeguarding County funds or are in the best interests of the County. The investment goal is to minimize risk and to ensure the availability of cash to meet the County's expenditures, while generating revenue from the use of funds which might otherwise remain idle. Therefore, the primary objectives of the Treasurer's investment activities are safety, liquidity, and yield. The Treasurer will provide a cash and investment summary report to the Board of Supervisors on a quarterly basis that shows cash balances, investment holdings, interest earnings and any changes investment strategy.

Revenue Policies

Revenue Diversification

The County will strive to maintain a diversified and stable revenue system to shelter the government from fluctuations in any one revenue source and ensure its ability to provide ongoing service. The County intends for ongoing expenditures to be funded through ongoing revenues, not one-time revenue sources. One-time or other special revenues will not be used to finance continuing County operations, but instead will be used for special projects.

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Fees and Charges

All fees established by Dinwiddie County for licenses, permits, fines, services, applications, and other charges should be set to recover all or a portion of the County's expense in providing the attendant service. These fees shall be reviewed periodically.

Tax Collections

The County shall strive to achieve an overall property tax collection rate of 100%, utilizing all available resources for collecting delinquent accounts.

Restricted Revenues

Restricted revenues shall only be used for the purpose intended and in a fiscally responsible manner.

Grants, Donations, and Insurance Payments

Upon receiving notice of grant or program opportunities offered by various federal, state, local and other outside organizations, the County Administrator or his designee is designated as the agent:

- o To execute the necessary grant or program application and other documentation unless the terms of the grant or program require specific actions by the Board;
- o To give such assurances as may be required by the Agreement, subject to approval as to form by the county attorney;
- o To provide such additional information as may be required by the awarding organization. In addition, funding awarded and any interest earned on the funds awarded shall be appropriated to the applicable functional area.

Additional funds received for various County programs, including contributions and donations, shall be appropriated for the purpose established by each program.

Funds received through insurance claims for damages incurred to County property as a result of unusual or infrequent events shall be appropriated to the applicable functional area.

Expenditures Policies

Debt Capacity, Issuance, and Management

The County intends to manage cash in a fashion that will prevent any borrowing to meet daily operational needs. The County will confine long-term borrowing to capital improvements or projects that cannot be financed from current revenues except where approved justification is provided.

The County will utilize a balanced approach to capital project funding, using a combination of debt financing, draws on unassigned fund balance, and pay-as-you-go current year appropriations. Debt will be repaid within a period not to exceed the expected useful life of the project.

It is the County's intention to develop and update, at least annually, a Capital Improvement Funding Plan that identifies all funding sources for existing and proposed debt service and pay-go capital expenditures. As part of this Plan, the County will strive to provide a current year revenue appropriation for debt service that is consistent from year-to-year whereby excess funding resulting from declines in debt service payments will be carried forward to be applied to future debt service payments and/or other capital expenditures. This budgeting approach will help to create future debt and capital affordability and will provide budgeting consistency for debt and capital purposes.

For tax-supported debt, the net debt as a percentage of estimated market value of taxable property shall not exceed 5%. Net debt is defined as any and all debt that is tax-supported. The ratio of tax-supported debt service expenditures as a percentage of total governmental fund expenditures shall not exceed 10% with a minimum aggregate ten-year tax-supported payout ratio of 50%. Target debt ratios will be annually calculated and included in the review of financial trends. In the event that the County anticipates exceeding the policy requirements stated above, staff may request an exception from the Board of Supervisors stating the reason and length of time.

County staff and the financial advisor shall monitor the municipal bond market for opportunities to obtain interest savings by refunding outstanding debt. The County will seek to maintain its current bond ratings and comply with continuing disclosure of financial and pertinent credit information relevant to outstanding debt issues.

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Expenditure Accountability

The Deputy County Administrator–Finance and General Services shall maintain ongoing contact with department managers and Constitutional Officers throughout the budget implementation and execution process. Department managers and Constitutional Officers have the ability to review their expenditures at any time on the County’s on-line financial system. Monthly financial reports shall be prepared for the Board of Supervisors to monitor budgeted and actual expenditures and revenues.

The County shall appropriate as part of its annual budget, or any amendments thereto, amounts for salaries, expenses and other allowances for its Constitutional Officers that are not less than those established for such offices by the State Compensation Board.

Appropriation Amendments and Transfers

Appropriation amendments to the operating budget shall be brought before the Board of Supervisors for approval throughout the fiscal year. Per the Code of Virginia, any additional appropriation which exceeds 1% of the total expenditures shown in the currently adopted budget must be accomplished by publishing a notice of a meeting and a public hearing once in a general circulation newspaper at least seven days prior to the meeting date. The notice shall state the Board’s intent to amend the budget and include a brief synopsis of the proposed budget amendment. The amendment may be adopted at the meeting after the public hearing.

The County Administrator shall be authorized to transfer funds and personnel from time to time within and between the offices and activities delineated in the County budget as he may deem in the best interests of the County in order to carry out the work of the County as approved by the Board of Supervisors.

All appropriations lapse on June 30 of each fiscal year for all budgets.

Fund Balance Policy

Dinwiddie County follows GASB Statement #54 which establishes the five components of fund balance listed below.

Non-Spendable Fund Balance

Non-spendable fund balance includes amounts that cannot be spent because they are either not in spendable form such as inventories and prepaid expenditures or they are legally or contractually required to be maintained intact.

Restricted Fund Balance

Restricted fund balance includes amounts that have constraints placed on their use by external sources such as creditors, grantors, contributors, laws or regulations of other governments or imposed by law through constitutional provisions or enabling legislation.

Committed Fund Balance

Committed fund balance includes amounts that can only be used for specific purposes pursuant to constraints imposed by formal action of the highest level of decision making authority – the Board of Supervisors. Formal Board action includes the annual adoption of the County’s budget resolution and the approval of other Board resolutions appropriating funds and/or resources throughout the fiscal year. Board resolutions that impose fund balance limitations would need to occur no later than the close of the fiscal year and remain binding unless removed by additional Board resolutions.

Assigned Fund Balance

Assigned fund balance includes amounts that are constrained by the government’s intent to be used for specific purposes but are neither restricted nor committed. Fund balance may be assigned either through the encumbrance process as a result of normal purchasing activity or by the County Administrator or his designee.

Unassigned Fund Balance

The larger the unassigned general fund balance, the greater the County’s ability to cope with financial emergencies, fluctuations in revenues, and to maintain bond rating agencies’ expectations. The County does not intend to establish a trend of using the unassigned general fund balance to finance current operations.

The County has established an unassigned general fund balance target rate of at least 15% of total budgeted expenditures less annual debt service payments and bonds proceeds expenditures. Funds in excess of the targeted 15% fund balance may be considered to supplement “pay as you go” capital outlay expenditures, other non-recurring expenditures or as additions to fund balance. The Board of Supervisors may, from time-to-time, appropriate unassigned fund balances that will reduce available fund balances below the 15% policy in the case of a declared fiscal emergency or other such global

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purpose as to protect the long-term fiscal security of the County. In such circumstances, the Board will adopt a plan to restore the fund balance to the policy level within 36 months of the appropriation.

Policy on the Order of Spending Resources

When expenditures are incurred for purposes for which committed, assigned or unassigned amounts are available, the County considers committed fund balance to be spent first, assigned fund balance second, and lastly unassigned fund balance.