

Lowndes County Board of Commissioners Budget and Equity Reserve Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide general guidelines for the operations of the Finance Department relating to budgeting and equity reserves. The adoption of an operating budget is one of the County's most important activities and is subject to Georgia Code Section 36-81-7.

A budget calendar for the subsequent budget year shall be presented to the Board of Commissioners ~~prior to January 15 of each year~~ at the start of each budget cycle. The calendar shall include specific tasks required to prepare the budget and completion dates for those tasks.

The County will utilize a decentralized operating budget process. All departments and constitutional officers provide to the Finance Department requests for personnel, goods, capital, and services necessary to meet the operational objectives of the budget period. Each shall submit a budget for "current services," "expanded services," and "expanded service-not carried forward."

Special, one-time revenues shall be used to purchase non-recurring items and shall not be used to support the long-term operations. Special revenue funds are limited to the mandates of the funding source and are not to be used to subsidize other funds unless specifically allowable under the program regulations.

Annual budgets shall be adopted for the general fund, special revenue funds, enterprise funds, and debt service funds. Project budgets shall be adopted for capital project funds. Trust and agency funds achieve budgetary control through stipulations in the trust agreements; therefore, budgets are not adopted for these funds.

The budget for each fund must be balanced. Anticipated revenues and unreserved fund balance must equal or exceed anticipated expenditures.

It is the objective of the County to maintain an unreserved fund balance for the general fund to pay expenditures from unforeseen emergencies, for shortfalls caused by revenue declines and to eliminate any short-term borrowing for cash flow purposes. The County shall strive to maintain this unreserved fund balance at a level equivalent to ~~three month's~~ one quarter's expenditures (120 days).

Lowndes County
Ref. No. 2000-0006-a
December 13, 2000

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