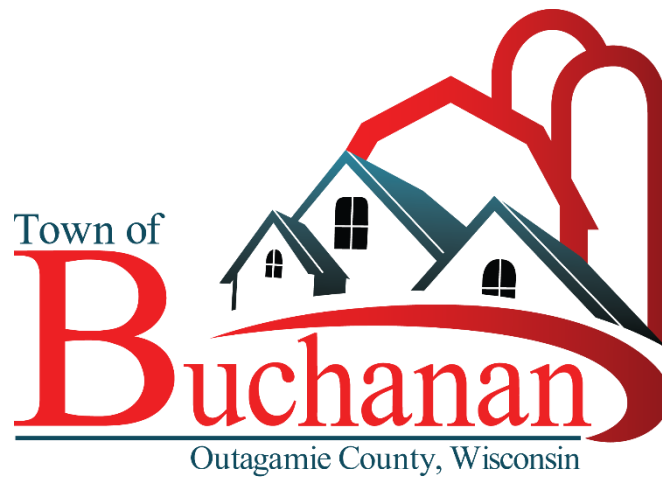


Town of Buchanan

N178 County Road N

Appleton, WI 54915

Town of Buchanan Budget and Financial Policies



Adopted by Town Board: March 16, 2010

INTRODUCTION

The financial policies of the Town of Buchanan establish a framework for the overall fiscal management of the Town. They are guidelines that have been established by the Town Board and should be followed when making financial decisions impacting the future of the Town. These policies may be updated by the Town in the future as necessary.

The purpose for these policies are:

- To improve the Town's fiscal position.
- To provide a consistent framework for financial decision making in lieu of changes in elected or appointed officials.
- To improve credibility and confidence among residents, taxpayers, and investors in the financial management of the Town.

OPERATIONS BUDGET POLICIES

ANNUAL BUDGET PROCESS

The Town will prepare an annual budget based on generally accepted accounting principles. Department heads (Fire Chief, EMS Chief, Outagamie County Sheriff, etc.), with assistance from the Town Administrator/Clerk, will be responsible for preparation of their annual capital and operating budgets. The Town Administrator/Clerk is responsible for creating the budget and presenting to the Town Board for review and approval.

The Town Board will adopt the annual budget at a special meeting held for that purpose in mid-November, following a public hearing and following all procedures as required by state statute.

DEVELOPMENT PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy for Town budget development includes the following guides:

- The Town will utilize information contained in the comprehensive plan, emergency operations plan, strategic plan, and any other planning documents for support of budget priorities.
- The Town will strive to ensure that Town service priorities keep pace with the needs of the community by incorporating a needs review as part of the budget process.
- Quality programs and services will be offered by the Town of Buchanan. If expenditure reductions are necessary, program or service elimination is preferable to poor or marginal quality programs.
- As much as reasonably possible, Town services that provide private benefit should be supported in whole or in part by fees and charges.

AUDIT

An annual audit will be performed by an independent public accounting firm which will issue an opinion on the annual financial statements of the Town.

BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS AND BALANCES

BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

Mid-year adjustments within budgeted accounts of a department may be made by department heads that have advised the Town Administrator/Clerk accordingly. Budget amendments, which change a budget appropriation or are transfers between departments must be approved by a 2/3 majority of the Town Board. As necessary, typically at the end of the year, the Administrator/Clerk may also present to the Board needed budget adjustments to maintain a balanced budget at year end.

UNCOMPLETED PROJECTS OR APPROPRIATIONS

Any projects which are still considered open or uncompleted at year end shall be presented to the Board at the last meeting held in December by the Town Administrator/Clerk or during the budget approval process. The Board shall determine if funds will be designated for the following year to complete the open or uncompleted project.

All appropriations lapse at year end and, unless reserved for a specified use, are transferred into the undesignated fund balance. Appropriations which lapse at year end due to increases in efficiency or changes in services, or projects that result in a new cost savings, shall be recognized by the Town Board. Savings shall be used in future years to the benefit of the department which developed the savings if feasible.

BUDGET REPORTING

A statement of bills and a summary report of account balances shall be provided to the Board at its monthly meeting for approval. Year to date reports comparing actual to budgeted expenditures will be provided to the Town Board upon request and provided to department heads bi-monthly or quarterly.

DONATIONS

Donations accepted by the Town for a specified purpose shall be used exclusively for that purpose. For example, a donation made to Buchanan Fire & Rescue for purchase of a specific piece of equipment shall only be used for that purpose or the donation shall not be accepted.

COLLATERALIZATION

The Town shall maintain full collateralization of all Town accounts throughout the year unless authorization is granted by the Town Board. The Town may seek to collateralize accounts through the use of collateral agreements with financial institutions or through diversification of accounts at several institutions. Any collateral agreement shall be approved by the Town Board.

PURCHASING POLICY

The Town shall maintain a Purchasing Policy as a supplement to these Budget and Financial Policies which shall be reviewed and updated as necessary and provide further detail on expenditure approvals.

DEBT POLICY

OBJECTIVE

The Town shall strive to maintain a balanced relationship financing its capital improvements through utilization of current revenues and issuance of long term debt. The Town recognizes that access to capital markets over the long term is dependent upon the Town's commitment to full and timely repayment of debt.

POLICY

The Town may issue bonds and notes for purposes of financing its capital improvements or to refund existing debt. The Town will not use long term debt for financing current operations.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- 1) The Town shall assess the fiscal impact of the debt prior to issuance.
- 2) The length of term of borrowing should not exceed the useful life of the assets or projects for which funding will be used.
- 3) General obligation debt shall not exceed Wisconsin State statute limitations of 5% of equalized valuation. The Town shall also set a self-imposed limit of 75% of the statutory limit as the ceiling for general obligation debt.
- 4) Total annual debt service payments on tax-supported debt of the Town will not exceed 25% of total general government operating revenue.
- 5) The Town shall not incur debt obligations which have variable interest rates, negative amortization, unusual deferred principal payment or other risky attributes.

REFUNDING

Periodic reviews of outstanding debt by Town staff shall be undertaken to determine refunding opportunities. Refunding may be considered by the Town Board if it appears there may be a net economic benefit. In general, refunding for savings may be undertaken when the present value of future annual debt service savings net of issuance cost amount to at least 3% of the refunded debt.

DISCLOSURE

The Town is committed to transparent financial disclosure, and to cooperating fully with rating agencies, institutional investors, other units of government, and the general public, in order to share clear, comprehensible, and accurate financial information. The Town Administrator/Clerk or designee shall provide continuing disclosure in compliance with any continuing disclosure certifications that may be made at the time of each debt issuance.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN POLICY

POLICY

The Town shall create and maintain a five year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to plan for and finance Town capital projects. As necessary, longer term CIPs may be created.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- 1) The CIP will be reviewed and updated annually.

- 2) Where feasible, the Town shall use all sources of revenue available before using local property tax funds or borrowing. Department heads are encouraged to apply for any private, state or federal funding sources available to leverage local property taxes.
- 3) Expenditures and funding sources shall be so arranged as to smooth out the property tax rate, therein avoiding significant fluctuations in property tax rates from year to year.
- 4) The use of special assessment shall be in conformance with the Town's Special Assessment Policy.
- 5) Under no circumstances shall the Town install public improvements for private development without fully securing the financial interests of the Town.
- 6) The CIP will generally be financed on a "pay-as-you-go" basis. However, the need to finance major expenditures by borrowing will be reviewed as necessary and consistent with the Debt Policy. The decision to use current financial resources or to borrow will be based on the following factors:
 - a. Type of Project – The projected useful life of the project will be the determinant. The longer life of the project, the greater justification for borrowing.
 - b. Cost of Project – The larger the cost of the project, the greater justification for borrowing.
 - c. Funding Source – The degree of certainty that exists on the future level and availability of a particular funding source is a factor.
 - d. Fund Availability – If adequate fund balances are available, there is less justification for borrowing.
 - e. Bond Market – Status of the market condition, i.e., interest rates and terms.

FUND BALANCE POLICY

OBJECTIVE

A formal policy governing the purpose and parameters of an undesignated/unreserved general fund balance and/or contingency fund (hereafter referred to as the undesignated fund balance) is an effective financial management tool. A formally adopted policy helps eliminate ambiguity regarding the proper amount to maintain in the undesignated fund balances.

DEFINITION

The General Fund is the general operating fund of the Town. It is used to account for all financial resources except those accounted for in segregated funds. The undesignated fund balance is the portion of the General Fund not assigned to a defined purpose. Currently the Town also sets aside funds in a defined account referred to as the Contingency Fund.

POLICY

To preserve working funds for cash flow purposes and adequately prepare for unforeseen events which require ready access to funds, it is the policy of the Town to maintain a minimum undesignated fund balance and/or contingency equal to 15% to 25% of the operating budget. Limited budgeting for contingencies should therefore be included in department budgets.

Any appropriation from the undesignated fund balance or contingency fund requires a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Town Board.

PROCEDURE

The Town Administrator/Clerk shall annually review the levels of the undesignated fund balance and contingency fund to ensure that appropriate levels are maintained.

FORMULA

The formula for computing the fund balance percentage is as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Current Year Undesignated Fund Balance}}{\text{Current Year Total Budget} \text{ (Less capital outlay and debt service)}} = \% \text{ of Fund Balance}$$

INVESTMENT POLICY

OBJECTIVE

To establish a uniform policy governing the investment of operating funds of the Town of Buchanan.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Town of Buchanan to invest public funds in a manner that will provide the highest investment return consistent with the protection of principle while meeting the daily cash flow demands of the Town. The Town shall conform to all applicable legal requirements governing the investment of public funds.

INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE

The primary objectives, in priority order, of the Town of Buchanan investment activities shall be:

- 1) Safety. Investments of the Town shall be undertaken in a manner that seeks to ensure the preservation of capital.
- 2) Liquidity. Town investments will remain sufficiently liquid to enable the Town to meet all operating requirements that might be reasonably anticipated.
- 3) Return on Investments. Town investments shall seek a high rate of return commensurate with the objectives of safety and liquidity.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

Management responsibility for the investment of funds is hereby delegated to the Town Administrator/Clerk and Town Deputy Clerk with oversight by the Town Board.

ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Officers and employees involved in the investment process shall refrain from personal business activity that could conflict with proper execution of the investment program, or which could impair their ability to make impartial investment decisions.

AUTHORIZED AND SUITABLE INVESTMENTS

The investment of Town funds shall be in accordance with Wisconsin statutes. As practicable, investment amounts are limited to the maximum of state and FDIC insurance limits for each institution unless collateralized.

- Certificates of Deposit (CD). Town funds may be invested in a CD at any financial institution authorized as a public depository for the Town.
- Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP). Town funds may be invested in the Wisconsin Local Government Investment Pool.
- U.S. Treasury obligations which carry the full faith and credit guarantee of the United States government.
- Money Market and Savings Deposit. Town funds may be invested in interest bearing checking, savings and money market accounts provided by a Town approved public depository.

Appendix C: Capital Improvement Plan Project Summary Reports

- Projects by Year and Priority
- Projects by Funding Source
 - All projects listed by their source of funding.
- Projects by Department
 - Total expenditures for each project listed by department.

Appendix D: Capital Improvement Plan Project Detail Reports

Provided are project detail reports for all projects which include expenditures in fiscal years 2018 to 2022.