

Prineville City Council Meeting November 18, 2014

Staff Report

Topic: Consideration to Amend the City of Prineville's Fiscal Policies

Department: Finance Department

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OVERVIEW

In fiscal year 2007, the City Council adopted fiscal policies into the budget deliberation process which are reviewed and updated as needed.

In 2009, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) issued Statement No. 54, *Fund Balance Reporting and Governmental Fund Type Definitions*. It was required to have this implemented by the financial reporting period for FY 2011. These components to fund balance reporting and definitions have been in our financial reports since that time.

Prior to GASB Statement No. 54, our definitions for fund balance were: reserved fund balance, unreserved fund balance and designated fund balance. GASB found these definitions to be frequently misunderstood and applied inconsistently in practice for governments. This resulted in Statement No. 54 which clarifies and further defines fund balance that the city has practiced since 2011 as follows:

- ✓ Nonspendable Fund Balance
- ✓ Restricted Fund Balance
- ✓ Committed Fund Balance
- ✓ Assigned Fund Balance
- ✓ Unassigned Fund Balance

Meanwhile, the city has been implementing this method since 2011, our new auditors Pauley Rodgers suggests that we also recognize this within our fiscal policies. However, since circumstances differ among governments, not every government or governmental fund will include all of these components.

The last update to the fiscal policies was in June, 2013 with the adoption of Resolution No. 1216.

RECOMMENDATION

As reviewed by the Finance Committee on October 28th, 2014 staff recommends the Council review and consider updating the City of Prineville Fiscal Policies to include the definition of the different fund balances components listed above.

Attachments:

“A” – Fiscal Policy with Recommended Edits

**City of Prineville
Fiscal Policies**

EXHIBIT A

Purpose

The City of Prineville is committed to responsible fiscal management through financial integrity, prudent stewardship of public assets, planning, accountability and full disclosure. The broad purpose of the Fiscal Policies is to enable the City to achieve and maintain a long-term stable and positive financial condition. These policies are adopted by the City Council as the basic framework for overall financial management of the City, to guide day-to-day and long-range fiscal planning and decision making, and to achieve the following general financial goals:

1. Provide an adequate financial base to sustain the desired level of municipal services to maintain the social wellbeing and physical conditions of the City.
2. Deliver cost effective and efficient services to citizens.
3. Provide and maintain essential public facilities, utilities, and capital equipment.
4. Protect and enhance the City's credit rating so as to obtain the lowest cost of borrowing and assure taxpayers and the financial community that the City is well managed and financially sound.
5. Provide the financial stability needed to navigate through economic downturns, adjust to changes in the service requirements of the community and respond to other changes as they affect the City's residents and businesses.
6. Adhere to the highest standards of financial management and reporting practices as set by the Government Finance Officers Association, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board and other professional standards.
7. Fully comply with finance related legal mandates, laws and regulations.

To achieve these goals, fiscal policies generally cover areas of revenue management, operating and capital budgeting, financial planning and forecasting, investment and asset management, debt management, pension funding, accounting and financial reporting, reserves and internal controls. These policies are reviewed annually by management, the Finance Committee, and City Council and amended as necessary, as part of the budget process.

Policies are addressed in ten areas:

- **Revenue**, which deals with taxes, user fees and other revenues by which the city generates income to fund programs and services.
- **Operating expenditures**, which relates to budgeting guidelines.
- **Expenditure control**, which addresses the City's efforts to ensure spending is consistent with the City's fiscal plans.
- **Capital equipment and improvements**, which relates to establishing a 5-year capital equipment and improvement plans for all major equipment and infrastructure systems provided and maintained by the city.
- **Accounting and financial reporting**, which relates to accounting and reporting financial transactions and preparing financial reports.
- **Financial planning**, addresses longer term financial forecasting to help inform decisions.
- **Debt**, which addresses long-term financing of the city's capital needs and maintaining its bond rating.
- **Pension funding**, addresses the short- and long-term funding policies of the City's pension obligations.
- **Reserves**, establishes minimum working capital balances, required reserves and operating contingency as needed for routine cash flow and responding to unexpected expenditures or increases in service delivery costs.
- **Management of fiscal policy**, sets forth the administration of fiscal policies on a continuing basis.

1 Revenue Policies

1.1. The City will strive for and maintain diversified and stable revenue sources to prevent undue or unbalanced reliance on any one source of funds. Revenue diversity will also reduce risk to the City from short-term fluctuations in any one revenue source.

1.2. Significant one-time and or temporary revenues will not be used to fund continuing programs and services, but rather to fund one-time expenditures or fund reserves.

1.3. The maximum allowable system development charges (SDCs), for each of the public infrastructure systems the City operates and is allowed by state law to impose, shall be determined on a periodic basis (approximately each five years).

1.3.1. The Council will determine what amount of SDCs to impose.

1.4. The City will maximize the use of users' charges in lieu of ad valorem taxes and subsidies from other City funds, for services that can be identified and where costs are directly related to the level of service provided.

1.4.1. Charges for providing utility services shall be sufficient to finance all operating, capital outlay and debt service expenses of the City's enterprise funds, including operating contingency, reserve requirements, and capital replacement. Consideration will be given to return on investment and existing and or anticipated debt to insure a debt coverage ratio of no less than 1.25 for debt issued in public markets and 1.1 for debt issued to federal and state agencies.

1.4.2. User charges shall be sufficient to finance all City costs to perform development review and building activities. User charges include, but are not limited to, land use, engineering inspection, building permit and building inspection fees.

1.4.3. Other reimbursable work performed by the City (labor, meals, contracted services, equipment and other indirect expenses) shall be billed at total actual or estimated total actual cost.

1.4.4. Charges for services shall accurately reflect the total actual or estimated total cost of providing a

specific service. The cost of providing specific services shall be recalculated periodically, and the fee adjusted accordingly. The City shall maintain a current schedule of fees, indicating when the fees were last reviewed and/or recalculated.

1.5. The City shall pursue an aggressive policy of collecting delinquent accounts. When necessary, discontinuing service, small claims court, collection agencies, foreclosure, liens and other methods of collection, such as imposing penalties, collection and late charges, may be used.

1.6. The City Manager shall approve all grant applications before their submission. Additionally, all potential grants that require matching funds, on-going resource requirements, or include new or additional continuing compliance requirements shall be evaluated and considered before submittal of the application. The City Council will be provided the evaluation with the request for their acceptance of the grant.

1.7. Revenues will be estimated realistically and prudently. Revenues of a volatile nature will be estimated conservatively. The City will estimate its revenues by an objective, analytical process using best practices as defined by the Government Finance Officers Association.

2 Operating Budget Policies

2.1 The City will prepare an annual budget with the participation of all departments that incorporates GFOA recommendations relative to budgeting for results and outcomes..

2.1.1 Determine how much money is available. The budget should be built on expected revenues. This includes base revenues, any new revenue sources, and the potential use of fund balance.

2.1.2 Conduct analysis to determine what strategies, programs, and activities will best achieve desired results.

2.1.3 Budget available dollars to the most significant programs and

activities. The objective is to maximize the benefit of the available resources.

2.1.4 The City shall maintain a budget system to monitor expenditures and revenues on a monthly basis, with a thorough analysis and adjustment (if required) at least at mid-year.

2.2 All budgetary procedures will conform to existing state regulations. Oregon budget law requires each local government to prepare a balanced budget and Oregon Administrative Rules state: 1) the budget must be constructed in such a manner that the total resources in a fund equal the total of expenditures and requirements for that fund, and 2) the total of all resources of the entity must equal the total of all expenditures and all requirements for the entity.

2.3 The budget process will be coordinated so that major policy issues and department goals and objectives are identified and incorporated into the budget.

2.4 The cost allocation plan, previously developed, will be reviewed annually and serve as the basis for distributing general government and internal service costs to other funds and capital projects.

2.5 The City Council shall adopt the budget at the fund, departmental or program level as a total dollar amount for all appropriations except contingency, unappropriated ending fund balance and reserves, which shall be stated separately.

2.6 Long-term debt or bond financing shall only be used for the acquisition of capital improvements or specialized equipment with a cost greater than \$100,000. Long-term debt or bond financing shall not be used to finance current operating expenditures.

2.7 Every City fund, department, program or activity shall start each year's budget cycle with no predetermined appropriation amount. Budget appropriation decisions and the allocation of resources shall be based on direction provided by the City Council and implementation of that direction by the City Manager.

2.8 The City will submit the Adopted Budget Document to the Government Finance Officer's Association (GFOA) to obtain the Award for Distinguished Budget Presentation.

2.9 A budget calendar will be prepared detailing the key elements in the development of the budget. (Please see exhibit 1).

3 Expenditure Control Policies

3.1 Expenditures will be controlled through appropriate internal controls and procedures. Management must ensure expenditures comply with the legally adopted budget. Each Department or Division Manager or Director will be responsible for the administration of his/her department/division budget. This includes accomplishing the goals and objectives incorporated into the budget and monitoring each department/division budget for compliance with spending limitations.

3.2 The City Manager will administer expenditure control at the category level and program or divisional level. Additionally, the City Manager may give authorization to mandate this level of control down to any line item level. Expenditures anticipated to be in excess of these levels require approval of the City Manager, or Finance Director. Any increase in a budget category anticipated to exceed \$50,000 will require City Council approval.

3.3 All purchases of goods and services must comply with the City's Purchasing Policies, guidelines and procedures and with State laws and regulations.

3.4 All compensation planning and collective bargaining will include analyses of total cost of compensation, which includes analysis of salary increases, health benefits, pension contributions, and other fringe benefits. The City will only propose operating personnel costs that can be supported by continuing operating revenues.

3.5 City staff are to make every effort to control expenditures to ensure City services and programs provided to its citizens and taxpayers are cost effective and efficient. Expenditures that will reduce future costs will be encouraged.

4 Capital Improvement Policies

4.1 Annually, the City will approve a 5-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), congruent with the adoption of its annual budget. The CIP shall provide details on each capital project: its estimated costs, sources of financing and a description, including a statement identifying: (a) the needs, conditions and circumstances that have caused the project's creation and (b) the expected results if the project is approved and implemented.

5 Accounting and Financial Reporting Policies

5.1 The City shall establish and maintain its accounting systems according to generally accepted accounting practices and shall adhere to generally accepted accounting principles and standards promulgated by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) and Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB).

5.2 Consistent with GASB Statement 54 the City will report fund balance in the following categories:

5.2.1 *Restricted* fund balance includes amounts that can be spent only for the specific purposes stipulated by the City Charter, external resource providers, or through enabling legislation.

5.2.2 *Committed* fund balance classification includes amounts that can be used only for the specific purposes determined by a formal action of the City Council.

5.2.3 *Assigned* fund balance classification is intended to be used by the City for specific purposes but do not meet the criteria to be classified as restricted or committed. In governmental funds other than

the general fund, assigned fund balance represents the remaining amount that is not restricted or committed.

5.2.4 *Unassigned* fund balance is the residual classification for the City's general fund and includes all spendable amounts not contained in the other classifications. In other funds, the unassigned classification will be used only to report a deficit balance resulting from overspending for specific purposes for which amounts had been restricted, committed, or assigned.

5.2.5 The City will disclose information about the processes through which constraints are imposed on amounts in the committed and assigned classifications.

5.3 An annual audit shall be performed by an independent public accounting firm, which will issue an opinion on the annual financial statements, along with a management letter identifying areas needing improvement, if necessary.

5.4 Full disclosure shall be provided in the financial statements and bond representations.

5.4.1 Upon request, all departments will provide notice of all significant events and financial and related matters to the Finance Director for the City's annual disclosures to the municipal markets as required by SEC Regulation 15-C-2-12. Full disclosure will be provided in the financial statements and bond representations. Significant events include delinquencies and defaults related to the City's bonds, adverse tax opinions or events affecting the tax exempt status of bonds, the release, substitutions or sale of property securing repayment of bonds and other events having a significant impact on the City's finances and outstanding

bonds. The Finance Director will notify all Nationally Recognized Municipal Securities Information Repositories of these significant events.

- 5.4.2 The City's asset capitalization policy is to capitalize and depreciate assets greater than \$10,000 with a useful life beyond one year. Capital assets costing less than \$10,000 or having a useful life of one year or less will be treated as operating expenditures.

5.5 Up-to-date accounting and budgeting information is available online to all management and authorized support staff. Quarterly actual-to-budget reports showing the current status of revenues and expenditures shall be prepared and distributed to appropriate legislative, staff and management personnel in a timely manner and made available for public inspection.

6 Financial Planning Policies

- 6.1 The Finance Department, collaborating with other departments, will prepare a long-term financial plan for each fund, phased in so that all funds are planned by June 30, 2015, to promote responsible planning for the use of resources. The long-term financial plans will include projected revenues, expenditures and reserve balances for the next five years for all funds, except the golf course fund, which shall include a ten-year financial plan, and the water and wastewater funds, which shall include twenty-year financial plans.
- 6.2 The City's financial plan should be strategic, reflecting the City Council and community priorities for service while providing resources that fund desired service levels.
- 6.3 Long-term projections of revenues and expenditures will be based upon disclosed assumptions, and prepared consistent with best practices

established by the Government Finance Officers Association.

- 6.4 The long-term financial plans will be integral to the development of the annual budget.

7 Debt Policy

7.1 The City may use debt proceeds to finance costs associated with capital infrastructure, equipment, vehicles and other purposes that provide long-term benefits to the community, i.e., benefits that extend more than one year.

7.2 Capital projects financed through the issuance of bonds shall not be financed for a period which (a) exceeds the expected useful life of the project and (b) is less than 30% of the expected useful life of the improvements.

7.3 Financing for non-capital purposes shall not extend beyond the amortization period available for the respective type of obligation, e.g., retirement unfunded liabilities include an amortization period of twenty-five years.

7.4 The Finance Director will structure all debt issuances and oversee the on-going management of all City debt. Debt includes general obligation bonds, lease purchase obligations, revenue bonds, special assessment obligations, promissory notes, equipment financing agreements and any other contractual arrangements that obligate the City to make future principal and interest payments.

7.5 No debt shall be issued for which the City has not identified specific revenue sources sufficient for repayment. Such revenue sources can include internal sources, such as charges to personnel costs, that are transferred to a debt service fund for debt repayment. The Finance Director shall prepare an analysis of the source of repayment prior to issuance of any debt.

7.6 The City will not use long-term debt to fund current operations, to balance the budget or to fund projects that can be funded from current resources, unless the use of debt is otherwise determined to be in the best interest of the City.

7.7 The City may utilize short-term debt or inter-fund loans as permitted, to cover temporary cash flow deficiencies due to timing of cash flows, such as may result from delay in receipting grant proceeds or other revenues and delay in issuance of long-term debt.

7.8 When issuing long-term debt, the City will ensure that the debt is soundly financed by:

7.8.1 Incurring debt only when necessary for capital improvements too large to be financed from current available resources,

7.8.2 Insuring that capital projects financed through long-term debt shall be financed for a period not to exceed the useful life of the project,

7.8.3 Determining that the benefits of the project financed exceed the cost of financing including interest costs,

7.8.4 Analyzing the source of repayment, debt coverage ratios and the impact of debt service on annual fixed costs prior to issuance of long-term debt.

7.9 All bond issuances, promissory notes, and capital leases will be authorized by resolution of the City Council.

7.10 The City shall maintain its bond rating at the highest level fiscally prudent, so that future borrowing costs are minimized and access to the credit market is preserved.

8 Pension Funding Policies

8.1 The City participates as an Individual Employer in the Oregon Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). The will use its best efforts to fund its pension obligations in an equitable and sustainable manner. The following principles and objectives shall guide the City:

8.1.1 PERS provides no less than biennially an actuarially determined contribution rate (ADC) to serve as the basis for minimum contributions;

8.1.2 Although the PERS ADC is calculated in a manner that fully funds the long-term costs of promised benefits, while balancing the goals of 1) keeping contributions relatively stable and 2) equitably allocating the costs over the employees¹ period of active service; financial impacts due to significant compensation in the last three years above historical earnings may not be;

8.1.2.1 The City will consider implementation of a PERS rate stabilization plan to more equitably fund PERS costs on a sustainable basis, with a goal of ensuring its funding status is between ninety and one-hundred ten percent (90%-110%) of its actuarially determined liability.

8.1.3 The City commits to fund the full amount of the ADC each period, together with contributions consistent with an approved PERS rate stabilization plan.

8.1.4 To continue the City's accountability and transparency the City will communicate all of the information necessary for assessing the City's progress toward meeting its pension funding objectives periodically, but no less than annually.

9 Reserve Policies

9.1 The City shall maintain adequate working capital reserves in all funds.

9.1.1 The general fund shall maintain sufficient working capital to allow the City to adequately fund operations until property taxes are received in November

- of each year, without borrowing.
- 9.1.2 The City's utility funds shall maintain at a minimum working capital balance sufficient for sixty days operating expenses, together with an adequate emergency repair reserve and required debt service reserves.
- 9.1.3 The City's internal service funds shall maintain at a minimum working capital balance sufficient for thirty days operating expenses and any required debt service reserves.
- 9.1.4 The City's debt service funds shall maintain adequate working capital to pay required debt service without borrowing and fund required debt service reserves.
- 9.1.5 The City's other operating funds shall maintain a minimum working capital balance sufficient for forty-five days operating expenses and any required debt service reserves.
- 9.1.6 The City shall establish a contingency budget to provide for unanticipated expenditures of a nonrecurring nature. The contingency shall be a minimum of five percent (5%) of a fund's operating and capital expenditure estimates for the fiscal year. This policy does not apply to debt service, internal service, trust and agency, capital projects, serial levy, temporary or certain special purpose funds.
- 9.2 The City may use reserves on a one-time or temporary basis for purposes described above. In the event that reserve funds are presently or decrease to levels below the levels desired by this policy, the City will develop a plan to restore reserves to the desired levels.

adopted by resolution after a public hearing is held (the approval may be inclusive of the annual budget adoption process and the associated resolutions to that process).

10.1.1 The City Manager or designee shall prepare a report explaining the substantive impact of all recommendations and their impact on the City's operations, service levels and/or finances.

10.1.2 The Finance/Audit Committee shall review the City's fiscal policies annually.

10.2 The City Manager shall implement fiscal policies and monitor compliance.

10.2.1 If the City Manager discovers a material deviation from policy, he/she shall report it in writing to the City Council in a timely manner.

10.2.2 As a part of the City's annual budget document, the City Manager's budget message shall identify: (a) all major changes in policy since the previous budget year and (b) any material variations from policy in the ensuing year's budget.

10 Management of Fiscal Policy

10.1 Fiscal policies and changes in policies shall be approved by the City Council and

Definition of Terms

Budget Committee – is a committee consisting of the mayor and six city councilors and an equal number of citizen members appointed by the city council.

Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) – is the national finance officers organization whose purpose is to enhance and promote the professional management of governments for the public benefit by identifying and developing financial policies and best practices and promoting their use through education, training, facilitation of member networking, and leadership.

Category level – for budget control purposes, categories include personal services, materials and services, capital outlay, debt service, transfers, contingency, reserves and unappropriated.

Program level – for budget control purposes, programs may include library services, community services, administration, finance, human resources, etc.

Divisional level – for budget control purposes, divisional level would include water, street, storm water, and wastewater divisions within the public works department. Other divisions may include the police field services, police administration, and police support services within the police department.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) – The CIP is a schedule of capital projects including estimated cost and timing. There is a separate CIP for each major infrastructure system in the City, e.g., water, streets, sidewalks, storm water, wastewater, information technology, City facilities and vehicles.

Debt Coverage Ratio (DCR) – represents the ratio of “net revenues” available to pay scheduled debt service. A ratio of 1.0 reflects “net revenues” equal to scheduled debt service. A ratio greater than 1.0 reflects “net revenues” in excess of scheduled debt services and a ratio less than 1.0 indicates “net revenue” is less than scheduled debt service.

Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) – Oregon’s compilation of state laws including rules of civil procedure.