

RESOLUTION NO. 09-15

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE CITY OF SCAPPOOSE FINANCIAL POLICIES AND INTERNAL CONTROLS DOCUMENT.

WHEREAS, the City of Scappoose has a responsibility to ensure it handles public funds appropriately; and

WHEREAS, written, adopted financial policies and internal controls have many benefits in assisting Council with the financial management of the City; and

WHEREAS, the auditing firm for the City has recommended that Council adopt financial and internal control policies that promote sound financial management practices designed to meet Council's goals and objectives; and

WHEREAS, staff has prepared a City of Scappoose Financial Policies and Internal Control document that outlines procedures, safeguards, and internal controls for public fund management; and

WHEREAS, the City of Scappoose Financial Policies and Internal Control document, attached hereto as Exhibit A, has been reviewed by the City Attorney.


NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Scappoose Financial Policies and Internal Control document, attached hereto as Attachment A, is hereby adopted.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Scappoose City Council and signed by me, and the City Recorder, in authentication of its passage this 3rd day of August, 2009.

CITY OF SCAPPOOSE, OREGON



Scott Burge, Mayor

Attest: 

Susan M. Reeves, CMC
City Recorder



City of Scappoose

Financial Policies and Internal Controls

The financial integrity of our City government is of utmost importance. City government is accountable to its citizens for the use of public dollars. Resources should be used wisely to ensure adequate funding for the services, public facilities and infrastructure necessary to meet the community's present and future needs.

Written, adopted financial policies have many benefits, such as assisting the Council and City Manager in the financial management of the City, saving time and energy when discussing financial matters, generating public confidence, and providing continuity over time as Council and staff members change. While these policies will be amended periodically, they will provide the basic foundation and framework for many of the issues and decisions facing the City. They will promote sound financial management and assist in the City's stability, efficiency and effectiveness to accomplish the City Council's goals and objectives.

In addition, the City as an institution has multiple partners, including citizens, taxpayers, businesses, employees and other governments. As a major institutional, economic and service force in the region, it is important that the City strengthen its relationships with its partners by adopting clear and comprehensive financial policies.

The goals of the following fiscal policies are as follows:

- To enhance City Council's policy-making ability by providing accurate information on program and operating costs.
- To assist sound management of City government by providing accurate and timely information on current and anticipated financial conditions.
- To provide sound principles to guide important decisions of the Council, Budget Committee and management which have significant fiscal impact.
- To employ revenue policies, which prevent undue or unbalanced reliance on any one source, distribute the cost of municipal services fairly and provide adequate funds to operate desired programs.
- To make sure an equitable fee structure is developed to assure continued services.
- To provide and maintain essential public facilities, utilities, and capital equipment.
- To protect and enhance the City's credit rating.
- To insure that all surplus cash is prudently invested in accordance with the investment policy adopted by the Scappoose City Council to protect City funds and realize a reasonable rate of return.

BUDGET POLICIES

The City will live within its means. There must be a balance between revenues and expenditures, so that the public can realize the benefits of a strong and stable government. It is important to understand that this policy is applied to budget entities over periods of time which extend beyond current appropriations. By law, budgets cannot exceed available resources, defined as revenues generated in the current period added to balances carried forward from prior years. Temporary shortages, or operating deficits, can and do occur, but they are not tolerated as extended trends.

Balanced Operating Budget

The City shall annually adopt a balanced budget where operating revenues are equal to, or exceed, operating expenditures. Any increase in expenses, decrease in revenues, or combination of the two that would result in a budget imbalance will require budget revision, rather than spending unappropriated surpluses or designated contingencies to support ongoing operations. Any year end operating surpluses will revert to fund balances for use in maintaining contingency reserve levels set by policy and the balance will be available for capital projects and/or "one-time only" expenditures.

Budget Document

City staff works from January thru March to compile the proposed budget. The individual Department Heads draft department material & services along with capital outlay figures. The Finance Administrator prepares personal services, debt services and transfers. Capital projects expenditures planned during the fiscal year are incorporated into the budget. With input from individual Department Heads, the City Manager writes department narratives. The Finance Administrator compiles the budget document. The initial draft is reviewed by the City Manager, who directs any changes needed to balance the budget. The City Manager makes sure the budget document is consistent with Council goals, priorities and policies. The operating budget shall serve as the annual financial plan for the City. It will serve as the policy document of the City Council for implementing Council goals and objectives. The budget shall provide staff the resources necessary to accomplish City Council determined service levels. The Budget Officer shall annually prepare and present a proposed operating budget to the Budget Committee no later than May 30 of each year; and the City Council will adopt said budget no later than June 30 of each year. Funds may not be expended or encumbered for the following fiscal year until the budget has been adopted by the City Council. The City's annual budget will be presented by fund, with a logical breakdown of programs and expenditures. A separate line item budget printout will also be presented for discussion and review by the Budget Committee and City Council. The budget will focus on policy issues and will summarize expenditures at the Personnel, Materials and Services, Capital, Debt Service, and Interfund Transfer levels. Where practical, the City's annual budget will include performance goals for the upcoming year and performance measures for the past year.

Budget Control and Accountability

Budget control is maintained at the departmental level. The City Manager has the authority to approve expenditures up to \$10,000. Expenditures exceeding \$10,000 must be approved by the City Council. In no case may total expenditures of a particular fund exceed that which is appropriated by the City Council without a budget amendment. Budget accountability rests primarily with the operating departments of the City.

Budget Changes After Adoption

Oregon law requires all City funds to be appropriated. Appropriations may be changed during the fiscal year, within the limitations imposed by budget law. City staff monitors actual events and recommends changes as needed. The City Council makes changes by resolution transfers or supplemental budgets.

A resolution transfer decreases an existing appropriation and increases another by the same amount. A supplemental budget typically creates a new appropriation, funded by increased revenues. Supplemental budgets are used for occurrences or conditions which were not known at the time the budget was prepared which require a change in financial planning. Supplemental budgets require a public hearing; resolution transfers do not. Department Heads may amend their budgets for individual accounts without Council approval so long as appropriations at the legal level of control are not changed.

City Funds (excluding Cogeneration Fund)

- Acquisition of buildings, improvements, machinery and equipment with a cost of \$5,000 or more, and a life expectancy of three or more years.
- Vehicles or licensed rolling stock, regardless of cost or life expectancy.
- Land, regardless of cost or life expectancy.
- Infrastructure, including mass assets such as street lights, with a cost of \$5,000 or more, regardless of life expectancy.

Cogeneration Fund

- Acquisition of buildings, improvements, machinery and equipment with a cost of \$10,000 or more, and a life expectancy of three or more years.
- Vehicles or licensed rolling stock, regardless of cost or life expectancy.
- Land, regardless of cost or life expectancy.
- Infrastructure, including mass assets, with a cost of \$20,000 or more, regardless of life expectancy.

Capital and Equipment

A five-year Capital Improvements Program shall be prepared and updated each year. The operating impact of each project shall be identified and incorporated into annual operating budgets. Capital assets shall be purchased and maintained on a regular schedule. Within legal limits and the constraints of operating budgets, debt shall be issued for the purchase of capital assets, including major renovations. The annual budget will provide for adequate maintenance and replacement of capital assets.

Enterprise Funds

- The Enterprise Funds shall be supported by their own rates and not subsidized by the General Fund.
- The Enterprise Funds will pay their share of overhead services provided by the Administrative Service funds.
- Capital improvement in the enterprise funds will be funded from utility rates unless otherwise approved by the City Council.

Interfund Advances and Transfers

City funds may borrow from one another. Interfund advances use cash temporarily idle in one fund to provide cash flow for a specific purpose in another fund. Interfund loans are repaid on a set schedule. Transfers move resources between funds with no expectation of repayment.

Internal Service Funds

Sufficient charges and rate schedules shall be levied to support operations of the Internal Service Funds. No trend of operating deficits shall be allowed. Services shall be scaled to the level of support available from charges.

Contingency Reserves Policy

Contingency Reserve will be budgeted annually to provide for unanticipated expenditures of a nonrecurring nature, unexpected operational changes, legislative impacts, unexpected increases in costs and to avoid the need for service level reductions in the event an economic downturn causes revenues to come in lower than budget.

General Fund Reserves

The City will annually appropriate a contingency reserve balance in the General Fund of at least 20% of the annual General Fund operating budget. If Council authorizes expenditure of contingency reserves for any purpose identified in the previous section, which causes reserve balances to fall below 20%, reserves must begin to be restored in the fiscal year following their use.

Enterprise Fund Reserves

The City will annually appropriate a contingency reserve balance in the Water, Wastewater and Storm Water funds each year. The City may use the recommended contingency reserve percentage found in the most recent rate study.

Special Revenue Funds

The City will annually appropriate a contingency reserve balance in other funds receiving property tax support at a minimum level of 10% (to be determined by Council) of the annual operating budget. Special revenue funds will be evaluated individually based on the type of service, potential for unexpected expenditures and purpose of the fund to determine the appropriate contingency reserve. There may be some funds that require no contingency reserve.

REVENUE POLICY

In the City of Scappoose fiscal system, the monitoring and control of revenues is a primary concern. To accomplish this, revenues are monitored on a continuous basis to insure that receipts from each revenue source are at maximum levels. An understanding of the economic and legal factors, which directly and indirectly affect the level of revenue collections, is an important part of the City's revenue policy.

Revenue Policy Goals

- A diversified yet stable revenue system will be utilized by the City to protect it from possible short-term fluctuations in any of its revenue sources.

- The City will, after having considered all possible cost reduction alternatives, explore the possibility of obtaining new or expanded revenue sources as a way to help insure a balanced budget.
- Cost recovery revenue sources will be analyzed on an annual basis and modified as necessary to insure that revenue collections reflect the cost of providing associated City services.
- The City will follow an aggressive policy of enforcement of revenue regulations and collection of revenues.

Specific Revenue Policies

- All revenue forecasts shall be conservative.
- To the extent possible, current operations will be funded by current revenues.
- The use of unencumbered prior period balances for operations shall be scrutinized and carefully limited in all funds.
- The various sources of revenue shall be monitored to determine that rates are adequate and equitable, and each source is maximized.
- The City will pursue federal, state, and private grants but will carefully review financial support of these programs in areas that require commitments, which continue beyond funding availability.
- It is the policy of the City to charge fees for services where such an approach is permissible, and where a limited and specific group of beneficiaries who can pay such charges is identifiable.
- The City will continuously seek new revenues and pursue diverse support, so as to limit the dependence on one or only a few sources.
- A diversified and stable revenue system will be maintained to shelter the government from short-run fluctuations in any particular revenue source.
- One-time revenues will be used only for one-time expenditures. The City will avoid using temporary revenues to fund mainstream services.
- Monthly reports, comparing actual revenues to budgeted revenues, will be prepared by the Finance Administrator, and presented to the City Manager and all Department Heads. These reports can also be requested at anytime during the month.
- New and expanded unrestricted revenue streams should be first applied to support existing programs prior to funding new or expanded programs.
- All City funds shall be safely invested to provide a sufficient level of liquidity to meet cash flow needs and to provide the maximum yield possible, in that order. One hundred percent of all idle cash will be continuously invested.

Cogeneration Revenues

The City Council will set forth a plan for use of Cogeneration revenues that may be separate from the above mentioned policies. As revenue amounts change over time, Council will determine whether Cogeneration Revenue appropriations should be modified or changed.

FEE POLICY

As a home rule municipality, the City of Scappoose has the ability to determine the extent to which fees should be used to fund City facilities, infrastructure and services. This Policy sets forth principles for identifying: the kinds of services for which fees could appropriately be imposed by the City; methods for calculating the percentage of costs to be recovered by such fees; and the manner in which the fees should be allocated among individual fee payers.

Ongoing Review

Fees will be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis to ensure that they keep pace with changes in the cost-of-living as well as changes in methods or levels of service delivery. Fees will be increased on a yearly basis by the Consumer Price Index for Urban areas (CPI-U). A full review of all fees will be conducted at least every five years to ensure fees are equitable and consistent with the cost of providing the service.

User Fee Cost Recovery Levels

In setting user fees and cost recovery levels, the following factors will be considered:

- Community-wide versus special benefit.
The level of user fee cost recovery should consider the community-wide versus special service nature of the program or activity. The use of general purpose revenues is appropriate for community-wide services, while user fees are appropriate for services that are of special benefit to easily identified individuals or groups.
- Service recipient versus service driver.
After considering community-wide versus special benefit of the service, the concept of service recipient versus service driver should also be considered. For example, it could be argued that the applicant is not the beneficiary of the City's development review efforts: the community is the primary beneficiary. However, the applicant is the driver of development review costs, and as such, cost recovery from the applicant is appropriate.
- Effect of pricing on the demand for services.
The level of cost recovery and related pricing of services can significantly affect the demand and subsequent level of services provided. At full cost recovery, this has the specific advantage of ensuring that the City is providing services for which there is genuinely a market that is not overly-stimulated by artificially low prices. Conversely, high levels of cost recovery will negatively impact the delivery of services to lower income groups. This negative feature is especially pronounced, and works against public policy, if the services are specifically targeted to low income groups.
- Feasibility of collection and recovery.
Although it may be determined that a high level of cost recovery may be appropriate for specific services, it may be impractical or too costly to establish a system to identify and charge the user. Accordingly, the feasibility of assessing and collecting charges should also be considered in developing user fees, especially if significant program costs are intended to be financed from that source.

General Concepts Regarding the Use of Service Charges

The following general concepts will be used in developing and implementing service charges:

- Revenues should not exceed the reasonable cost of providing the service.
- The City will maximize utilization of user charges in lieu of property taxes for services that can be individually identified and where the costs are directly related to the level of service. User fees will be reviewed each year to ensure that related costs are recovered in accordance with City Council policy.
- Cost recovery goals should be based on the total cost of delivering the service, including direct costs, departmental administration costs, and organization-wide support costs such as accounting, personnel, data processing, vehicle maintenance, and insurance.

- The method of assessing and collecting fees should be as simple as possible in order to reduce the administrative cost of collection.
- Rate structures should be sensitive to the "market" for similar services as well as to smaller, infrequent users of the service.
- A unified approach should be used in determining cost recovery levels for various programs based on the factors discussed above.

Factors Favoring Low Cost Recovery Levels

Very low cost recovery levels are appropriate under the following circumstances:

- There is no intended relationship between the amount paid and the benefit received. Almost all social service and public safety programs fall into this category as it is expected that one group will subsidize another.
- Collecting fees is not cost-effective or will significantly impact the efficient delivery of the service.
- There is no intent to limit the use of (or entitlement to) the service. Again, most social service programs fit into this category as well as many public safety emergency response services. Access to neighborhood and community parks would also fit into this category.
- The service is non-recurring, generally delivered on a "peak demand" or emergency basis, cannot reasonably be planned for on an individual basis, and is not readily available from a private sector source. Many public safety services fall into this category.
- Collecting fees would discourage compliance with regulatory requirements and adherence is primarily self-identified, and as such, failure to comply would not be readily detected by the City. Many small-scale licenses and permits might fall into this category.

Factors Favoring High Cost Recovery Levels

The use of service charges as a major source of funding service levels is especially appropriate under the following circumstances:

- The service is similar to services provided through the private sector.
- Other private or public sector alternatives could or do exist for the delivery of the service.
- For equity or demand management purposes, it is intended that there is a direct relationship between the amount paid and the level and cost of the service received.
- The use of the service is specifically discouraged. Police responses to disturbances or false alarms might fall into this category.
- The service is regulatory in nature and voluntary compliance is not expected to be the primary method of detecting failure to meet regulatory requirements. Building permit, plan checks, and subdivision review fees for large projects would fall into this category.

Low Cost - Recovery Services

Based on the criteria discussed above, the following types of services should have very low cost recovery goals. In selected circumstances, there may be specific activities within the broad scope of services provided that should have user charges associated with them. However, the primary source of funding for the operation as a whole should be general purpose revenues, not user fees:

- Delivering public safety/emergency response services such as police patrol services and fire suppression.
- Maintaining and developing public facilities that are provided on a uniform, community-wide basis such as streets, parks, and general purpose buildings.

- Providing social service programs and economic development activities.
- Recreation Programs.

Development Review Programs – Example of High Cost Recovery and Methodology

Services provided under this category include:

- Planning (planned development permits, tentative tract and parcel maps, rezoning, general plan amendments, variances, use permits).
- Engineering (public improvement plan checks, inspections, subdivision requirements, and encroachments).

The following cost recovery policies apply to the development review programs:

- Cost recovery for these services should generally be very high. In most instances, the City's cost recovery goal should be 100%. Exceptions to this standard include planning services, as this review process is clearly intended to serve the broader community as well as the applicant; appeals, where no fee is charged; and environmental impact reports, where the goal is full recovery.
- In charging high cost recovery levels, the City needs to clearly establish and articulate standards for its performance in reviewing developer applications to ensure that there is "value for cost".
- Comparability with other communities.

Surveying the comparability of the City's fees to other communities provides useful background information in setting fees for several reasons:

- They reflect the "market" for these fees and can assist in assessing the reasonableness of the City of Scappoose fees.
- If prudently analyzed, they can serve as a bench mark for how cost-effectively the City of Scappoose provides its services.
- Fee surveys should never be the sole or primary criteria in setting City fees as there are many factors that affect how and why other communities have set their fees at their levels.

In setting user fees, the City will consider fees charged by other agencies in accordance with the following criteria:

- What level of cost recovery is their fee intended to achieve compared with our cost recovery objectives?
- What costs have been considered in computing the fees?
- When was the last time that their fees were comprehensively evaluated?
- What level of service do they provide compared with our service or performance standards?
- Is their rate structure significantly different than ours and what is it intended to achieve?

These can be very difficult questions to address in fairly evaluating fees among different communities. As such, the comparability of our fees to other communities should be one factor among many that is considered in setting City fees.

Enterprise Fund Rates

- The City will set fees and rates at levels which fully cover the total direct and indirect costs—including operations, capital outlay, and debt service—of the following enterprise programs: Water, Wastewater and Storm Water.

- The City will review and adjust enterprise fees and rate structures as required to ensure that they remain appropriate and equitable.
- Upon review of utility rates, Council will set rates through the required public process and adopt any changes to the rate structure for the City's enterprise funds by ordinance.
- The City will review the Systems Development Charges on a regular basis.

INTERNAL CONTROLS

Introduction:

Historically, internal controls relied heavily on segregation of duties, which continues to be the heart of establishing good internal controls; but around 1985, the accounting profession broadened the definition of internal controls to include establishing a control environment, risk assessment, the flow of information and communication, and monitoring.

Control Environment: The internal control environment starts at the top of any organization. Ethical behavior and management integrity set the tone to establish the organization's culture. The City of Scappoose makes every effort to stress financial accountability to all employees. The City takes great pride in financial record and strives to continue maintaining effective internal controls, consistent with professional standards and practices. In the past, management has decentralized, to a certain extent, the financial accountability and responsibility; but we continue to monitor financial transactions and controls - which are explained in more detail below.

Risk Assessment: Risk assessment is primarily handled by the City Manager, although all supervisors and department heads need to be aware of potential for fraud.

Control Activities: As explained previously, this is the historical center of internal controls. The following are examples of City of Scappoose policies and procedures that have been established to maintain internal control:

Purchasing and Accounts Payable

- No invoice is paid without a Department Head approval, or their designee if they are on vacation.
- The City Manager authorizes any and all invoices. The Finance Administrator then approves all invoices for accurate account codes, vendor and dollar amounts
- Only the Finance Administrator may set up new vendors.
- Pre-printed and numbered accounts payable check stock is stored in a locked cabinet and all checks require two signatures: City Manager, City Recorder, Mayor or Council President.
- The Finance Administrator will keep a separate record of all checks issued.

Human Resources and Payroll

- Each Personnel Action Form, establishing employees wages and budget account numbers, are signed by the City Manager, and processed by the Finance Administrator and a copy given to the City Recorder for the employees personal file.
- Pre-printed and numbered payroll check stock is stored in a locked cabinet and all checks require two signatures: City Manager, City Recorder, Mayor or Council President.
- Also affecting payroll is the number of direct deposit checks. The direct deposit check count must be documented in the check signing process to balance automatic signatures with the number of payroll checks.
- The Finance Administrator will keep a separate record of all checks issued.

Cash Receipts and Accounts Receivable

- Each satellite operation has been given financial procedures to follow for cash and credit card receipting.
- Satellite operations bring their deposits to City Hall for bank depositing daily. Along with an listing of the currency amounts in the cash drawer.
- The bank deposit is prepared by the Office Administrator.
- The deposit is re-counted with the Office Administrator present and the deposit is then placed in a tamper resistant bank approved bag and taken to the depository.
- The cash receipt records are reviewed by the Finance Administrator.
- The Finance Administrator compares the actual bank deposit slips received from the bank to the General Ledger Cash Receipts Posting.
- During the above verification process, the Finance Director reviews each general operating and escrow account receipt along with the revenue account coding. If any questions arise or bank deposit errors occur, the Office Administrator who prepared the deposit is contacted for problem resolution.

Bank and Investment Reconciliations

- The bank accounts are reconciled monthly by the Finance Administrator who does not have check signing authority.
- Canceled checks are not provided to the City although a CD of their images is received each month and stored until the audit is complete for the fiscal year. Those CD's are viewed upon receipt by the Finance Administrator and compared to the separate list kept of all checks issued.
- Voided checks must be given directly to the Finance Administrator.
- The Finance Administrator reviews and initials each monthly bank reconciliation, questioning any items that are not adequately annotated or that are unique.
- The Local Government Investment Pool accounts are reconciled monthly by the Finance Administrator.

General Ledger

- Each asset and liability account on the City's general ledger is reconciled monthly with back-up work papers kept in a monthly general ledger file.
- The general ledger is closed monthly, usually balanced by the third week of the month of the following.
- All General Ledger reports, bank statements and journal entries, along with details to justify the entry are kept by the Finance Administrator.

Budget

The City Manager, with the assistance of the Finance Administrator and Department Head, requires all over-budget amounts to be adequately explained.

Audits

The City undergoes an on-time yearly audit as required by ORS 297.425. As part of governmental auditing standards, the auditor must review and test the City's internal controls and issue a separate opinion on the City's internal control. The City has always received "clean" opinions on our financial report and on the auditor's internal control report. The audit involves a limited number of surprise cash counts each year at satellite offices. The auditor's verify sequential use of check numbers in each bank account.

Flow of Information and Communication: Accessibility of financial information to all levels of the organization help to ensure correct and complete recording of financial transactions. Each night the Cash

Receipts are posting into the General Ledger. Each day invoices are put into purchase order status waiting approval. Department Heads can at anytime request printed financial reports detailing revenue and expenses compared to adopted budgeted amount.

Monitoring: Monitoring activities are primarily following up on situations or transactions that come to the Finance Department that are irregular. By backtracking with operating departments on small, possibly insignificant issues, operating department employees realize that the City operates with tight controls. This helps to set the tone that the Finance Department monitors department financial transactions.