

TOWN OF SCARBOROUGH
FUND BALANCE POLICY
[Adopted November 2, 2016]

SUBJECT: Fund Balance Policy

The Fund Balance Policy is intended to provide guidelines during the preparation and execution of the annual budget to ensure that sufficient reserves are maintained for unanticipated expenditures or revenue shortfalls. It also is intended to preserve flexibility throughout the fiscal year to make adjustments in funding for programs approved in connection with the annual budget.

The Fund Balance Policy should be established based upon a long-term perspective recognizing that stated thresholds are considered minimum balances. The main objective of establishing and maintaining a Fund Balance Policy is for the Town of Scarborough to be in a strong fiscal position that will allow for better position to weather negative economic trends.

The Fund Balance consists of five categories: Nonspendable, Restricted, Committed, Assigned, and Unassigned.

- **Nonspendable** Fund Balance consists of funds that cannot be spent due to their form (e.g. inventories and prepaids) or funds that legally or contractually must be maintained intact.
- **Restricted** Fund Balance consists of funds that are mandated for a specific purpose by external parties, constitutional provisions or enabling legislation.
- **Committed** Fund Balance consists of funds that are set aside for a specific purpose by the Council. Formal action must be taken prior to the end of the fiscal year. The same formal action must be taken to remove or change the limitations placed on the funds.
- **Assigned** Fund Balance consists of funds that are set aside with the intent to be used for a specific purpose by the Council. Assigned funds cannot cause a deficit in unassigned fund balance.
- **Unassigned** Fund Balance consists of excess funds that have not be classified in the previous four categories. All funds in this category are considered spendable resources. This category also provides the resources necessary to meet unexpected expenditures and revenue shortfalls.

Unrestricted Fund Balance is the combination of the Committed, Assigned and Unassigned fund balance.

Operating Budget

The total General Fund Budget, are all budgets, including amendments, as adopted by the Town council. The General Fund Budget shall include all budgets included in funds 1100 and 7100:

- Municipal Gross Budget
- Education Gross Budget
- Adult Learning
- Community Services- All Divisions
- Capital Equipment
- Debt Service
- County Assessment

Nonspendable and Restricted Funds

Nonspendable funds are those funds that cannot be spent because they are either:

- 1) Not in spendable form (e.g. inventories and prepaids)
- 2) Legally or contractually required to be maintained intact

It is the responsibility of the Town Manager or their designee, to report all Nonspendable Funds appropriately in the Town's Financial Statements.

Restricted funds are those funds that have constraints placed on their use either:

- 1) Externally by creditors, grantors, contributors, or laws or regulations or other governments
- 2) By law through constitutional provisions or enabling legislation.

It is the responsibility of the of the Town Manager, or their designee, to report all Restricted Funds appropriately in the Town's Financial Statements.

Classifying Fund Balance Amounts

When both restricted and unrestricted funds are available for expenditure, restricted funds should be spent first unless legal requirements disallow it. When committed, assigned and unassigned funds are available for expenditure, committed funds should be spent first, assigned funds second, and unassigned funds last; unless the Town Council has provided otherwise in its commitment or assignment actions.

Authority to Commit Funds

The Town Council has the authority to set aside funds for a specific purpose. Any funds set aside as Committed Fund Balance requires the passage of a resolution by a simple majority vote. The passage of such action must take place prior to June 30th of the applicable fiscal year. If the actual amount of the commitment is not available by June 30th, the resolution must state the process or formula necessary to calculate the actual amount as soon as information is available.

Authority to Assign Funds

Upon passage of the Fund Balance Policy, authority is given to the Town Manager to assign funds for specific purposes. Any funds set aside as Assigned Fund Balance must be reported to the Town Council. The Town Council as the authority to set aside funds for the intended use of a specific purpose. Any funds set aside as Assigned Fund Balance requires a simple majority vote and must be recorded in the minutes. The same action is required to change or remove the assignment.

Unassigned Fund Balance

Unassigned Fund Balance is the residual amount of Fund Balance in the General Fund. It represents the resources available for future spending. An appropriate level of Unassigned Fund Balance should be maintained in the General Fund in order to cover unexpected expenditures and revenue shortfalls.

In the event of projected revenue shortfalls, it is the responsibility of the Town Manager to report the projections to the Town Council's Finance Committee on a quarterly basis and will include an outline of recommended Management actions to address any shortfall.

The Town has set a goal, through this Fund Balance Policy, to maintain the level of unassigned fund balance equal to 10.0% of Scarborough's Operating Budget for the prior fiscal year and to not fall below 8.33% (or 1/12) of Scarborough's Operating Budget.

Once the Town achieves an unassigned fund balance equal to 10.0% of Scarborough's Operating Budget, any excess above 12% must be assigned by any combination to one of the following:

- a) Retained in nonspendable and restricted accounts that offset unfunded liabilities, and/or
- b) retained in assigned accounts that may be used in future budget cycles as a property tax rate stabilization; available for use during a catastrophic event, and/or
- c) funding future capital expenditures and/or projects, and/or
- d) the retirement of debt, and/or
- e) a taxpayer refund.

In the event that the balance drops below the established minimum level, the Town Council will develop a plan to replenish the fund balance to the established minimum level within two years.

Reporting

Annually the Town Manager shall report to the Town Council's Finance Committee the Statement of Activity of all fund balances that will include the beginning year's balances, gross adjustments in and out of each account during the reporting period and final report period ending balances. Such report shall occur following receipt of the audited financial statements.

Repeal of Prior Town Council Fund Balance Policy.

This section repeals the Town Council Fund Balance Policy adopted by the Town Council on September 17, 1997 and as amended on January 20, 2010 and replaces it this document adopted by the Town Council on November 2, 2016.