

## **CITY OF MUSCATINE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES**

The following financial policies have been developed to provide guidance to the City's financial management system. The 2013/2014 budget for the City of Muscatine was prepared based on these policies where possible. The City's intent is to support a sound and efficient financial management system which best utilizes available resources and provides an acceptable service level to the citizens of Muscatine. The following statements are not intended to restrict the City Council's authority in determining service needs and/or activities of the City. These financial policies do not limit the City Council's ability and responsibility to respond to service delivery needs above or beyond these policies. The City Council as a policy making group is still accountable for the efficient and responsive operation of the City.

### **Revenue Policy**

1. The City will initiate efforts to maintain a diversified and stable revenue system in an attempt to avoid short run fluctuations in any one revenue source.
2. Annual revenues will be estimated by an objective, and whenever possible analytical process.
3. Existing revenue sources will be re-examined annually with new revenue sources investigated during the annual budget preparation process.
4. Revenues will be estimated at a level to fund estimated expenditures on an annual basis. Revenues may exceed expenditures if the fund balance of any fund needs to be increased to meet minimum balance requirements. Additionally, surplus fund balances may supplement revenues in order to fund estimated expenditure levels.
5. Property tax revenue collections will be established through a tax levy rate for general operations which will not generally exceed the Municipal Cost Index and Consumer Price Index of the previous year. This increase will not include levy collections due to natural growth of the City but will include any state mandated equalization orders.
6. In relation to enterprise funds which have been established to support expenditure levels, user fees and charges will be established to fund direct and indirect costs of the activity whenever feasible. Exceptions include, but may not be limited to, the public transportation system and airport operations.
7. User fees in other governmental areas such as recreational services will be established at a level to support actual costs of adult activities and for other groups at a level which will not inhibit participation by all.
8. All user fees and charges will be re-evaluated on an annual basis during the budget preparation process.
9. One-time or special purpose revenues such as grant funds will be utilized to fund capital expenditures or expenditures required by that revenue. Such revenues will not be used to subsidize reoccurring personnel, operating, and maintenance costs.

10. The City will on a continuous basis seek methods to reduce the City's reliance on the property tax through seeking legislative support for local option taxes, investigating additional non-property tax revenue sources, and encouraging the expansion and diversification of the City tax base with commercial and industrial development.

#### **Operating Budget/Expenditure Policy**

1. The City Administrator will compile and submit to the City Council a balanced budget by the first Monday in February of each year.
2. The balanced budget will reflect expenditures which will not exceed estimated resources and revenues. Routine expenditures will not be greater than the previous year's expenditure level by more than the estimated annual percentage increase in the cost of living. The Municipal Cost Index and Consumer Price Index will be used as a basis for the cost of living.
3. The operating budget for the City will be developed and established on a service level basis. Any additions, deletions and/or alterations in the operating budget will be related to services to be provided to the general public.
4. The operating budget will emphasize productivity of human resources in providing services, efficient use of available revenue sources, and quality of services to be provided.
5. New service levels will be considered when additional revenues or offsetting reductions of expenditures are identified, the new services fall within the broad framework of the City operation, or when such services are mandated by the State of Iowa or the federal government.
6. Current City expenditures will be funded by current revenues unless specifically approved by the City Council.
7. The City will avoid the postponement of current expenditures to future years, accruing future years revenues, or utilization of short term debt to fund operating expenditures.
8. The operating budget will provide funding for the on-going maintenance and replacement of fixed assets and equipment. These expenditures will be funded from current revenues and, in the case of replacement of equipment, surplus fund balances in excess of the minimum working balance reserve.
9. Within the operating fund a reserve will be set aside for unforeseen emergencies. This reserve will be maintained at one percent of the operating budget as a minimum.
10. The budget will provide adequate funding for all retirement systems as prescribed by state law.

11. A working fund balance for general operations will be maintained in order to support expenditures prior to the collection of taxes. The working balance will be at least ten percent of the budgeted level of expenditures.

Note – During the 2013/2014 budget development process, City Council discussed increasing the minimum working balance to at least fifteen percent of the budgeted level of expenditures and the 2013/2014 General Fund budget was based on this higher level of fund balance. During the upcoming year the City Council will consider formally amending the minimum fund balance policy.

12. Each year the City will revise current year expenditure projections during the succeeding year's budget preparation process. Costs of operating future capital improvements included in the capital projects budget will be included in the operating budget.
13. The City will participate in a risk management program to minimize losses and reduce costs. This program will also protect the City against catastrophic losses through the combination of insurance, self-insurance, and various federal and state programs.
14. The City will maintain a budgetary control system to monitor its adherence to the approved operating budget.
15. The City administration will prepare monthly expense and revenue reports comparing actual revenues and expenditures to budgeted amounts.

#### **Capital Improvement Budget Policy**

1. The City will make all capital improvements in accordance with the adopted Capital Improvement Program except for emergency capital improvements which are deemed necessary by the City staff and approved individually by the City Council.
2. Capital improvements will be identified on the basis of long range projected needs rather than on immediate needs in order to minimize future maintenance, replacement, and capital costs.
3. All capital improvements proposed will be submitted to the Planning Commission for their review and consideration. Their recommendation, in addition to staff's recommendation, will be submitted to the City Council for approval as the capital improvement plan for the City.
4. A capital improvement program will be developed for a five-year period and updated annually.
5. Estimated costs of each capital improvement projected for each year will be included in the plan.
6. Revenue sources for each capital improvement will be identified in the plan whenever possible.
7. Intergovernmental funding sources from the federal, state, and private sector will be actively sought and used as available to assist in financing of capital improvements.
8. Future operating costs associated with the capital improvement will be projected and included as a memo item in the Capital Improvement budget.

9. During the initial stages of a particular capital improvement but no later than the public hearing for the capital improvement, revenue sources to fund the capital improvement and estimated project costs including incidental costs will be approved by the City Council.

#### **Debt Administration Policy**

1. The City will limit its long-term borrowing to capital improvements or projects which cannot be financed from current revenues or for which current revenues are not adequate.
2. Long-term borrowing will only be utilized to fund capital improvements and not operating expenditures.
3. The payback period of the bonds issued to fund a particular capital project will not exceed the expected useful life of the project.
4. The City will attempt to keep the average maturity of general obligation bonds at or below 10 years.
5. The City will maintain its debt limitation at 5 percent of actual property valuation as mandated by the State of Iowa.
6. Of the debt margin for general obligation bonds, 40 percent will be reserved for emergency purposes.
7. Whenever possible, special assessment, revenue and/or general obligation bonds abated by enterprise revenues will be issued instead of general obligation bonds funded by property tax.
8. For those general obligation bonds issued and funded by property taxes, debt service and interest payment schedules shall be established whenever possible in such a manner to provide equalization of debt and interest payments each year for the life of the total outstanding general obligation bonds.
9. The City shall encourage and maintain good relations with the financial and bond rating agencies and prepare any reports so requested by these agencies. Full and open disclosure on every financial report and bond prospectus will be maintained.

#### **Investment Policy**

1. The City will make at least weekly a cash flow analysis of all City funds.
2. Disbursements of funds, collections of revenue, and deposit of such revenues will be scheduled to insure the maximum availability of funds for investment.
3. Where permitted by law, cash shall be pooled from separate funds in order to maximize investment yields. Interest earned from such pooling will be credited to each source of invested monies.
4. The City will obtain the maximum possible return on cash investments utilizing federal securities and/or local security purchases whichever yield the highest interest income.

5. Investments of City funds shall be accomplished first through the competitive bidding process by the invitation of bids to local banks and the Iowa Public Agency Investment Trust (IPAIT). If the interest rate offered by local banks and IPAIT do not fit the requirements of the City, investments shall be made in federal securities or any other higher yielding securities as authorized by the State of Iowa.
6. City checking accounts shall be established as interest bearing accounts according to the provisions of banking services agreements and as specifically restricted by state law and/or federal regulations unless a particular situation necessitates noncompliance with this provision.
7. The accounting system will provide regular information regarding the investments of the City and a quarterly report will be submitted to the City Administrator.
8. An annual report describing the activity of investment purchases will be submitted to the City Council at the end of each fiscal year.

#### **Financial Reporting Policy**

1. The City will establish and maintain a high standard of accounting practices and procedures which adhere to the concept of full and open public disclosure of all financial activity.
2. The accounting system will be maintained on a basis consistent with accepted standards for governmental accounting.
3. Monthly financial reports which represent a summary of financial activity for the City will be presented to the City Council on a regular basis.
4. The City will contract with an independent public auditing firm to perform the annual audit.
5. The independent public accounting firm will publicly issue an audit opinion regarding the financial statements of the City. This annual audit will be made available to the general public, bonding and financial consultants, and any other interested citizens and organizations.
6. The annual financial statements and accompanying audit opinion will be completed and submitted to the City Council by the 15th of December following the close of the preceding fiscal year.