

**Town of Machias  
General Fund  
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 is also 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 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 Town's highest level of decision making authority (Town Meeting). Formal action must be taken before the end of the fiscal year. The same formal action must be taken to remove or change the limitations placed upon the funds.

**Assigned Fund Balance** consists of funds that are set aside with the intent to be used for a specific purpose by the Town's highest level of decision making authority, or a body (Board of Selectmen) that has been given the authority to assign funds. Assigned funds cannot cause a deficit in unassigned fund balance.

**Unassigned Fund Balance** consists of excess funds that have not been 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.

**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 Finance Director to report all Nonspendable Funds appropriately in the Town's Financial statements.

Restricted funds are those 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 Finance Director to report all Restricted Funds appropriately in the Town's Financial Statements. All Restricted Funds must also be reported to the Town's governing body within two months of the end of the fiscal year.

### **Order of Use of Restricted and Unrestricted Funds**

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.

### **Authority to Commit Funds**

The Town's governing body (Town Meeting) 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 a resolution must take place prior to June 30<sup>th</sup> of the applicable fiscal year. If the actual amount of the commitment is not available by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 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's Selectmen to assign funds for specific purposes. Any funds set aside as Assigned Fund Balance must be reported to the Town's governing body, (Town Meeting), at their next regular meeting and recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The governing body has the authority to remove or change the assignment of funds with a simple majority vote.

The Town's governing body has the authority to set aside funds for the intended use for 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.

Upon passage of a budget ordinance where fund balance is used as a source to balance the budget, the Finance Director shall record the amount as Assigned Fund Balance.

## Unassigned Fund Balance

Unassigned Fund Balance is the residual amount of Fund Balance in the General Fund. It represents 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.

Unassigned Fund Balance may be accessed in the event of unexpected expenditures up to the minimum established level upon approval of a budget amendment by the Town's governing body.

Revenues, including shortfalls, are reported by the Finance Director, at least monthly, to the Board of Selectmen by the Revenue Summary Report.

Adopted: 25 Jan 2012

Town of Machias  
Board of Selectmen

Walter Gay

Osney Hunt

Lonny L. Vinton

Glenn Davis

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