

Long Term Planning/Cash Basis Forecasting

Presented by:
Local Government Services

What is a forecast?

- Per Merriam-Webster (via the internet):
 - "to calculate or predict (some future event or condition) usually as a result of study and analysis of available pertinent data"
 - "a prophecy, estimate, or prediction of a future happening or condition"

Financial Forecasts

What is a financial forecast?

- A financial forecast is prospective financial statements that present, to the best of management's knowledge and belief, the government's expected revenues, expenditures and fund balances.
- It is based on **management's assumptions reflecting conditions it expects to exist and the course of action it expects to take.**

What can you afford?

- Do you want to give your employee's raises? Layoffs?
- If you offer insurance, how much will your premiums increase?
- Can you afford a new or currently existing service?
- Can we buy some new equipment or make repairs to facilities?
- Do you have reserves for an emergency or downturn in the economy?
- **What are the long-term effects of the decisions that are made today?**

Efficient • Effective • Transparent

4

Is this really necessary?

- Why do you need a forecast?
 - Identify programs, activities and service levels that you **CAN** provide compared to what you **WANT** to provide.
 - Identify costs associated with providing services and the funding sources used to provide them.
 - Identify capital needs and establishes a plan for fulfilling those needs.
 - Allows management to set priorities and document plans.
 - Determine the effect on the community
 - **If you are declared in Fiscal Watch or Fiscal Emergency by the Auditor of State, a five year forecast is required.**

Efficient • Effective • Transparent

5

Who should be involved in the process?

- The Governing Body - Council
- Chief Operating Officer(s) – Mayor, Administrator, Manager
- Finance Committee (if one exists)
- Chief Financial Officer - Fiscal Officer, Auditor
- Department heads
- Process should be all inclusive so that all parties are aware of the financial situation and priorities can be set.

Efficient • Effective • Transparent

6

Long-Term Planning

- What should a forecast include?
 - An Operating Plan
 - A Capital Plan
- Does it matter which comes first?

Efficient • Effective • Transparent

7

Long-Term Planning

- Operating Plan
 - Based on historical trends, new laws or regulations, upcoming or expiring revenues / expenditures, other factors.
 - Assumes existing programs will continue at the same level of service, both now and in the future.

Efficient • Effective • Transparent

8

Long-Term Planning

- Operating Plan - Where do you Start?
 - **ALWAYS** start with revenue estimates! What revenues do you know are going to continue into future years (i.e. taxes) and what revenues may expire (i.e. grants). New revenues?
 - ❖ If these estimates are not truthful and as realistic as possible, then the entire plan is useless.
 - What expenditures **MUST** you pay for (i.e. debt or lease payments, salaries, utilities)? Items you cannot cut.
 - What expenditures do you really need, but can live without if absolutely necessary (at least for a time)?
 - Wish list

Efficient • Effective • Transparent

9

Long-Term Planning

- Capital Plans
 - Plan for capital expenditures over a period of years
 - Sets forth each project or purchase in which the local government is to have a part
 - Identifies the resources to be available to finance the project / purchase

Efficient • Effective • Transparent

10

Long-Term Planning

- Capital Plan - Where do you Start?
 - Develop a list of projects & purchases - no ceiling
 - Include roads, bridges, buildings, parks and recreation facilities
 - Identify replacement of existing vehicles and equipment
 - **Set priorities based on.....**
 - Identify resources to finance the expenditures
 - Are there any alternatives (i.e. shared services, shared grants)

Efficient • Effective • Transparent

11

Long-Term Planning

- How can I pay for Capital Expenditures?
 - Reducing expenditures each year to build up a balance in a fund.
 - Reserve Balance Accounts
 - Note or Bond Issuances
 - Loans – OPWC/OWDA/EPA/USDA/ODOT, etc.
 - Special Capital levies
 - Grants
 - Special assessments
 - ORC 5705.13 Capital Projects Fund

Efficient • Effective • Transparent

12

Long-Term Planning

- Special Revenue Fund (ORC 5705.13)
 - Accumulates resources for the payment of sick leave and vacation leave, and for payments in lieu of taking compensatory time off, upon the termination of employment or the retirement of employees/officers.
 - May also accumulate resources for payment of salaries during any fiscal year when the number of pay periods exceeds the usual and customary number of pay periods.

Efficient • Effective • Transparent

13

Long-Term Planning

- Capital Projects Fund (5705.13)
 - Accumulates resources for the acquisition, construction, or improvement of capital assets, including motor vehicles
 - More than one capital project fund may be established and may exist at any time

Efficient • Effective • Transparent

14

Long-Term Planning

- For Operating and Capital Plans, what type of Legislative approval should there be?
 - Long-Term Operating Plan
 - Choice of the Legislative Body
 - Commitment is the current year Appropriation Measure
 - Capital Plans
 - Choice of the Legislative Body
 - Commitment to a project takes place when appropriated and bids are authorized

Efficient • Effective • Transparent

15

Financial Forecasts

- **Management** – Those persons who are expected to direct the operations of the entity during the prospective period. Management typically refers to those persons at the highest level of authority within the entity.
- **Assumptions** – The building blocks for the forecast developed from the key factors. They identify significant matters that are expected to occur, based on an entity's plans.

Efficient • Effective • Transparent

16

Financial Forecasts

- **Key Factors** – The significant matters on which a government's future results are expected to depend. Such factors are basic to the government's operations and thus encompass matters that affect, among other things, the government's financial activities. Key factors serve as a foundation for prospective financial information and are the basis for the assumptions.

Efficient • Effective • Transparent

17

Financial Forecasts

- A financial forecast is used:
 - As a planning tool
 - To identify to governments whether they can provide services or undertake projects they are planning.
 - To help governments determine whether or not they are headed toward financial difficulty.

Efficient • Effective • Transparent

18

Financial Forecasts

- What are management's responsibilities?
 - Reasonableness of the assumptions
 - Preparation of the forecast
 - Accuracy of the presented figures

Forecast Preparation Guidelines

- AICPA "Guide for Prospective Financial Information" provides **general guidelines** to the responsible party for preparing financial forecasts. These are:
 - Forecasts should be prepared in good faith
 - Forecasts should be prepared with appropriate care by qualified personnel
 - Forecasts should be prepared using appropriate accounting principals

Forecast Preparation Guidelines

- Assumptions used in preparing forecasts should be appropriate
- Key factors should be identified as a basis for the assumptions
- Information used in preparing forecasts should be consistent with the plans of the entity

Forecast Preparation Guidelines

- Process used to develop forecasts should provide a means to determine the relative effect of variations in the major assumptions (raises, insurance / utility increases)
- Process used should provide adequate documentation of the forecast and the process used to develop it (supporting your assumptions)
- Process used to develop forecasts should provide for seeking out the best information that is available at the time (historical information, contracts, debt schedules, calculations, etc.)

Forecast Preparation Guidelines

- Process used to develop forecasts should include the regular comparison of the forecast with the actual results
- Process used to prepare forecasts should include adequate review and approval by the responsible party at the appropriate levels of authority

Assumptions and Key Factors

- Property Taxes
 - The type of levies, rate or dollar amount, year of approval, first and last year of collection
 - Full and effective rates (real and commercial)
 - Assessed valuations
 - Triennial and sexennial updates
 - Delinquent taxes and collections
 - New and expiring levies
 - Current amended certificate

Assumptions and Key Factors

- Municipal Income Taxes
 - Levy rate and effective period
 - Department of Taxation estimates
 - Income trends for area
 - Unemployment trends for area
 - New businesses for area? Any business leaving the area?

Assumptions and Key Factors

- Local government revenues – provided by the State of Ohio. Included as part of the State's biennium budget every two years.
- Grants – are there time constraints? One-time or continuous?
- Homestead and Rollback – provided by the State of Ohio (based on property taxes).

Assumptions and Key Factors

- Fines and Fees
- Interest
- Licenses and Permits
- Rentals
- Miscellaneous
- For revenues such as rentals, are you charging enough? Are you charging too much?
- Predicting these revenues is difficult

Assumptions and Key Factors

- Personal Services
 - Bargaining unit contract dates
 - Salary schedules
 - Staff positions
 - Severance pay
 - Retirement incentives
 - Computation of salaries (old/new rates)

Efficient • Effective • Transparent 28

Assumptions and Key Factors

- Fringe Benefits
 - Pension payments (% of salaries) and the method of payment
 - Health Care Benefits
 - Purchase of service credit
 - Workers' compensation premiums/rates/rebates
 - Other benefits

Efficient • Effective • Transparent 29

Assumptions and Key Factors

- Contractual Services/Materials & Supplies
 - Significant contractual obligations
 - Materials and supplies needed
 - Inflation factor
 - Utilities

Efficient • Effective • Transparent 30

Assumptions and Key Factors

- Capital Outlay
 - Capital Assets to be purchased
 - Land
 - Buildings
 - Furniture and Equipment
 - Vehicles
 - Infrastructure – includes water and sewer plants and lines (EPA requirements?)

Assumptions and Key Factors

- Capital Outlay
 - Capital Assets to be constructed
 - Infrastructure – In-Kind Contributions
 - Capital Assets to be acquired
 - Local share of contributed assets

Assumptions and Key Factors

- Debt Service
 - Principal and Interest on debt payments
 - Example: Street truck, fire truck, new/renovated building, water and sewer improvement loans

Assumptions and Key Factors

- Miscellaneous
 - Other expenditures that don't fall into any of the other categories
 - Non-reoccurring items
 - Spending practices – are you getting “the best bang for your buck?”

Efficient • Effective • Transparent 34

Assumptions and Key Factors

- Other Funds
 - Deficits or anticipated deficits
 - Fire Levy fund
 - Police Salary Levy fund
 - Transfers to ORC 5705.13 Funds
 - Termination Payments/Excess Pay Periods
 - Capital Projects

Efficient • Effective • Transparent 35

Successful Planning

- Be **REALISTIC** and **HONEST** about your situation: good, bad or ugly.
- Be willing to make and explain decisions, even tough ones.
- Maintain all documentation and materials supporting the values and the assumptions
- Continue to update both plans as additional information becomes available or plans/goals change.
 - Grant Awards
 - Construction Contracts
 - Debt Issuance
 - Unplanned Emergency Situations

Efficient • Effective • Transparent 36

OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE
KEITH FABER

Local Government Services

88 E. Broad St.
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Presenter phone: (800) 345-2519
contactlgs@ohioauditor.gov

Efficient • Effective • Transparent

OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE
KEITH FABER



88 E. Broad St.
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Phone: (800) 282-0370
www.OhioAuditor.gov

Efficient • Effective • Transparent
