

BUDGET PROCESS ADOPTION REQUIREMENTS

An annual budget, including all such funds as required by law, shall be prepared, approved and adopted for each fiscal year. The budget shall control the levy of taxes and expenditure of money for all County purposes during the ensuing fiscal year. The budget process shall be conducted in accordance with Chapters 125, 129, 200, and 218 of the Florida Statutes, as amended.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

By July 1, the Property Appraiser must certify the (initial) taxable value of property within each taxing district.

The County Administrator must present a balanced budget to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) by July 15.

Within 35 days of either July 1, or the date the Property Appraiser certifies the taxable value of property, whichever is later, the BOCC must set proposed millage rates. At that time, a date, time and place is set for a first public hearing on the proposed budget and millage rates.

Within 65 to 80 days of July 1, or the date the Property Appraiser certifies the taxable value, the BOCC must hold a public hearing, after 5:00 p.m., to hear public testimony and to adopt a tentative budget and tentative millage rates. The first substantive issues discussed must be the percentage increase in the proposed aggregate millage rate over the rolled-back rate and the specific purposes for which the ad valorem tax revenues are being increased. (Information on rolled-back millages may be found in the Executive Summary section of **Volume I Operations and Funding Guide** and a definition may be found in the glossary.) Prior to the conclusion of the hearing, the BOCC shall amend the tentative budget as it deems necessary, adopt the amended tentative budget, recompute its proposed millage rates and publicly announce the percent, if any, by which the recomputed proposed aggregate millage exceeds the rolled-back rate. That percentage shall be characterized as the percentage increase in property taxes tentatively adopted by the BOCC (regardless of whether millage rates have changed). A date, time and place for a second public hearing is set at this hearing. As with the first public hearing, the second public hearing must be held after 5:00 p.m.

Within fifteen days after the first public hearing, the County must publish two adjacent budget ads in a newspaper of general circulation in the County. One advertisement notifies

County residents of the BOCC's intent to finally adopt millage rates and a budget, identifying any increase in property taxes. The second advertisement summarizes the tentative budget, showing for each budget and for the total of all budgets, the proposed millage rates, balances, reserves, and major revenues and expenditures classifications. Specific size, placement, and wording requirements apply, as set forth in Chapter 200.065(3) of the Florida Statutes.

Within two to five days after the advertisements are published, a second public hearing is held to hear public testimony and to adopt a final budget and final millage rates. If, for any reason, the adoption of the final budget is delayed beyond the start of the next fiscal year, the BOCC can expend moneys as outlined in Chapter 200.065(2)(g) of the Florida Statutes, as amended.

Copies of completed resolutions adopting the final millages are forwarded to the Property Appraiser and the Tax Collector by the Clerk of the BOCC within approximately 100 days of certification of preliminary taxable value by the Property Appraiser.

Not later than 30 days following adoption of an ordinance or resolution establishing a property tax levy, the BOCC shall certify, to the Florida Department of Revenue, compliance with the provisions of Chapter 200 of the Florida Statutes, as amended. In addition to a statement of compliance, the certification package includes a copy of the adopted millage resolution or ordinance, a copy of the budget advertisements including proof of publication, and a copy of the Certification of Taxable Value form.

Copies of the budget shall be filed with the Clerk of the BOCC as public records.

Upon final adoption of the budget, the budget shall regulate the expenditures of the County and the budget shall not be amended, except as provided for in Chapter 129.06, Florida Statutes. Pursuant to Chapter 129.07, Florida Statutes, it is unlawful for the BOCC to expend or contract for expenditures in any fiscal year in excess of the amount budgeted in each fund. Every appropriation shall lapse at the close of the fiscal year. Unexpended funds for uncompleted projects and encumbrances for capital outlay (equipment) at the close of the fiscal year may be reappropriated in the succeeding fiscal year.

The process for adopting the FY 02 budget for Hillsborough County consisted of four distinct phases.

The Planning Phase began October 1, 2000 with in-house review of the FY 00 and FY 01 two-year budget process and consideration of comments from the review of prior budget documents by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). The FY 00 and FY 01 biennial (two-year) budget received GFOA's *Distinguished Budget Presentation Award*. The planning phase continued with preparation of budget instructions, examples, and training materials.

The Preparation Phase for all BOCC funded organizations began with a budget "kick-off" meeting on January 10, 2001. This meeting included the delivery of budget instructions and reports. Departments and agencies were told to prepare budgets at what is called the "continuation level", that is, pricing FY 02 service and activity levels with modest cost increases. Continuation level funding is the level of funding needed to provide the same level of services in the next fiscal year as was provided in the current fiscal year. It does not necessarily provide funding for growth in demand for services. Departments requiring such funding must submit a new or revised decision unit.

These "decision units" describe distinct services and levels at which these services may be offered. Department or agency management then ranks each decision unit by funding source against all decision units in the funding source and in the department. The ranking of "decision units" gives management a means of evaluating what services could be offered at a variety of funding levels by a department. For FY 02 and FY 03, departments were also allowed to submit "desired decision units" reflecting service or activity levels above the "continuation level."

The deadline for BOCC departments and agencies to submit their budget packages to the Management and Budget Department was March 2, 2001. Although Florida Statutes allow most Constitutional Officers to submit their budgets on June 1st, the County Administrator asked them to make their submissions earlier to

accommodate an accelerated schedule. Most were able to supply preliminary budget information in the requested timeframe.

The Review Phase consisted of scheduled public budget hearings with the County Administrator, appropriate Assistant County Administrator, Department Director and budget staff to review and discuss the departmental budget submittals. These sessions began in March and continued through May. In response to the Commission's request, the structure of these meetings was made more formal, they were videotaped and Commissioners and the public were invited to attend.

In addition to the departmental budget hearings, there were six formal budget workshops conducted with the BOCC. These workshops were scheduled at the request of the Board so that they could be more involved in the budget process and provide input into the prioritization of issues that lead to the development of the Recommended Budget.

The Public Adoption Phase began with the formal presentation of the County Administrator's Recommended Budget on June 6, 2001. The BOCC review of the budget and the public process of review, change, and formal adoption lasted through late September. This phase included nine workshops with the BOCC and four public hearings of which two were mandatory under State law. Although two of these public hearings were not required by State law, the BOCC wanted to give county residents opportunities for input to the budget prior to the Board setting proposed millage rates.

The second milestone of this phase involved setting the proposed millage rates for FY 02. The proposed millage rates for FY 02 were set at a budget reconciliation workshop on August 2nd. The proposed millage rates approved at the August 2nd workshop were used by the Property Appraiser to prepare Truth-in-Millage (TRIM) notices mailed to property owners in mid-August.

TRIM notices advise County taxpayers of how tax rates proposed by all local taxing authorities combined

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with current information on assessed value of real property will affect the taxes on each taxed parcel of land. The TRIM notice also serves as the official notification of the time and place of the first public hearing for adoption of both tentative millage rates and a tentative budget by each taxing authority.

The third milestone in this phase was the first of two State required public budget hearings. The first public budget hearing was held on September 6th. After hearing public testimony at the hearing, the BOCC

adopted tentative millage rates and a tentative FY 02 budget.

The fourth and final milestone in this phase was the adoption of the FY 02 budget, setting the final millage rates, and adopting the FY 02 through FY 07 Capital Improvement Program. These actions were taken at the second public hearing held on September 20th. The second public hearing was advertised by a published notice with detail information of the tentative millage rates and the tentative budget.

BUDGET PROCESS MILESTONES

Planning

- **October - December - Staff review of previous biennial budget process, comments from GFOA reviewers, and Board policies.**

Preparation

- **January 10 – Budget “Kickoff” Meeting; Distribute Budget Instructions and Reports**
- **March 2 - Budget Submissions Due**
- **June 1 - Budget Submissions Due From Sheriff, Clerk, Property Appraiser, and Supervisor of Elections**

Review

- **January 24 – Presentation of financial projections and discussion of long range targets for tax burdens**
- **February 14 – Forecasts of other major County revenues; feasibility of buying-down debt; BOCC budget review process and staffing; retaining the non-competitive funding program; Community Investment Tax pro-forma; presentation of capital project request list; and discussion of budget priority questionnaire**
- **March 14 – Presentation of impact fee comparison; school site impact fees; transportation and right-of-way impact fees; Fire Rescue service levels, discussion of issues pertaining to transportation, HARTline, and the Parks and Recreation PR2000 Report**
- **April 25 – Presentation on transportation revenue and expenditure projections for the MPO; Sheriff’s Office per capita staffing; Code Enforcement service level;**

CDBG allocation; Water Team funding; and HARTline subsidy

- **May 3 – Fleet Management Department staffing level; Water Resource Team funding; staffing and service levels of the code enforcement function; and discussion of policy direction on various issues**
- **May 15 – Fire Rescue service level; building additional reserves in major operating funds, and further reductions in the Countywide operating millage**
- **March through May - County Administrator review of proposed budgets and decision units with Management and Budget Department staff and the Assistant County Administrators and representatives from BOCC departments, agencies and Constitutional Officers. These reviews were conducted as public meetings, were video taped and open to Commissioners.**
- **June 1 - Preliminary tax roll information from the Property Appraiser’s Office available.**

Public Adoption

- **June 6 - County Administrator presents the Budget at a regular BOCC meeting.**
- **June 13 – Budget Workshop to review the budget message, financial schedules and review organizational budgets for the BOCC, County Attorney, and Administrative Services**
- **June 14 – Budget Workshop to review organizational budgets for Economic Development, Fleet Management, Human Resources, Information and Technology Services, Management and Budget (including competitive and non-competitive funding program), Purchasing, Real Estate, and Aging Services**

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- **June 14 – Budget Public Hearing to accept public comment on the Operating and Capital Improvement Budgets**
- **June 19 – Budget Workshop to review organizational budgets for Library Services, Medical Examiner, Community Improvement, Fire Rescue, Planning and Growth Management, Parks and Recreation, and Public Safety**
- **June 21 – Budget Workshop to review organizational budgets for the County Administrator, Consumer Protection, Community Liaisons, Communications, Neighborhood Relations, Public Affairs, Quality Services, Debt Management, and Animal Services**
- **June 21 - Budget Public Hearings to accept public comment on the Operating and Capital Improvement Budgets**
- **July 1 - Official preliminary taxable values provided by the Property Appraiser’s Office**
- **July 10 – Budget Workshop to review organizational budgets for the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Public Defender, Property Appraiser, State Attorney, Victim Assistance, Tax Collector, Judicial Branch, Civil Service Board, EPC, Legislative Delegation, Law Library, and the Soil and Water Conservation Board**
- **July 12 – Budget Workshop to update the Board on the status of “flagged” items and budget issues, to review organizational budgets for the City-County Planning Commission, and to review the Capital Improvement Program for Parks, Fire Rescue, and Government Facilities**
- **July 15 - County Administrator’s Recommended FY 02 Budget filed with the Clerk in accordance with Florida Statutes**
- **July 31 – Budget Workshop to review organizational budgets for the Supervisor of Elections, Sheriff, Public Works, Solid Waste, Water, and the Water Resources Team**
- **July 31 – Budget Workshop to review organizational budgets for Health and Social Services, Children’s Services, Cooperative Extension, and Equal Opportunity and to review the Capital Improvement Program for Libraries, Solid Waste, Stormwater, Transportation, Water, Wastewater and Reclaimed Water**
- **August 2 - BOCC Workshop to Reconcile Changes to the Budget and Set Proposed TRIM Millage Rates**
- **September 6 - First State-Required Public Hearing to Adopt Tentative Millage Rates and Tentative Budget**
- **September 20 - Second State-Required Public Hearing to Adopt Final Millage Rates and the FY 02 Operating and Capital Budgets**