

RESERVES: DESCRIPTIONS AND GENERAL FUND RESERVES

Polk County Board of County Commissioners realizes it is essential for governments to maintain adequate levels of reserves and fund balance to mitigate current and future risks, such as revenue shortfalls, natural disasters, and unanticipated expenditures. Therefore, reserves are budgeted in each fund, as appropriate, in four major reserves accounts and various miscellaneous reserves accounts. Reserves are generally funded from prior year carry-forward balances and considered one-time money. The Board does not practice funding recurring expenses using one-time reserves or money.

Reserve for Budget Stabilization: Primarily a reserve in the County's General Fund, this reserve is used to provide short-term cash flow to maintain service levels when incoming revenue is not sufficient to cover expenditures or when an economic downturn causes a shortfall in revenues.

Reserve for Contingency: A reserve allocated to fund unanticipated or emergency expenditures during the fiscal year. Such events include, but are not limited to, matching dollars for grants, capital projects, outside agency requests, necessary division budget increases, new program initiatives, and expenditures relative to natural and unnatural disasters that fundamentally alters the current tax base. By statute, this reserve cannot exceed 10% of the total fund in which it is budgeted. (See Florida Statutes 129.01(2)(c)). For example, the General Fund has a Reserve for Contingency account of about \$7.8 million to fund unanticipated projects, to meet grant match needs, and to address natural disasters.

Reserve for Future Capital: This reserve should be maintained to fund future capital projects, as identified in the Community Investment Program plan. The reserve is funded from carryforward balances from one year to the next to ensure that funds are available in future years for anticipated project expenses.

Reserve for Debt Service: Debt Service reserves will be maintained as a depository for funds for payment of long-term debt as required by bond covenants, other obligations, or general practice.

Miscellaneous Reserves: Miscellaneous reserves consist of funds developed on a case-by-case basis to mitigate the effect of unforeseen funding needs. Examples include Reserve for Salary Adjustment and Reserve for Landfill Closure.

General Fund Reserves

All funds, except the General Fund, function similarly to a trust fund. As such, revenues generated in non-general funds can only be used within that fund and only for a certain purpose. Therefore, neither current year revenues nor reserves from other funds may be used to stabilize or supplement General Fund revenue. For example, the County's Transportation Trust Fund revenues are derived from gas tax; per State statutes, gas tax may only be used for transportation-related expenses.

FY 24/25 General Fund Reserves

Reserve	Amount
Aircraft for Sheriff	5,001,954
Budget Stabilization	42,938,479
Contingencies	7,788,700
Economic Development	2,398,621
Mitigation Match	1,878,236
MSBU & Assessment	99,841
Property Appraiser-Contingencies	500,000
Self-Insurance Claims	7,860,000
State Attorney Computer Project	50,000
Tax Collector-Contingencies	3,121,963
Tax Collector-Debt Service	2,100,341
Total	73,738,135