

RESERVE FUND POLICY

OVERVIEW

The Bear Valley Water District (District) considers careful fiscal planning essential to the long term, sustainable delivery of its core services, specifically the collection, treatment and disposal of waste water for all of its customers as well as the careful stewardship of the public's financial and environmental assets.

The District has determined that a key part of the District's financial preparedness rests on sound reserve policies and guidelines. This policy is intended to provide for the prudent accumulation and management of designated reserve funds to achieve the District's long term financial goals.

OBJECTIVES

Managed and allocated effectively, reserves ultimately provide stakeholders a variety of benefits. In addition to financial policies established to guarantee that the District can meet the future financial requirements of customer demand and system reliability, reserve policies are also considered essential to ensure stable rates for ratepayers in the District, well-maintained public assets, emergency preparedness, capital improvement and replacement of assets, savings to balance budgets and the proper allocation of funds for the future growth and expansion of facilities.

This Reserve Fund Policy was developed to clearly identify specific designated reserve funds and govern how they will be managed. It is the intent of this Reserve Fund Policy to clearly identify types of reserve funds as well as define the purpose, target balance, use and funding mechanism of each fund. The adequacy of the target reserve year-end balance ranges and/or annual contributions will be reviewed annually during the budgeting process and may be revised accordingly as necessary.

The Board of Directors establishes the following reserve funds with this policy:

1.0 - Sewer Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Emergency Reserve Fund

2.0 - Sewer Capital Improvement & Replacement Program (CIP) Reserve Fund

3.0 - Sewer System Capacity Fee Reserve Fund

1.0 SEWER OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE (O&M) EMERGENCY RESERVE FUND

- 1.1. Fund Type: Assigned Fund (GASB 54) - The District's Assigned Fund balance classification reflects a fund that the Board of Directors intends to be used for specific purposes but is subject to neither the restricted nor committed levels of constraint bound by legislation or formal Board action. As an Assigned Fund, this lower level of constraint provides for more flexibility by the General Manager to access and utilize this fund as emergencies arise.
- 1.2. Purpose: To ensure cash resources are available to fund the daily administration, operation and maintenance activities necessary to provide District services in the event of unplanned major maintenance or equipment failure.
- 1.3. Target Balance: A minimum of three (3) months of O&M expenses to fund the District's operational expenditures during a potential emergency.

- 1.4. Methodology/Rationale: The District is required to have sufficient cash flow to meet the next three months of budgeted District expenditures (Government Code Section 53646(b)(3)). In addition to holding enough cash for 3 months of operating expenses, industry standards also suggest setting aside sufficient cash in anticipation of an emergency system failure to replace the most vulnerable component of your system or one that would cause the greatest disruption of service.
- 1.5. Use of Funds: This fund will be used to pay for unplanned, emergency O&M expenditures determined necessary by the Board and/or the General Manager.
- 1.6. Funding: Annual contributions will vary depending on the current balance of the fund and current year regular and emergency expenditures. The 5-year O&M expense average is approximately \$600,000 suggesting an O&M emergency fund balance of a minimum of \$150,000. The Agency will strive to fully fund this Reserve every year based on excess cash flow as available.

2.0 SEWER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP) RESERVE FUND

- 2.1. Fund Type: Committed Fund (GASB 54) - The District's Committed Fund balance classification is subject to internal constraints self-imposed by formal action of the District's Board of Directors. For committed fund balances, formal action of the Board is required to establish (and modify or rescind) a commitment of fund balance.
- 2.2. Purpose: Fees are collected for the future replacement of existing facilities and major equipment.
- 2.3. Target Balance: The target balance will comprise an amount determined by the Board of Directors which considers both the District's 5-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and the current total aggregate asset value as reflected in the most current depreciation schedule. The District records depreciation using the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of facilities and equipment. The 5-Year CIP assumes replacement of capital equipment equivalent to the depreciation schedule. At a minimum, the Board should allocate to the fund enough each fiscal year to adequately fund the 5-Year CIP.
- 2.4. Methodology/Rationale: The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) reserve fund is for system rehabilitation, long term equipment replacement and equipment and component purchases that meet the District's Capital Assets Policy. The fee is collected through ratepayer service fees to replace District facilities and equipment as they reach the end of their useful life and also to handle unanticipated repairs during the life-cycle. A key objective for accumulating capital reserves is to minimize external borrowing and interest expenses.
- 2.5. Use of Funds: The CIP Reserve Fund will be used to replace facilities and equipment as necessary to continue reliable and efficient delivery of District services. The Board of Directors will authorize use of planned capital reserves during the budget process. Capital reserves are also available for unplanned (unbudgeted) capital replacement projects.
- 2.6. Funding: At a minimum, the target annual funding amount of the CIP Fund should reflect the approved annual budgeted depreciation amount in conjunction with the approved 5-Year CIP Plan. However, by vote of the Board of Directors, this reserve fund balance may be fully funded either at once or incrementally to provide for capital reserves sufficient to cover the District's total depreciated fixed asset position.

3.0 SEWER SYSTEM CAPACITY CHARGE RESERVE FUND

- 3.1. Fund Type: Restricted Fund (GASB 54) - The District's Restricted Fund balance classification reflects a fund subject to externally imposed and legally enforceable constraints which limit the District's Board to redirecting these funds to other uses or funds. The California Water Code explicitly limits public water agencies use of capacity funds collected from new customers to expanding system capacity.
- 3.2. Purpose: Government Code Section 66013(b)(3) does not allow us to charge new or existing customers an arbitrary amount to fund a future, undefined capacity expansion project. On the other hand, we are permitted to charge a new customer a fee that reflects an appropriate share of the historic cost of the established capacity. The amount of this fee is periodically calculated and adjusted through an engineering report that is subject to board approval. This "capacity" fee is collected from new customers and is required by law to be reserved for future capacity expansion, even if no expansion plan is in place at that time.
- 3.3. Target Balance: The target balance shall be set as a function of any board approved capacity enhancement plans. In the absence of any such approved plans, no specific target shall be set, but the funds shall accrue as available. At the time the District may need to expand capacity in the system, the target balance will be set at the amount as determined by the District Engineer.
- 3.4. Methodology/Rationale: Capacity charges are based on the capacity of the District's wastewater system to provide service to customers. Capacity charges are determined by an engineering report that establishes the basis for the charge and how it was calculated. All applicants for new or additional sewer service to the District's Sewer System shall pay a Capacity Charge as defined by Government Code Section 66013(b)(3) and District Ordinance 71 prior to issuance of a permit by the District. Capacity Charges represent the property owner's proportional capital costs associated with existing system capacity for a new sewer connection at the time of the connection. The current capacity fee calculation reflects the recommended cost for each equivalent dwelling unit (EDU) served until such time as the District reaches its current system capacity.
- 3.5. Use of Funds: The funds shall be used only for system capacity expansion/enhancement projects which ensure the property owner's proportional share of capacity in the system is associated with the specific capital cost for a new sewer connection at the time of the connection.
- 3.6. Funding: This fee is collected with each service application from a vacant parcel with the intent to connect to the wastewater system. In addition, the per new connection value of treatment and distribution capacity will be charged to all new land development projects and deposited into this account. Interest earnings will be accrued on and added to fund balance, using the District's earnings rate on investments.