

BASIS OF BUDGETING AND BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

BASIS OF BUDGETING

All funds of the County are budgeted for and accounted for during the year on the modified accrual basis of accounting in accordance with North Carolina General Statutes. Under the modified accrual basis, revenues are recognized in the accounting period in which they become measurable and available to pay liabilities of the current period. Expenditures are recognized in the accounting period in which the costs for goods or services are incurred (except for unmatured principal and interest on general long-term debt, which are recognized when due). The County maintains encumbrance accounts under which purchase orders, contracts and other commitments are reserved against available appropriations.

The appropriations in the General Fund and annually budgeted projects in the Capital Projects Funds are formally budgeted and legally controlled on a departmental basis. Projects in the Capital Projects Funds with project-length budgets are controlled by project. The legal level of control varies for the Special Revenue Funds. Appropriations in the Rural Fire District Fund are by rural fire tax district; the appropriations in the Room Occupancy/Tourism Development Tax Fund are on a fund basis.

Concurrent with the adoption of the annual budget ordinance, the County approves a balanced financial plan for the Internal Service Fund. A financial plan is balanced when estimated expenses do not exceed estimated revenues. Any change in the financial plan during the year must be approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

Basis of accounting refers to how revenues and expenditures or expenses and related assets and liabilities are recognized in the accounts and reported in the combined financial statements. Governmental fund financial statements are reported using the current financial resources measurement focus and the modified accrual basis of accounting.

Revenues are recognized as soon as they are both measurable and available. Revenues are considered to be available when they are collectible within the current period or soon enough thereafter to pay liabilities of the current period. For this purpose, the government considers revenues, except for property taxes, to be available if they are collected within 90 days of the end of the current fiscal period. Expenditures are recorded when the related fund liability is incurred, except for principal and interest on general long-term debt, claims and judgments, and compensated absences, which are recognized as expenditures to the extent they have matured. General capital asset acquisitions are reported as expenditures in governmental funds. Proceeds of general long-term debt and acquisitions under capital leases are reported as other financing sources.

The government-wide, proprietary, and fiduciary fund financial statements are reported using the economic resources measurement focus and the accrual basis of accounting, except for the agency funds which have no measurement focus. Revenues are recorded when earned and expenses are recorded at the time liabilities are incurred, regardless of when the related cash flows take place. Non-exchange transactions, in which the County gives (or receives) value without directly receiving (or giving) equal value in exchange, include property taxes, grants, entitlements, and donations. On an accrual basis, revenue from property taxes is recognized in the fiscal year for which the taxes are levied. Revenue from grants, entitlements, and donations is recognized in the fiscal year in which all eligibility requirements have been satisfied.