

Mandeville adopts first-ever general fund reserve policy after weeks of debate



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Mandeville adopts first-ever general fund reserve policy after weeks of debate

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 **Denis Bechac**
This isn't something new, Bill. The City of Mandeville has always had a standing policy to have 6-months of the operating budget as a reserve.

22h Like Reply 👍 1


 **Rhonda Alleman**
[Denis Bechac](#) This ordinance requires only reserving 2 months of annual operating expenses.

21h Like Reply Message 👍 1

 **Robert Berning III** ✓
[Rhonda Alleman](#) And that is exactly why the whole thing is a total scam to try to

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Robert Berning III 

[Rhonda Alleman](#) And that is exactly why the whole thing is a total scam to try to cover for irresponsible budgeting and spending by Mayor Clay Madden.

3h Like Reply Message



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Write a reply...



Jason Zuckerman

No previous council has ever established such fiscal policy by law or resolution. This is a first and a win for the taxpayers of Mandeville. I actually offered an amendment to my own ordinance to double the bottom threshold from 20% to 40% of annual operating expenses. It was voted down 3-2. So we ended up at a minimum threshold of 20% and a resolution setting policy for this upcoming budget to double that. It's a start..a good one.

21h Like Reply Message



Denis Bechac

Well, this is the type of thing that occurs when you lose political institutional knowledge. It's an over-reaction to uncontrolled spending behavior disguised as good government fiscal policy. We'll see if this actually has an impact on budget expenditures.

19h Like Reply



Jason Zuckerman

[Denis Bechac](#) the days of good ole boy politics are over sir. It was time to codify



19h Like Reply



Jason Zuckerman

[Denis Bechac](#) the days of good ole boy politics are over sir. It was time to codify fiscal policy and I just did that. Give it a chance. It's a great start, in my opinion. It can be modified, tweaked, adjusted. But at least we have something on paper that the City never had before. It forced a discussion and a policy. I see that as a good thing.

19h Like Reply Message



Denis Bechac

We'll see if this slows down the spendthrift Mayor and the complicit council's "lemming-like" support.

19h Like Reply



Jason Zuckerman

[Denis Bechac](#) well, these "lemmings", most of us, just passed the first written fiscal policy in the history of the city. Hasn't been done before. Councils and administrations have been winging it for years through the budget process. It's on paper now, it's law. It will force difficult decisions to be made. I stand by that being a good thing.

18h Like Reply Message



Denis Bechac

Never before in history has a mayor depleted reserves at the pace this mayor has during his 5 years in office.



Northshore Nosey Neighbors

Mandeville Daily · 1d · 🌐 ★ Rising contributor



19h Like Reply



Jason Zuckerman

[Denis Bechac](#) well, these "lemmings", most of us, just passed the first written fiscal policy in the history of the city. Hasn't been done before. Councils and administrations have been winging it for years through the budget process. It's on paper now, it's law. It will force difficult decisions to be made. I stand by that being a good thing.

18h Like Reply Message



Denis Bechac

Never before in history has a mayor depleted reserves at the pace this mayor has during his 5 years in office.

Never before in the history of this city has the budget have to be supplemented for multiple consecutive years with one time money due to recurring expenses exceeding recurring revenue.

etc etc etc

How about an ordinance requiring a structurally balanced budget ???

Now THAT would be newsworthy!!!

17h Like Reply



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All Photos Reels



Denis Bechac

4h · 🌐



Clay Madden inherited a healthy General Fund (GF) of \$23 million from the former administration....and recurring expenses were covered and paid for with recurring revenue - with extra funds going back into the GF to pay for capital projects and other city expenses.

Not anymore with the Madden administration...as this has been occurring for 6 years running.

Madden and the council has spent down the GF to \$10 million and recurring revenue does not cover recurring expenses. The budget gaps have been filled with one time federal money received by the city - which should never be used to balance a budget.

The fiscal irresponsibility is startling.

Now the council masks this problem with a "feel good" ordinance requiring only 2 months of emergency money for the city!! 2 months!! Mandeville's standing financial policy, for over 25 years, has been a 6-month reserve of the general fund.

Do you feel comfortable having only 2 months of emergency money for your household?

This reckless ordinance (piece of paper) is a distraction from the sad truth that the city is overspending and running down city reserves that will soon have Mandeville in the same position as New Orleans.

Don't be fooled.



Jason Zuckerman - Mandeville City Council at Large

June 25 at 9:30 PM · ⚙️



A HUGE WIN tonight for fiscal responsibility for the City of Mandeville! Only one vote against my Ordinance to set by law an absolute minimum threshold for our General Fund balance and my Resolution to set our goal for this year at twice that not a single amendment (other than my own) and both passed 4-1. A HUGE



All comments ▾



Jason Zuckerman

A completely incomplete and dishonest post. You fail to mention the ordinance that was passed is an absolute minimum threshold, set now by law, not a target. The target for this upcoming fiscal year was set by resolution at the same meeting at more than twice that, and more than twice what is recommended for municipalities such as ours. You also fail to mention there has never been a formal fiscal policy set by law or resolution passed by the council, ever. Show me, show us all, the 6 month policy you claim here has been in place. You also fail to say what the General Fund balance should be....what should it be sir???

I've been asking that question through the budget process for years now and now it's been established. It's been discussed at the quarterly budget meetings and now established by law and resolutio... See more

3h Like Reply



 Author

Denise Bechac

Here it comes folks...let the gaslighting and marginalization begin!

3h Like Reply



Jason Zuckerman

[Denise Bechac](#) exactly my point. I normally would not respond but this post is so inaccurate and incomplete I could not let it stand without a reply. Details matter sir.


3h Like Reply



Write a replv...

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<  **Denise Bechac**
4h · 🌐



 Author

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3h Like Reply



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3h Like Reply



Write a reply...



Kevin Vogeltanz

Hello Mr. Bechac, I guess I don't understand what you're upset about. The city didn't have any law, resolution, or formal or informal guidance on a minimal reserve for the general fund. Councilman Zuckerman sponsored an ordinance to set a minimum reserve for all future budgets. That passed. He then sponsored a resolution concerning the city's fiscal policy — setting the target reserve balance of the general fund at between 30% and 40% of yearly recurring operating expenses. That passed too.

If the mayor's office and council stick to that 40% target, that would leave about \$10 million as a reserve in the general fund — enough to pay for a Hurricane Ida-level cleanup response and two months of operating expenses on top of that.

I can understand your perspective if you think "that's not high enough" as a reserve, but before... See more

2h Like Reply



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Denis Bechac

4h · 🌐



in the general fund ... enough to pay for a hurricane
Ida-level cleanup response and two months of
operating expenses on top of that.

I can understand your perspective if you think "that's
not high enough" as a reserve, but before the council
voted at last meeting, there was no reserve set by law
whatsoever.

Anyway, as I said during the meeting, I think this was
a good place to start, and I expect we and future
council's will continue to revise and calibrate until we
get it best.

Finally, I encourage you and anyone else to certainly
attend any council meeting you like. Every second
and fourth Thursday of the month at 6:00 pm in the
council chamber. I truly welcome all public comment,
and it truly does influence my thinking on the matter. I
hope to see you during our upcoming budget
meetings this summer.

Best,
Kevin Vogeltanz
Mandeville Councilman District 2

2h Like Reply



Author


Denis Bechac

It's not the written nature of the ordinance that's
problematic...it's the "low bar" being set ...why
the need for an additional resolution, which is
nothing more than a statement...no force of
law...why not just pass a healthy balanced
budget ordinance?

This reminds me of the water bill disaster ... give
us more time and we will figure it out! And how
has that worked out??? (review the latest
financial report for the answer) Working out real

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<  **Denise Bechac**
4h · 🌐



Mandeville Councilman District 2

2h Like Reply



 Author

Denise Bechac

It's not the written nature of the ordinance that's problematic...it's the "low bar" being set ...why the need for an additional resolution, which is nothing more than a statement...no force of law...why not just pass a healthy balanced budget ordinance?

This reminds me of the water bill disaster ... give us more time and we will figure it out! And how has that worked out??? (review the latest financial report for the answer) Working out real world consequences should be done on the FRONT end...before attempting to pass legislation. These matters are far too serious to play the trial and error game.

1h Like Reply




Jason Zuckerman

[Denise Bechac](#) Did you watch the meeting? It was explained very clearly. In fact, I even proposed an amendment myself to set the absolute minimum threshold by law at 40% but that amendment failed. It can always be adjusted up at any time but at least we have something formalized now rather than relying on "institutional political knowledge"... which to me means trust those that have been around forever and we don't need to codify anything. As far as "working it out on the front end"...again, details matter sir. Debate happens in open meetings not behind closed doors. This was debated, in public, over several meetings and for the first time we passed written fiscal policy for the city.

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<  Denis Bechac
4h · 🌐



Kevin Vogeltanz
Mandeville Councilman District 2

2h Like Reply



 Author

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Denis Bechac

4h · 🌐



time we passed written fiscal policy for the city. Were you at any of those meetings to provide input during public comment? Did you email any council members with your thoughts since this has been on the table? I didn't see either. The keyboard is a powerful tool to some sir, but again...details matter.

1h Like Reply



Author

Denis Bechac

2 minutes does not promote healthy debate ...

1h Like Reply



Karen Johnston Williams

[Kevin Vogeltanz](#), I don't understand such things, but it seems like you are saying that as long as there is no law against spending down the GF, then it's okay that it was done. In that case, it seems we'd better have laws for a common sense issue. I think it is just common sense to have the bigger GF balance. Let the recurring influx of revenue take care of the recurring debt. Thereby letting the GF sit and grow if it receives interest.

1h Like Reply



Kevin Vogeltanz

To [Denis](#), with all due respect, I'm not sure your comments are well founded. At the council's June 11 meeting, Councilman Zuckerman actually offered an amendment to his own ordinance to increase the minimal fund balance proposed in the budget from 20% to 40%. Zuckerman and I both voted for that. The amendment failed 3-2. (That's not a knock on my council colleagues, btw. I think they had

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Denis Bechac

4h · 🌐



proposed in the budget from 20% to 40%. Zuckerman and I both voted for that. The amendment failed 3-2. (That's not a knock on my council colleagues, btw, I think they had completely valid reasons for voting against the amendment, specifically a preference for shifting that higher threshold to a target resolution, at least for this initial budget year to see how the ordinance effects discussion in real time). Indeed, that's the principle reason why Councilman Zuckerman's resolution setting the "target" rate to 30 to 40% was taken up at the next meeting in the first place.... [See more](#)



6/11/26 City of Mandeville Council Meeting

vimeo.com

32m Like Reply



Kevin Vogeltanz

Hello [Karen Johnston Williams](#), good question. I certainly don't think that the mayor or council should spend down the general fund regardless of whether there's a minimum fund-balance ordinance or not. That's why, during last year's budget hearings, I proposed a slate of amendments to cut operating-budget spending for this year by more than \$2 million (ultimately those amendments didn't pass). I'd like to think my record on these fiscal matters is pretty clear and strong. I support fiscally responsible budget policy, decreasing unneeded spending wherever possible before attempting to cut public services or raising revenues. In fact, I feel confident that each of my council colleagues agrees, and that's why Councilman Zuckerman's budget ordinance and resolution passed.

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Denis Bechac

4h · 🌐



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If you're interested in seeing more a... See more

25m Like Reply



Jason Zuckerman

[Denis Bechac](#) so the Council debated for two minutes? Come on sir. You have not addressed any single point I raised or question I asked of you in multiple replies. Not one. Besides not codifying anything but relying on "institutional political knowledge" to set fiscal policy you have not once said what you believe the annual ending General Fund balance should be from year to year.

If it's not 30-40% of annual operating expenses as we just set on Thursday, and that's what we set for FY 26-27, what should it be? And why? I am truly interested in that answer. That's for anyone reading this... if it's not what we passed, what should we change it to and why? We then have something to work with.

If you had made it to one of our meet... See more

10m Like Reply



Write a reply...



Liam Constantino Dixon

EVERY FINANCIAL planner insists on 6 months

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Denis Bechac

4h · 🌐



If you had made it to one of our meet... See more

10m Like Reply



Write a reply...



Liam Constantino Dixon

EVERY FINANCIAL planner insists on 6 months emergency funds for a single member household to the largest corporation, including municipalities

2h Like Reply



Annette Abney

We need [Donald Villere](#)

2h Like Reply



Jason Olivier

The city is in deep trouble and rose-colored glasses do not help

2h Like Reply



Johanna Miner

Whose running for Mayor???

Anyone 🤔

4h Like Reply



Author

Denis Bechac

Hopefully not Madden... OR ANYONE ELSE ON THE COUNCIL WHO VOTED FOR THIS.

3h Like Reply



Johanna Miner

[Denis Bechac](#) Madden is running 😊

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Denis Bechac

4h · 🌐



THE COUNCIL WHO VOTED FOR THIS.

3h Like Reply



Johanna Miner

[Denis Bechac](#) Madden is running 😊

3h Like Reply



Write a reply...



Walter Reed

I always did think that you were a smart guy. Great advice. W

2h Like Reply



Ellen Rein Pierce

I think a percentage is a good target but I think it should be based on unrestricted fund balance. I also don't know how we can start the budget process without knowing what that number is as of 8/31/25 yet.

1h Like Reply



Ellen Rein Pierce

The unrestricted fund balance has gone from 2019 13.4M, 2020 14.4M, 2021 16.6M, 2022 13.7M, 2023 4.3M, 2024 1.8M. I will be shocked if it is still a positive number as of 8/31/25.

54m Like Reply



Ellen Rein Pierce

And we're almost to 8/31/26.

26m Like Reply



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