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**Appoint a
Budget Officer**

- **GS 153A-101:** Board of Commissioners to direct fiscal policy of the county
- **§ 159-9. Budget officer.**
- Each local government and public authority shall appoint a budget officer to serve at the will of the governing board
- **§ 160A-148. Powers and duties of manager.** The manager ...shall have the following powers and duties:...
 - He shall prepare and submit the annual budget and capital program to the council.
 - He shall annually submit to the council and make available to the public a complete report on the finances and administrative activities of the city as of the end of the fiscal year.

2

Levy taxes in a sufficient amount to meet the ongoing needs of the local unit and its citizens.

Use the budget as a planning tool; it is not an audit.

Planning for future needs, ongoing operational needs, and capital asset maintenance and improvements should be a part of their budget discussions.

3

Hire a qualified Certified Public Accountant to annually audit the financial records of the unit.

- The board should issue requests for competitive bids for the unit's audit firm at least every five years.
- The auditor reports to the elected body, not to the manager; the board should receive the annual audit and ask for any management letter in a public meeting.

4

Entrust to the local government manager the daily management of the financial affairs of the unit.

- Leave to the manager the day-to-day management and oversight of the financial condition of the local unit.
- Understand the importance of having the Finance Office use Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)

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Be at all times aware of the overall financial condition of the unit of government.

- Ask for and review periodic financial reports – monthly/quarterly
- Understand the purpose and use of Fund Balance – encumbered/unencumbered.

6

Make sure properties are revalued at least every eight years.

- Appointing a separate Board of Equalization and Review is recommended practice
- In each year of a revaluation, the budget officer shall include a revenue-neutral tax rate in the budget for comparison purposes.

7

Adhere to the statutory requirements of the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act.

- Understand and honor the budget timeline
- Attend all meetings and ask question.
- Use the budget process as an opportunity to learn, and to educate the citizens about the role local government plays in their lives.

8

Understand where the unit's revenues come from, and when.

- Board members should fully understand the unit's revenue sources: property, sales, and others.
- The board should understand the unit's cash flow.
- The Board should be aware of the timeline for distribution of state-shared revenues and for receipt of property tax revenues.

9

Engage in strategic discussions about the unit's future capital needs.

- A wish list is not a capital improvement plan.
- "Pay as you go" budgeting for capital assets can be costly; debt can be a good option if managed properly.

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USE THE FULL FAITH AND CREDIT OF THE UNIT WISELY.

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