

# Introduction to Nonprofit Budgeting

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# Introductions and Logistics

- ▶ Hartford Public Library – Jessica Dolan
- ▶ Greater Hartford Gives Foundation – Lucas Codognolla
- ▶ Facilitator – Jennifer Hockenhull, CPA

# Learning Objectives

- ▶ Understand why organizations need to prepare annual realistic budgets.
- ▶ Steps to prepare a budget.
- ▶ Strategies to consider when preparing a budget.
- ▶ How to obtain budget approval from your board.
- ▶ How to monitor your budget.

# Why Do We Need a Budget?

- ▶ The budget is an organization's annual financial plan that translates organizational goals and objectives into dollars.
- ▶ Allow those outside of management to understand what the organization's priorities are for the upcoming year.
- ▶ Required for grant submission.
- ▶ Road map for the upcoming year.
- ▶ NOTE: Budgets are not meant to be exact – they are a guide and could require mid-year changes.

# 10 Step Budgeting Checklist

*(from Propel Nonprofits (formerly  
Nonprofits Assistance Fund))*

1. Determine timeline
2. Agree on goals (Board and Management)
3. Understand current financial status
4. Agree on budget approach
5. Develop draft expense budget
6. Develop draft income budget
7. Review draft budget
8. Approve budget
9. Document budget decisions
10. Implement budget

# Budget Calendar

- ▶ At least 2-3 months before adoption
  - ▶ Initial Discussion with Governing Body
  - ▶ Initial Discussion with Management/Leadership
  - ▶ Prepare draft revenue and expense estimates
- ▶ 1-2 months before adoption
  - ▶ Present high-level (summary) budget to Finance Committee for feedback
  - ▶ Revisit with Management/Leadership
- ▶ 1 month before start of new year
  - ▶ Request approval from Governing Body

# Budget Calendar

Due Date	Responsible Person	Department	Task
3/15/2026	Executive Director		Meet with Board Chair to discuss priorities for the following year
3/20/2026	Executive Director	Finance Manager	Discuss current year financial status and future year requirements; prepare revenue estimates, if information is available
3/21/2026	Finance Manager		Prepare and distribute budget sheets (should include prior year and current year actual data; any known expenses; guidelines)
3/21/2026	ED/Finance	Programs Teams	Meet to discuss upcoming priorities, guidelines (any known increases in salary, benefits, etc.)
3/30/2026	Program Teams		Return first draft of budget requests to Finance Manager
4/10/2026	ED/Finance	Manager	Review requests and consolidate into overall budget document; discuss needs to meet budget strategy
4/15/2026	Program Teams		Meet individually with ED/Finance Director to review requests and make recommendations for changes
4/20/2026	ED/Finance Committee		Meet with the Finance Committee to share high level budget projections; request feedback; include a budget brief highlighting changes from prior years, major program/activities to be funded, assumptions used (3% increase in salaries across the board, 10% increase in benefit costs, assume a 6% increase in individual donations, etc.)
4/30/2026	Finance Manager		Review feedback from Finance Committee; make necessary adjustments
5/15/2026	ED/Board		Share draft budget with the Board; request feedback
5/30/2026	Finance Manager		Prepare final draft of the budget for Board review and approval
6/15/2026	Board		Approve the budget for the upcoming year

# Budget Brief/Summary

## Organization's Name

### 2025 Budget Brief

The 2025 Budget for XYZ Organization includes the following major revenue assumptions:

- 6% increase in overall individual contributions based on current trends
- A \$5,000 grant from ABC Corporation to fund Program D, a new program for 2025.
- Flat revenue from our annual gala based on the last 3 years of revenue from this event.
- A \$20,000 grant from the State; however, this funding is not certain at this time, therefore, associated expenses are identified and will only be spent if the grant is received.

The 2025 Budget for XYZ Organization includes the following major expenditure assumptions:

- 5% across the board salary increases, however, actual increases will be based on performance. Current COLA increases would be 2.5% if no merit increases were considered.
- Two (2) new positions were added to cover the needs of the new programs – these positions are grant-funded and grant-dependent; if the grants are not received, the positions will not be filled.
- 10% increase in benefits based on information provided by our broker.
- Increases in gala costs are included

# Budgeting Strategies

- ▶ **Balanced Budget** (what you spend is what you bring in)
- ▶ **Budgeting for a surplus/deficit** (surplus if you are trying to pay off debt or saving for a purpose/deficit if you received funds in a prior year)
- ▶ **Cash Basis Budgeting** (funding depreciation, comparing budget to actual when preparing monthly financial statements)
- ▶ **Methods**
  - ▶ Zero-based
  - ▶ Income
  - ▶ Last Year Comparison

# Types of Budgets

- ▶ Line item
- ▶ Program-based Budget and Project-based Budget
  - ▶ Most often needed for grant proposals
- ▶ Capital Budget
- ▶ Multi-Year Budget



# Budgets

# Questions?

# Revenue Budget

## **What types of revenue does your organization bring in?**

- Government Grants (could have audit implications)
- Industry Grants
- Event Income – ticket sales, sponsorships, auction income, etc.
- Individual and Corporate Giving
- Board Member Giving
- Fee for Service/Earned Income
- Investment Income
- In-Kind Donations
- Endowment Funding (note the amount that can be spent in a year)

# Revenue Budget

## How do I estimate future revenue?

- Be realistic!
- Use Year-to-Date actuals/projections and prior year results as a guide
- Reach out to major donors/funders
- Review current outstanding grant applications
- Take into account any factors that might change future funding sources

# Revenue Budget

## Program Budget Revenue Considerations:

- Be realistic!
- Will you be receiving other grants to fund the program?
- Will there be earned income related to the program (participant fees, etc.)?
- Will you be receiving industry sponsorships for your program?

# Revenue Budget

## Budget Worksheet: Income Projection

	Projection to Current Year-End	Proposed Budget	Certain	Reasonably Certain	Uncertain/ Possible	Total
<b>SUPPORT</b>						
Government Grants						
1.	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$ -
2.						-
3.						-
Foundation Grants						
1.						-
2.						-
3.						-
4.						-
5.						-
6.						-
7.						-
8.						-

# Revenue Budget

## Budget Worksheet: Program-Based Budget For the Period \_\_\_\_\_.

# Revenue Budget

**Any Questions on  
Revenue?**

# Expenditure Budget

**What types of expenditures does your organization have?**

- Salaries, Benefits, Staff Development
- Direct Program Costs (only incur if the program occurs)
- Rent and other occupancy costs
- Travel
- Fundraising and other event expenses
- Accounting, IT, Legal, and other professional services
- Liability, Directors & Officers, and Cyber Insurance

# Expenditure Budget

## How do I estimate expenditures?

- Use Year-to-Date actuals and prior year results as a guide
- Take into account any assumed across the board salary and benefit increases (typically your largest expense category)
  - Attrition (staff turnover) savings?
- Include any known expenses – lease expenses, contracted expenses, etc.

# Expenditure Budget

## How do I estimate expenditures?

- Expenses for grant-funded projects (watch out for grant revenue received in one year that will be spent in a future year!)
- Include estimated increases for other services (insurance, tax/audit, professional services, etc.)
- Obtain quotes – best practice is (3) quotes from difference vendors (you don't need to go with the lowest quote! But keep quotes and document why you chose the vendor)

# Expenditure Budget

## Personnel Expenditures and Allocations

- Personnel is typically the largest line item in the budget
- Consider any required increase (contractual), industry standards, cost of living, etc.
- Discuss benefit increases with your broker early
- Consider including an attrition savings line if your organization has significant turnover
- Consider budgeting for full benefit costs

Employee Name	% Increase				4%				10%				Next Year Salary				Next Year Health Benefits				Next Year Total				
	Current Year Salary	Current Year Benefit Costs	Budgeted Next Year Salary	Budgeted Next Year Health Benefits	Program #1	Program #2	Program #3	Admin	Fundraising	Program #1	Program #2	Program #3	Admin	Fundraising	Program #1	Program #2	Program #3	Admin	Fundraising	Program #1	Program #2	Program #3	Admin	Fundraising	
Employee #1	10,000	10,000	10,400	11,000	5,200	5,200				5,500	5,500				10,700	10,700	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Employee #2	20,000	10,000	20,800	11,000			20,800					11,000				-	-	31,800	-	-	-				
Employee #3	30,000	10,000	31,200	11,000			31,200					11,000				-	-	42,200	-	-	-				
Employee #4	40,000	10,000	41,600	11,000		41,600					11,000				-	52,600	-	-	-	-					
Employee #5	50,000	10,000	52,000	11,000	52,000					11,000					63,000	-	-	-	-						
Employee #6	60,000	10,000	62,400	11,000	15,600	15,600		31,200		2,750	2,750		5,500		18,350	18,350	-	36,700	-						
Employee #7	70,000	5,000	72,800	5,500					36,400	36,400			2,750	2,750	-	-	-	39,150	39,150						
	280,000	65,000	291,200	71,500	72,800	62,400	52,000	67,600	36,400	19,250	19,250	22,000	8,250	2,750	92,050	81,650	74,000	75,850	39,150						

# Expenditure Budget

## Program Budget Expenditures Considerations:

- Be realistic!
- Who will be working on the program?
  - Estimate the cost based on the % of time each person will spend on the program – include salary and benefits – and if for a future year, don't forget to include estimated increases in costs!
- What supplies will be needed for the program?
- What outside consultants might be required?
- Indirect costs may be allowed as well (check the grant application!)

# Direct vs. Indirect

- ▶ **Direct costs** are those easily identifiable as costs associated with a program and are often variable (if a program doesn't happen, neither do the costs)
  - ▶ Supplies for a program
  - ▶ Salary for a Program Manager
  - ▶ Rent for a daycare center
- ▶ **Indirect costs** are those that are not directly related to a program and are typically fixed
  - ▶ Accountant Costs
  - ▶ IT Costs
  - ▶ Rent
  - ▶ Insurance

# Expenditure Budget

## Budget Worksheet: Program-Based Budget For the Period ,

# Expenditure Budget

**Any Questions on  
Expenditures?**

# Sharing the Budget with the Board

**Once you have the draft budget ready for Board evaluation, prepare a summary document:**

- Revenue by Category
- Expenditures in larger buckets
- Consider sharing information by program, if helpful for your board

**Work with your board leadership and/or Finance committee to:**

- Request feedback and allow for time to make adjustments
- Request approval from the Board (ideally before the start of the next year)

# Monitoring the Budget

## ► My budget is done – now what?

- Enter budget into financial software
- Monthly budget comparisons to actual results
- YTD budget comparison to actual results
- Budget revisions/mid-course corrections

# Monitoring the Budget - Grants

## ► My grant budget is done – now what?

- Monitor budget to actual results for each grant – are you over or underspending?
- Budgets for grant-funded projects can't change without approval from the grantor
- When entering expenditures related to grants, it is important to track in the financial system for ease and accuracy of reporting

# Monitoring the Budget

**Budget Worksheet: Budget to Actual Comparisons**  
For the Period Ended \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

	Current Month			Year To-Date			Annual Budget
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	
<b>Income</b>							
Grants	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Government Contracts							
Fees							
Interest							
Miscellaneous							
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>Expenses</b>							
Salaries							
Payroll Taxes							
Health Benefits							
Other Benefits							
<b>Total Personnel Expenses</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
Audit/Acct. Fees							
Equipment Lease							
Insurance							
Training/Education - Staff							
Promotional Expenses							
Consultant Fees							
Program Activities							
Supplies							
Office Equip./Repair							
Postage							

# Mid-Year Budget Changes

## **What do I do if my actual expenses are exceeding the budget?**

- Review your by-laws to see if there are guidelines as to how to proceed
- Typically, your board approves an overall budget, allowing room to overspend in some areas and underspend in others, as long as the total budgeted expenditures are not exceeded
- If you are monitoring your budget monthly, you will be able to discuss any potential overages with your board and determine if you need to go back to the board for a mid-year budget adjustment
- Recommend ongoing, open communication with your board on any budget concerns regularly and timely



# Final Questions?

# Resources, Next Session and Wrap-Up

- ▶ Other Training Sessions
  - ▶ Stand-Alone Workshops :: Nonprofit Support Program
- ▶ Any follow up questions, please reach out to  
JenniferHockenhullCPA@gmail.com
- ▶ Connect with me on LinkedIn!  
[www.linkedin.com/in/jennifer-hockenhull-8a6bbb92](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jennifer-hockenhull-8a6bbb92)

THANK  
YOU!

# Supplemental Information

# Cost Allocation

- ▶ Common (or shared) costs are expenses that are not easily identifiable with a single function.
- ▶ Cost allocation is the process of assigning the cost among two or more activities/programs.
- ▶ A cost allocation plan is written documentation of methods used to allocate costs – this is up to the organization, and needs to be followed and be consistent!

# Common Cost Allocation: Step 1

## Categorize Expenses

**Program:** Program staff, program materials

**Administrative:** finance staff, audit expense, board meeting expenses

**Fundraising:** development staff, event expenses

**Common Costs:** rent and utilities, computers, office supplies, receptionist

## Common Cost Allocation: Step 2 Choose Allocation Method

Frequently used cost allocation rates:

1. FTE
2. Payroll
3. Square Footage

## Common Cost Allocation: Step 3 Allocate Shared Costs

### 1. Line by Line Method

-- a different rate of usage for each line item, or groups of line items

### 2. Bottom Line Method

-- all shared costs are grouped together and one allocation rate is used

# Capitalization and Depreciation

**Capitalization** means that:

- ▶ an item has a useful life of more than one year
- ▶ the item is recorded as an asset when purchased rather than expense

**Depreciation** is the process by which the cost of a capitalized item is recorded over the useful life of the item. The value of the asset is reduced each year due to wear and tear, age or obsolescence