

than the amount of the unencumbered balance thereof or below any amount required by law to be appropriated.

The County Commissioners may at any time during the fiscal year transfer part or all of any unencumbered appropriation balance between classifications of expenditures within a department, office or agency; and if in the last quarter of the fiscal year the Director of Finance so requests in writing, the Commissioners, by resolution effective immediately on adoption, may transfer part or all of any unencumbered appropriation balance from one department, office or agency to another. But no transfer shall be made from appropriations for debt service or for estimated cash deficit; and no appropriation may be reduced below any amount required by law to be appropriated.

54. Every appropriation, except an appropriation for a capital expenditure to be met from current revenues, shall lapse at the close of the fiscal year to the extent that it has not been expended or encumbered. An appropriation for a capital expenditure to be met from current revenues shall continue in force until the purpose for which it was made has been accomplished or abandoned. The purpose of any such appropriation for a capital expenditure shall be deemed abandoned if three years pass without any expenditure from, or encumbrance of, the appropriation concerned.

54A. No payment shall be authorized or made and no obligation incurred by the County except in accordance with appropriations duly made. No payment shall be made and no obligation incurred against any allotment or appropriation unless the Director of Finance first certifies that there is available a sufficient unencumbered balance in the allotment or appropriation to meet the payment or obligation. Every obligation incurred and every authorization of payment in violation of the provisions of this law shall be void.

Nothing contained in this section or other sections of this subtitle shall be construed to prevent the making or authorizing of payments or making of contracts for capital improvements to be financed wholly or partly by the issuance of bonds; nor shall it prevent the making, when permitted by law, of any contract or any lease providing for the payment of funds at a time beyond the end of the fiscal year in which the contract or lease is made.

54B. The Commissioners may by resolution establish a reserve for permanent public improvements and may appropriate thereto any portion of the general fund cash surplus not otherwise appropriated at the close of any fiscal year. They may likewise assign to said fund a specified portion of ad valorem taxes on real estate or delinquent taxes paid or the whole or part of any other tax. Appropriations from the said fund shall be made only to finance improvements included in the capital budget or to make a down payment thereon.

54C. The County Commissioners shall provide annually for an independent audit of the accounts and other evidences of financial transactions of the County and of every department, office and agency thereof. The audit shall be made by a Certified Public Accountant designated by the Commissioners, who has no personal interest, direct or indirect, in the fiscal affairs of the County or any