



**Resolution 2021-10**

**A Resolution of the Board of Directors of the  
Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency**

**Updating the Cash Reserve Policy for Fiscal Year 2021-2022**

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The Board of Directors of the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency (PV Water) does resolve as follows:

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Directors has determined that it is prudent to formally articulate a Cash Reserve Policy establishing general guidelines on cash reserves that will help to ensure the Agency's long-term financial and operational stability; and

**WHEREAS**, the Cash Reserve Policy was adopted in 2013, establishing minimal reserves with the intention of building over time; and

**WHEREAS**, the Cash Reserve Policy was reviewed and updated annually through Fiscal Year 2021-2022; and

**WHEREAS**, the Cash Reserve Policy serves as an important management decision-making tool in planning for and evaluating activities or transactions that could have a significant impact on PV Water's finances.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Directors of the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency does hereby update the Cash Reserve Policy, attached to this Resolution as Exhibit A and incorporated herein.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency, County of Santa Cruz, State of California, the **16th** day of **June 2021** by the following vote:

**AYES:** Newell, Culbertson, Zamora, Bannister, Broz, Rider  
**NOES:** None  
**ABSENT:** None  
**ABSTAIN:** None

  
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**Amy Newell, Chair**

**Attest:**

  
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**Laura R. Taay, Board Secretary**



# Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency Cash Reserve Policy

## Introduction

The Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency (PV Water or the Agency) Cash Reserve Policy establishes general guidelines on cash reserves that will help to ensure the Agency's long-term financial and operational stability. In this capacity, the Cash Reserve Policy articulates a comprehensive set of reserves that seek to mitigate operational, capital, and debt service risks PV Water may encounter.

The Cash Reserve Policy is established in the context of PV Water's current and expected capital improvement program and borrowings associated with the Basin Management Plan (BMP). Since reserve targets are based on certain assumptions and estimated costs and risks for PV Water, the Cash Reserve Policy and established reserve levels will be reviewed annually or more often if there is a material change in the risk exposures to PV Water. It is noted that the Cash Reserve Policy is established to provide general guidelines for fiscally responsible cash management. The Cash Reserve Policy is not intended to set strict limits that must be adhered to in a vacuum, nor is it intended to be all-inclusive in the sense that there remain a variety of factors outside the purview of the policy that could materially impact PV Water's financial condition. Certain risks and risk probabilities have been considered to be sufficiently remote or to require a scale of reserves that would be prohibitive as compared to the probability of such an outcome, and this policy does not purport to address such risks. Instead, these guidelines are intended to serve as a management decision-making tool in planning for and evaluating activities or transactions that could have a significant impact on the level of cash on hand.

## Categories of Cash Reserves

The Cash Reserve Policy recommends the creation of four separate reserve funds:

- Operation & Maintenance Reserve
- Repair & Replacement Reserve
- Debt Service Reserve
- Rate Stabilization Reserve

## Summary of Recommended Reserve Levels

<b><i>Reserve Category</i></b>	<b>Recommended Reserve</b>
<b><i>Operation &amp; Maintenance Reserve</i></b>	<b>Start at 30 days of expenditures and build to 180 days</b>
<b><i>Repair &amp; Replacement Reserve</i></b>	<b>Start at 10% Annual Depreciation and build to 25%</b>
<b><i>Debt Service Reserve</i></b>	<b>20% for Debt Service obligation that do not have their own reserve</b>
<b><i>Rate Stabilization Reserve</i></b>	<b>As determined by the Board and management</b>

Each reserve is summarized below with an explanation as to the methodology that was used to size each reserve.

# Operation & Maintenance Reserve

## Purpose

The purpose of the Operation & Maintenance Reserve is to provide greater stability in annual operations even under unforeseen and changing circumstances as relates to both revenues and expenses. Utilities such as PV Water are subject to a broad array of risks, including but not limited to natural events such as earthquakes and climate change, which may vary from small, temporary disruptions of business to substantial disruptions. The intent of the Cash Reserve Policy is to set an overall reserve level that is reasonable, defensible and consistent with the aggregate risk profile that PV Water faces in effectively managing water supplies in the Pajaro Valley. Considering climate change resiliency is an important aspect of this effort.

## Methodology

Many water utilities, which generally operate on a monthly billing cycle, maintain operating reserves at a level of 60 to 180 days of operating expenses. Typically, it is utilities in the most stable operating environments that are able to manage with reserves on the smaller end of this range, while many agencies with significant annual volatility in revenues or expenditures or those undergoing significant expansion have substantially larger operating reserves.

## Operation & Maintenance Reserve Policy

PV Water will maintain an Operation & Maintenance Reserve equal to 180 days of operating expenses. See Exhibit A.

# Repair & Replacement Reserve

## Purpose

PV Water's BMP is made up of projects that will increase water supply to the Pajaro Valley and significantly expand PV Water's existing infrastructure. The purpose of the Repair & Replacement Reserve is to fund the unplanned repair or replacement of capital assets and to allow PV Water to absorb fluctuations in the capital plan without an immediate rate impact to customers.

## Methodology

Given the significant capital improvements in which the Agency has invested over the past couple of decades and the sizeable capital plans associated with implementation of the BMP, the Repair & Replacement Reserve ensures the availability of funds to respond to unexpected needs.

## Repair and Replacement Reserve Policy

PV Water will maintain a 25% Annual Depreciation reserve. See Exhibit A.

# Debt Service Reserve

## Purpose

The purpose of the Debt Service Reserve is to provide PV Water with funds dedicated to paying the Agency's debt service obligations in the event of a significant, unexpected decrease in operating revenue during which operating funds may be insufficient to meet such obligations.

## Methodology

Typical municipal bond covenants require the establishment of a debt service reserve fund in an amount equal to maximum or average annual debt service on the bonds. Such a requirement exists in connection with the Agency's Department of Water Resources promissory note. It would be prudent for PV Water to also set aside reserves in connection with its other debt as these loans are significant.

## Debt Service Reserve Policy

PV Water maintains a debt service reserve funded at a level equal to 20% for Debt Service obligations that do not have their own reserve (see Exhibit A).

# Rate Stabilization Fund

## Purpose

The Rate Stabilization Fund is established to provide short-term rate stability in case of an unexpected drop in revenue or increase in expenses. Among other things, the rate stabilization reserve affords PV Water with added flexibility in meeting its financial covenants to bondholders in the event of a financial shock to the Agency resulting from disaster or unforeseen financial circumstances.

## Methodology

Unlike other reserves, the rate stabilization reserve is typically not a percentage or ratio, but rather a fixed amount. The funding of such a reserve is highly dependent upon the expected variability in PV Water's revenue stream, budgeted expenditures, political matters, legal matters and the level of total annual debt service, among other factors.

## Rate Stabilization Fund Policy

PV Water maintains a rate stabilization fund reserve as determined by management and the board. (see Exhibit A).

# Annual Review Process

PV Water reviews and evaluates reserve funding levels annually. Since reserve targets are based on certain estimates, assumptions, and risk probabilities, the Cash Reserve Policy will be revisited more frequently if there is a change in PV Water's operations, capital program, or debt service obligations that warrant review of these policies.

**Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency**  
**Cash Reserve Policy**  
**Exhibit "A"**  
**June 2021 Update**

<b>Operation &amp; Maintenance Reserve</b>	<b>FY 16/17</b>	<b>FY 17/18</b>	<b>FY 18/19</b>	<b>FY 19/20</b>	<b>FY 20/21</b>	<b>FY 21/22</b>
Projected Operating Expenditures (\$MM)	6.81	6.55	7.19	7.29	7.43	8.04
Projected Reserve Amount (\$KK)	2,837.00	3,274.13	3,597.27	3,644.46	3,713.93	4,017.71

<b>Repair &amp; Replacement Reserve</b>	<b>FY 16/17</b>	<b>FY 17/18</b>	<b>FY 18/19</b>	<b>FY 19/20</b>	<b>FY 20/21</b>	<b>FY 21/22</b>
Projected Annual Depreciation (\$MM)	2.42	2.52	2.53	2.60	2.65	2.59
Projected Reserve Amount (\$KK)	625.00	629.79	631.67	649.67	661.58	647.88

<b>Debt Service Reserve</b>	<b>FY 16/17</b>	<b>FY 17/18</b>	<b>FY 18/19</b>	<b>FY 19/20</b>	<b>FY 20/21</b>	<b>FY 21/22</b>
Projected Debt Service Payments (\$MM)	3.55	3.36	3.36	3.36	3.36	3.36
Restricted Funds for Debt Covenants (\$KK)	251.88	253.49	253.62	253.75	253.85	253.94
Projected Reserve Amount (\$KK)	661.00	621.28	620.38	620.95	621.53	620.29

<b>Rate Stabilization</b>	<b>FY 16/17</b>	<b>FY 17/18</b>	<b>FY 18/19</b>	<b>FY 19/20</b>	<b>FY 20/21</b>	<b>FY 21/22</b>
Projected Reserve Amount (\$KK)	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00

<b>Total Cash Reserve (\$MM)</b>	<b>4.62</b>	<b>5.03</b>	<b>5.35</b>	<b>5.42</b>	<b>5.50</b>	<b>5.79</b>
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