

Budget Season Checklist for Club Controllers

From kickoff to board approval: the steps, in order, for next year's operating budget, dues and capital plan.

Timing = weeks before the board vote; adjust as needed. **USFRC-style** = departments per the Uniform System of Financial Reporting for Clubs

1 Kickoff & calendar

16–14 WKS OUT

- ☐ Agree on the **budget calendar** with the GM and treasurer: submission deadlines, committee and board dates.
- ☐ Confirm board **priorities and policies**: reserve target, how surpluses and deficits hit the reserve, initiation fee split.
- ☐ Build a **current-year forecast** (YTD actual + remaining months). It's the baseline everyone works from.
- ☐ Issue **planning assumptions**: inflation, utility rates, insurance renewal timing, member counts.
- ☐ Send department heads templates prefilled with prior-year actuals and forecast.

2 Payroll & benefits assumptions

14–12 WKS OUT

- ☐ Pull a **position roster by department**: headcount, hours, rates, seasonal staff.
- ☐ Set the **wage increase pool** and timing; check any scheduled minimum-wage changes.
- ☐ Request the **health insurance renewal** estimate early; set benefit and payroll-tax load rates.
- ☐ Decide how **service charges** and gratuity distributions are budgeted.
- ☐ Lock payroll before department heads finish, since it's the largest cost line.

3 Department head submissions

12–9 WKS OUT

- ☐ Collect volume, revenue, cost of sales, payroll and other expenses by **USFRC-style department**:

☐ Membership dues & fees	☐ Racquets & fitness
☐ Golf operations	☐ Clubhouse (undistributed)
☐ Course maintenance	☐ G&A, energy & utilities
☐ Food & beverage	☐ Fixed charges
- ☐ Require a **one-line explanation** for any change over your threshold vs. forecast.
- ☐ Separate **capital requests** from operating repairs, with quotes where possible.

4 Dues & capital assessment modeling

10–7 WKS OUT

- ☐ Project **member counts by class**: attrition, new members by month, waitlist.
- ☐ Budget **initiation fees** with the operating vs. capital split your board policy requires.
- ☐ Run **low / base / high dues scenarios** and show the operating result of each.
- ☐ Roll the **capital reserve** forward 5 years: capital dues, projects, debt service, minimum balance.
- ☐ Test whether a **special assessment** or borrowing is needed, and its effect on **cost of belonging** per member.

5 F&B minimums

8–7 WKS OUT

- ☐ Pull a **POS spend distribution** by member class: who meets the minimum and who doesn't.
- ☐ Budget **shortfall (breakage) revenue** in the months it's actually billed.
- ☐ Model any **proposed minimum change** as an upper bound; members may change behavior.
- ☐ Check the effect on F&B departmental net and on member experience.

6 Consolidate & tie out

7–5 WKS OUT

- ☐ Roll departments into the **consolidated statement**; tie dues to member counts × rates.
- ☐ Compare to forecast and prior year; **flag every large variance** before anyone else does.
- ☐ Check **cash flow**: debt service, capital spend, reserve transfers, monthly spread.
- ☐ Review **nonmember income** against 501(c)(7) limits with your advisors, if applicable.
- ☐ GM review and sign-off on the draft.

7 Finance committee review → board presentation & approval

4–0 WKS OUT

- ☐ Send the committee packet **at least a week ahead**: summary, departmental detail, dues scenarios, capital plan.
- ☐ Keep a **questions log** and record every change made after committee review.
- ☐ Build a **one-page board summary**: KPIs, departmental nets, 5-year dues and reserve outlook.
- ☐ Lead with the **decision you need** (dues rate, assessment, capital list), then the support.
- ☐ Prepare the **member dues letter** for approval alongside the budget.
- ☐ After approval: load the **monthly budget** into your system and send final targets to department heads.

Quick win this week: list the three questions your board asked last year and build the answers into your plan now, not the night before.

Want steps 4 and 5 in one workbook?

If it helps, the **Club Budget Model** is a USFRC-style Excel model with member classes, initiation and capital dues, F&B minimums, a 5-year dues and capital plan, and a one-page board summary. Standard \$395 or Pro \$695, 12 months of updates included, 14-day refund. Built by a working private club controller.

See what's inside →

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