



MnGFOA Newsletter

February 2024

Excellence and Leadership in Government Finance

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President's Message

By: Mary Kaye Wahl

It's that time of year again... the time when I'm more likely to write the wrong year than the right one - 2023, no, scratch that, 2024, oh wait - budget

year 2025 🙄. I hope your year-end closes are progressing smoothly, and the word 'audit' is still a word you can say without stress in your voice.

As February arrives, with 'heart' on our minds, it serves as a gentle reminder to prioritize self-care. Regardless of our roles, stress is inevitable. I challenge you to take a moment for yourself, whether it's a few deep breaths, a walk around the block, or stepping away from your desk for lunch - anything to alleviate the pressure.

Continuing with the theme of challenges, but with a 'heart-fulfilling' twist, mark your calendars for the 1st Annual MNGFOA Polar Plunge on 2/24. More

details can be found later in the newsletter. It's a fantastic event for a wonderful cause - I hope you'll consider participating in some capacity. After all, I keep hearing that cold water therapy is good for you, and it's definitely on trend! 😊

If you're looking to enrich your mind, don't miss out on this month's educational opportunities. Learn how to navigate the challenges we face with fraud and explore a class on cash basis accounting. More information is available below and on our website's event calendar page.

As we continue into February, with 'heart' as our guiding theme, let's remember the importance of community and connection. Our organization, MNGFOA, thrives on the heart and dedication of its members. I hope you've found value in the sense of belonging and support that comes from

being part of our community. If you're not already involved in one of our committees, I encourage you to explore the opportunities available. Each committee is fueled by the passion and commitment of its members, and your contribution could make all the difference.

Together, let's keep our organization beating with the heart of collaboration, growth, and support. Thanks for being such an essential part of MNGFOA! Here's to a month full of warm connections and chances to grow both personally and professionally.



FEBRUARY MONTHLY MEETING

Date: Wednesday, February 21, 2024
 Time: 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM
 Location: Wherever you are
 Cost: Free
 CEU: 1.0 on request
 Speakers: Jennifer Vucinovich (US Bank) and Chris Styring (Wells Fargo)



Topic: Fraud Trends

One of the largest challenges organizations face today is protecting financial information from payments fraud. Attempts remain constant and continue to increase year after year with 65% of organizations facing attempted or actual payment fraud in 2022*. Between 2018 and 2022 there was a reported \$27.68B in internet crime losses with roughly 615,000 complaints. In most instances, the question is not will you be the target of these attempts, but whether they will succeed. What can your municipality do to help prevent this from happening? Join us for a discussion around the trends and most common fraud attempts we are seeing across the government space. We will talk through check fraud, ACH fraud, cybercrime and best practices to protect your organization.

**Association for Financial Professionals 2023 AFP Payments Fraud and Control Survey*

Speakers: Jennifer Vucinovich and Chris Styring

Jennifer Vucinovich joined U.S. Bank in 2001 and is currently a Senior Vice President and Relationship Manager providing banking and financial services to government entities. Jennifer is an associate member of Minnesota Government Finance Officers Association and serves on their conference and programming committees. Jennifer has a bachelor's degree in Finance and Business Communications from the University of St. Thomas and an MBA from Carlson School of Management, University of Minnesota.

Chris Styring joined Wells Fargo in 2005 and is a Vice President and Relationship Manager with the Government and institutional Banking team. Based in Bloomington, he manages local government relationships for the state of Minnesota, North and South Dakota. He is an associate member of Minnesota Government Finance Officers Association serving on the programming committee. Chris is a Certified Treasury Professional with the Association for Financial Professionals and received his bachelor's in business from Arizona State University in Tempe.

Membership Renewals

Annual Memberships expire at the end of February each year. All renewals must be done online at www.mngfoa.org. You may still pay by check by following the renewal steps online and then sending your check made payable to MNGFOA to the 2024 Treasurer:

Gina Foschi, MNGFOA Treasurer
 803 Old Highway 8 NW
 New Brighton, MN 55112

Gina may be contacted at:
 651-638-2105

Retiree Memberships - FREE

The MNGFOA board recently discussed retirees and the \$10 annual retiree membership dues. As MNGFOA values the contributions of its members and the significant relationships that are built, the board discussed how to encourage retiree members to stay connected. Although not a large dollar amount, with the additional fee we have seen some retirees opt out and have lost connection and contact information. The board has approved changing the retiree membership fee to "Free". Thanks to all active and retired members for being involved in MNGFOA!

Upcoming Training Opportunities...

Webinar: Understanding Cash Basis Accounting

MNGFOA is partnering with the LMC to provide this FREE WEBINAR!

Cash, or regulatory basis of accounting, is a system used by many smaller cities. It is different to accrual basis accounting in a few key ways, including how to chart out accounts and how to record revenue and expenditures. In this webinar you will learn the basics of implementing a cash basis accounting system and dive into topics which will help you and your city manage city funds efficiently and prepare for an audit.

Topics include:

- Recording expenditures and revenue
- Coding expenses and understanding fund accounting
- Reporting requirements
- Preparing for an audit
- How to properly use your chart of accounts
- Understanding bank charges
- Overview of software available

Date - Tuesday, Feb. 20
10:30 a.m. – 11:45 p.m.

REGISTER TODAY

Moderator

Lisa Sova, Assistant Finance Director — Outreach, League of Minnesota Cities
Nate Reinhardt, Minnesota Government Finance Officers Association

Presenters

Mary Reedy, Principal – State and Local Government, CliftonLarsonAllen LLP
Chris Knopik, Principal – State and Local Government, CliftonLarsonAllen LLP

Audience

Intended for cities under 2,500 population.

Keep an eye on the [Events Calendar](#) as more details will follow.



MN GFOA is a very generous group of people. **We raised \$1,200 for Second Harvest Heartland!** Your generous support helps make a difference for the more than half a million people in our region who are living with the uncertainty of where their next meal will come from.



Exciting News!!



Please join us in congratulating Pa Thao on her promotion from Assistant Finance Director to Finance Director at the City of Edina, effective February 1, 2024.

Congratulations to Rob Voshell, Finance Director at the City of Sartell on completing GFOA’s Certified Public Finance Officer Program (CPFO). Currently there are 22 professionals from Minnesota who have obtained their certification.





1st Annual MNGFOA Polar Plunge

Calling all brave, and not so brave, MnGFOA members to join the Social Committee on February 24th for our 1st Annual Polar Plunge!

Donating or registering is easy! Check out our Event Page!
<https://reg.plungemn.org/team/mngfoaplungers>

After the 2023 conference, we were inspired by Ian Leonard, and his commitment to the Special Olympics organization, to add this wonderful event to our roster of annual social events.
Don't feel like plunging? Donate, come cheer us on or join us for happy hour after.

AS EXTRA INCENTIVE TO DONATE OR PLUNGE, if we reach our **donation goal of \$1,500**, Bonnie Schwieger (Team Captain), will dye her hair **BLUE** for the event.

Event Details

- ❖ Date: Saturday February 24, 2024
- ❖ Location: Lakeside Commons Park, 3020 Lake Parkway, Blaine MN
- ❖ Time:
 - Check-In at 11 am, Plunge starts at 12 pm
 - We will be able to register for a specific time slot 3 days prior to the event, updated list servs will be sent when a specific time slot is reserved. If you register before this occurs, you have the advantage of getting to help pick the time slot. 😊
- ❖ Happy Hour: To Be Determined once our timeslot is confirmed. Stay Tuned!
- ❖ How to Register: Go to our event page or email Bonnie, bonnie.schwieger@abdosolutions.com
- ❖ Plunge Specific Info:
 - Check out the Polar Plunge FAQ (<https://www.plungemn.org/faqs/general-questions/>)
 - Prior to the event, Bonnie will send out information on parking, timing, and any other event logistics.

Check out our Event Page to track how much our organization raises for Special Olympics!
Spread the word by sharing the link to our event page!



GFOA Leadership Academy and CPFO Program – Save the Date!



Date: Wednesday, April 24, 2023

Time: 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Location: Wherever you are

Cost: Free

Please register online at www.mngfoa.org

Topic: GFOA Leadership Academy and CPFO Programs (Informational Session)

Please join us for an information session on the National GFOA's Leadership Academy and Certified Public Finance Officers program. The administrators of the program will provide you with what you need to know if you are considering these programs now or in the future and past participants will share their experiences.

GFOA Leadership Academy - Enhance your leadership skills and advance your career trajectory with participation in the immersive GFOA Leadership Academy at Arizona State University or the College of Charleston. This weeklong training session provides ambitious public and government finance professionals an opportunity to bolster their leadership and management skills to better serve their communities.

Application for the program is completed through the National GFOA website at <http://www.gfoa.org/leadershipacademy>. Visit the national website for more information.

GFOA's Certified Public Finance Officers (CPFO) program - is designed to **prepare individuals for leadership positions** in state and local governments by **enhancing fundamental skills** and **increasing knowledge** of best practices and standards in public finance. Individuals will be equipped to participate in decision-making efforts related to their government and community and lead projects and professionals in a substantive and significant manner.

The CPFO program supports the core beliefs of GFOA, including ethics, leadership and competencies in various finance matters and recognize members who have made the commitment to both obtain necessary knowledge and skills and remain current with industry best practices.

For more information on the CPFO program including the candidate guide, please visit:
<https://www.gfoa.org/cpfo>

Scholarships!

We are excited to announce that we will be able to provide funding for three members to participate in the CPFO program (\$1,200 each) and two members to participate in the Leadership Academy (\$3,400 each). For more information or to apply visit the MNGFOA website.

Speakers: Eric Roach, Government Finance Officers Association (CPFO Program Manager), Rob Voshell, Sartell (Current CPFO Program Enrollee), Pa Thao, Edina (Leadership Academy Graduate)

2024 MN GFOA Networking Events



February 24, 2024

Polar Plunge in Blaine - for Special Olympics



April 2024

Meat Raffle in Rogers



May 2, 2024

Cinco de Mayo Celebration (Location TBD)



Summer 2024

MN Twins Baseball game at Target Field Minneapolis



Summer 2024

MN United Soccer game at Allianz Field St Paul



September 25-27, 2024

Annual Conference in Alexandria, MN - Fun networking events are being planned!



November 2024

Tie Blanket Event - Autumn Grove Park Building 1365 Lydia Ave W, Roseville, MN
Make blankets for metro area charitable organizations that serve at-risk teens.



Nov - Dec 2024

Second Harvest Heartland On-Line Food Drive

JOB POSTINGS

Position Title	Entity	Closing Date
Accountant	City of Crookston	Wednesday, January 31, 2024
Accounting Technician	City of Oakdale	Friday, February 2, 2024
Division Director Finance – Purchasing and Contracting	Ramsey County	Friday, February 2, 2024
Finance Director	City of Savage	Sunday, February 4, 2024
Finance Analyst	City of Blaine	Monday, February 5, 2024
Deputy Director for the Office of Financial Services (OFS)	City of Saint Paul	Monday, February 5, 2024
Finance Controller	Goodhue County	Thursday, February 8, 2024
Senior Accountant	City of Faribault	Monday, February 12, 2024
Controller	Saint Paul Port Authority	Friday, February 16, 2024
City Clerk/Treasurer	City of New London	Sunday, February 18, 2024
Accountant	Saint Paul Port Authority	Friday, February 23, 2024
Support Services and Accounting Supervisor	Renville County	Friday, March 1, 2024
Accounting and Finance Director	Washington County	Sunday, March 31, 2024

Links and further details can be found on the [Jobs & Volunteering](#) page



2024 OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

President

Mary Kaye Wahl
Carver County
952.361.1511

At-Large

Kristen Vipond
Otter Tail County
218.998.8034

President-Elect

Mark Ebensteiner
City of Becker
763.200.4250

At-Large

Chris Knopik
CliftonLarsonAllen
612.397.3266

Secretary

Tina Lannes
City of Albertville
763.496.6802

State Representative

Joel Merry
City of Minnetonka
952.939.8254

Treasurer

Gina Foschi
City of New Brighton
651.638.2105

Past President

Nathan Reinhardt
City of Shakopee
952.233.9326

DID YOU KNOW?

That if you have changed e-mail addresses you need to subscribe to the ListServ with your new email address. We have had a number of inquiries as to why members may not be receiving the ListServ e-mails. Since the ListServ is managed by a different platform than our membership renewals and newsletters, changes to e-mails need to be changed in both locations. The ListServ tab is at the top of the homepage.

2024 Committee Chairs & Vice Chairs

Conference Committee – plans/coordinates topics, speakers, and all other aspects of the annual fall conference

Co-Chairs Melissa Schlingman, City of Shakopee and 952-233-9329
Jackie Heinz, City of Montrose 763-575-7435

Social Committee – plans and organizes social activities for the membership through the year

Co-Chairs Kari Carlson, City of Bloomington and 952-563-8725
Michelle Hoffman, CliftonLarsonAllen 612-397-3269

Program Committee – plans and coordinates topics and speakers for the monthly meetings

Co-Chairs Hannah Lynch, City of Lino Lakes and 651-982-2405
Jennifer Vucinovich, US Bank 651-466-8750

Education Committee – plans and coordinates October accounting classes and other training sessions during the year other than the fall conference

Chair Joe Starks, City of Fridley 651-277-5230

Student Outreach Committee – The Student Outreach Committee is responsible for connecting with students to introduce them to career possibilities in government finance. Committee members attend career fairs and on-campus events, and also promote the John B. Lilja Undergraduate Scholarship.

Chair Justin Juergensen, City of Hutchinson 320-234-4256

Technology Committee – operate and improve the organization’s website and other technology

Co-Chairs Jeanette Boit-Kania, Ramsey County, 651-266-8057
Joe Rotz, City of Apple Valley and 612-986-4722
Janice Brandt, City of Coon Rapids 763-767-6442

Mentorship Committee – The committee helps engage our members in developing our future and the future of local government finance in Minnesota

Co-Chairs Cory Kampf, Anoka County, 763-324-1751
Lynn Cornwell, Moreton Capital Markets and 952-777-3227
Nate Reinhardt, City of Shakopee 952-233-9326

Please contact any member of the Board of the Committee chairs directly if you are interested in participating on any of the committees. Committee participation does not require a lot of time and is a great way to meet people and share ideas.

Message from the Editor

This is YOUR newsletter. If you wish to share items of interest with the membership, such as job openings, career moves, or retirements, please email them by the 21st of the month for inclusion in the next newsletter. Thank you!

Mark Ebensteiner
MNGFOA President Elect
763-200-4250

