



MINNESOTA GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

MnGFOA NEWSLETTER

May 2007

Excellence and Leadership in Government Finance

www.mngfoa.org

Message from the President

By Greg Sticha

Minnesota weather or Minnesota legislature, which is easier to predict? This question could or may already have its own blog somewhere out there. But as this year's legislative session is in high gear right now, we were able to get some insight from our good friend at the League, Mr. Gary Carlson, during April's lunch meeting.

For those of you not able to attend here are some of the highlights. The overall theme of the session is uncertainty due mostly in part to the threat from the governor to veto any bill that is presented to him that will result in a tax increase of any sort. This being known, the legislature is planning on submitting tax bills and transportation bills that contain tax increases and will end up being vetoed if the governor sticks to his guns. That being said, Gary noted it is completely a prediction on what will happen between now and the end of the regular session on May 21st, especially on the very large and very important Tax and Transportation legislation.

There were a few smaller yet important issues Mr. Carlson addressed. The phase out of the Market Value Homestead Credit program over the next three years appears likely. This could possibly be replaced by an increased "Homeowner Circuit Breaker" tax credit given directly to homeowners. Also, in the current house tax bill a provision was made that would allow property tax payers the option to pay their property tax bills in eight installments starting in May, in addition to the current system of twice annually. Gary noted the league is on top of this issue, and for many reasons is advising against giving taxpayers this option.

There was also an amendment to the data practices bill that was introduced that would allow for damage claims for local governments, for releasing private data incorrectly. The amendment would increase the potential claim against that government to \$50,000. This could have a severe impact on especially smaller communities.

Once said, Gary admitted that all this information is probably now dated. Keep in touch with the League bulletins and League website for more information as the session continues. Is there going to be a special session?

It was implied that it is very possible especially with the promised veto's of the governor.

So which is more predictable? Well our meteorologist of the legislature (Mr. Carlson) is probably as good as Paul Douglass or Mike Fairbourne. However, with things as wild and uncertain as the entities we are talking about, forecasts are only so useful. As the Minnesota saying goes, if you don't like the weather (legislation) wait five minutes and it will change. I would like to thank Gary and his staff for once again making time to come inform us on these important issues.

A couple of reminders: please make plans to attend the May meeting which is in conjunction with the half day training in Mankato on May 16th. We hope to see some of our out-state members from the southern part of the state and it is a good chance to network with some of our members we don't get to see normally during the year. Also a reminder for those of you attending the national conference in Anaheim - the Minnesota reception will be Sunday night from 7-9 pm at the House of Blues. More information will be sent out to those of you who have signed up to attend this year's national conference.

May Meeting * Quarterly Training *

Date: Wednesday, May 16, 2007
Location: Midwest Wireless Civic Center
Mankato, MN
Quarterly Training Session: Developing, Implementing and Maintaining a Meaningful Capital Plan
Time: 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

A brochure and on-line registration are available on the Government Training Services website www.mngts.org.

Please remember that you **can not use** the MNGFOA website to register for this training or the lunch

SPEAKING OF REGISTERING FOR LUNCH...

Please remember to e-mail Cathy Shuman (cathy.shuman@ci.monticello.mn.us) or to sign up on the website for future luncheons. We need an accurate count for the hotel to set up enough tables and prepare enough lunches. Thanks for your cooperation!

2007 Meeting Dates

Monthly Meetings:

May 16 – Quarterly training in Mankato
No June Meeting July 18 - Quarterly Training
August 15 – Meeting on the St. Croix

Annual Conferences:

GFOA – Anaheim, California June 10-13
MnGFOA – Alexandria, MN Sept. 19-21

Committee

o r n e r Executive Committee Update

The following are highlights of the April 18th meeting:

- Approved minutes, check register and treasurers report from March.
- Received reports from the conference, social, program and education committees.
- Discussed current Membership, Conference and Monthly luncheon fees.

Annual Conference Preview (September 19th to 21st)

*“Riding the Highway of Change –
Leading the Pack in the Fast Lane of Tomorrow”*

Prime your engines and coast past the changing leaves to Arrowwood Resort this fall. Cruise into the future with an updated driver’s manual and hot, new tips for achieving excellence in local government. In addition to enjoying plenty of networking and social opportunities, get ready for a fantastic line-up of popular speakers.

Dr. James M. Benson, former president of Bemidji State University and the keynote speaker this year will drop the flag to kick off the event as he addresses the ever-changing world we live in. Dr. Benson delivers many keynote presentations a year and we are very excited to have him in Alexandria. Stephen Gauthier, the Director of Technical Services Center for the National GFOA, will also be joining us. Mr. Gauthier will speak on current hot topics of the GASB/SAS and the newer GASB Statement 44 (the statistical section). Mr. Gauthier is a captivating speaker who tackles and makes sense of complex issues. And our very own Tom Kelly, Finance Officer of White Bear Township, will present a session on “How to create a budget for the GFOA award.”



On Thursday, take in Steve Gilliland's fresh discussions on "Negative Attitudes in the Workplace" and "Managing Multiple Priorities." Mr. Gilliland will also pull together a grand finale "Enjoy the Ride" performance on Friday morning. Mr. Gilliland declares, "My passion is to bring laughter to people while slipping simple nuggets of truth into their hearts, giving them courage to take a look at their challenges and enabling them to begin to conquer them." There will also be many other interesting topics—too many to list here. Please look for a more complete conference schedule in the upcoming newsletters. As always, the social committee is revving up to produce another memorable conference filled with fun, networking, comedians, karaoke, and dancing.

On Tuesday, September 18, 2007, the MGFOA will be hosting the National CPFPO exam from 1-5pm. Please contact www.gfoa.org for questions and/or registration. There is still time to study for the exam and further your professional accreditations. Please consider this opportunity thoughtfully!

JOB POSTINGS

CITY OF SOUTH ST. PAUL ASSISTANT FINANCE DIRECTOR

The City of South St. Paul is accepting applications for the position of Assistant Finance Director. Assists Director in providing leadership for all finance related functions. Directly responsible for supervision and management of the day-to-day functions of accounts payable, payroll, cash management, utility billing, general accounts receivable, and general accounting of the department. Works extensively in all phases of City annual budget and CAFR. Responsible for the administration of financial, accounting, and related computer activities. Requires degree in accounting, finance, related field or equivalent experience in addition to five years of accounting or auditing experience. Starting salary range: \$54,685 to \$70,310 depending on qualifications with benefits. For detailed position description and application materials visit www.southstpaul.org. Send resume and application to: The Office of the City Administrator, City of South St. Paul, 125 Third Avenue North, South St. Paul, MN 55075. Phone (651) 554-3203. Applications will be reviewed upon receipt.

CITY OF WASECA FINANCE DIRECTOR JOB OPENING

The City of Waseca is accepting applications for the position of Finance Director. Responsibilities include: Planning, directing and coordinating all activities relating to finance, including accounting, financial reporting, budgeting and debt management and related computer activities. Supervises all departmental personnel including Utility Billing. Minimum qualifications include: a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting, Finance or related field. Three years of government accounting experience, strong personal and mainframe computer skills, experience in team management, strong written and verbal communication skills. Salary Range: \$61,000 - \$70,000 DOQ.

Applicants must submit a City employment application, resume and cover letter to Office of the City Manager, 508 South State Street, Waseca, MN 56093. Applications are available on the City of Waseca website www.ci.waseca.mn.us or by calling (507) 835-9700. Recruitment will continue until position is filled.

CITY OF MAPLEWOOD CONTROLLER

Maplewood has an immediate opening for a FT Controller in our Finance Dept. Performs supervisory and professional work overseeing daily operations and staff of the Accounting and Payroll Divisions; assists with preparation of the annual financial report, budget, and five-year capital improvement plan; assists Finance & Administration Manager as needed. Proposed annual salary: starting: \$53,165; range: \$53,165 - \$71,261 plus great benefits! Min. quals: Bachelor's degree in accounting or related field; 3 years accounting experience using an automated system; 1 year of supervisory experience. Prefer experience with Eden Systems, Crystal Reports software, and government accounting. Must complete a city application & questionnaire. Contact Maplewood City Hall, 1830 County Road B E, Maplewood, MN 55109; (651) 249-2000; or visit www.ci.maplewood.mn.us. **Deadline: 5/4/07.** EOE

Robin Roland
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Congratulations To the Following Members...

- Cory Kampf - who is leaving Robbinsdale after 12 years to become the Finance Director for the City of Brooklyn Park. He starts May 7th. Best wishes Cory!
- Julie Linnihan – who is leaving Waseca to be the Finance Director for the City of New Hope. She starts May 7th. Good luck Julie!

Message from the Editor

May I help you? Send your job openings, ads, career moves, or other items of note to me by the 20th of this month and I'll put them in the next newsletter.

Thanks!
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