



MINNESOTA GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

MnGFOA NEWSLETTER

May 2008

Excellence and Leadership in Government Finance

www.mngfoa.org

Message from the President

Most of us, at some point, have felt hopeless, or at least helpless, in the face of some problem. The current foreclosure crisis is one of those items for me. Tom May, Jeff Strand and Jan Duffie from Hennepin County addressed this issue at our April meeting.

We've talked about the risky mortgage loans, predatory lending, and lax oversight. We've seen the pictures of the houses with ice coming out the doors and windows because the house is abandoned and the heat has been turned off, but the water hasn't been. We have seen the "previews" of tax capacity for 2009 and the declines in housing valuations in every county. We have wondered "How can I help? What can I do?"

And I have to admit, I've been pretty cynical because there doesn't seem to be a proactive way to deal with this. Our speakers addressed some of the things Hennepin County and the State are doing to help residents including the Coordinated Plan to address foreclosures, gap funding for development and resale and the "Greater Metro Housing Committee". It seems more reactive rather than proactive, but the concern and intent is aimed in the right direction. Thanks again to Tom, Jeff and Jan for taking the time to talk to us about it.

Obviously, all the markets have felt the slap of the mortgage/housing debacle. Helpless (or hopeless) is how our friends in the investment business feel every time they call us to say "you have money coming back and all I can show you is 2.5%." Our broker friends at RBC Capital Markets, Wells Fargo, Citigroup/Smith Barney, Northland, Wachovia, FAF and Galliard know us in good times and bad. They always have ideas and they always pitch in and help us – whether individually or the MnGFOA as a whole. They deserve our thanks.

You all should have received the 2008 Membership Directory by now. Thank you to Heidi at Timesaver and Ron Hedberg for compiling and completing the book. It's an important resource for our organization.

Spring has finally arrived and not a moment too soon! (At least for my sanity) The social committee has the Golf Outing Scheduled for the end of May. See the website for more info on this fun annual event! And looking even farther forward, July's quarterly training will be held in the Brainerd Lakes area. Look for more information in the June newsletter.

See you at the May meeting!
Robin



May Meeting

DATE: Wednesday, May 21, 2008
LOCATION: Minneapolis Sheraton Four Points
TOPIC: **Legislative Update**
SPEAKER: Gary Carlson, League of Minnesota Cities
TIME: 11:30 Meeting & Program
12:15 Luncheon
LUNCH: Wild Mushroom Ravioli
COST: \$15

Reservations: Please register on the MnGFOA website (www.mngfoa.org), send an e-mail to Ron Hedberg (rhedberg@cottage-grove.org), or leave a voice mail for Ron at 651-458-2832 by Thursday, April 10th.

Please remember to register for the meeting to provide that enough meals are ordered and tables are set up for the meeting.

Speaker Bio...

Gary Carlson has been involved with Minnesota local government finance and taxation issues, including property taxation and local aids, for the past 25 years.

Currently, Gary is the director of Intergovernmental Relations for the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC). The League is a membership organization representing over 800 cities across the state. For more than 85 years, LMC has provided research, communication, advocacy and insurance services to its members. As director, Gary works with the Intergovernmental Relations Department to represent the League and its member cities before the state Legislature and other levels of government.

Prior to his employment with LMC, Gary worked for over five years with the St. Paul law firm of Briggs and Morgan concentrating on state legislative affairs, public finance and litigation support. He also worked from 1984 to 1986 for the city of Minneapolis in the Legislative Liaison Office. Gary attended Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter from 1978 to 1982 and the University of Minnesota Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs from 1982 to 1984.

ANNUAL GOLF OUTING – Thursday, May 29th, Noon Shotgun Start



Annual Golf Outing: Thursday May 29th, Noon

The annual golf outing is fast approaching. It's earlier this year so make your plans. The event will be at Oak Marsh in Oakdale. The sign up information is on the attached flyer and located on the web site.



Website News ~

The new website is almost complete. We should be going live shortly after you read this news letter. We will send out a listserv when it officially happens. Some of the new features will be added later, so check it out and let us know what you think. Many thanks go to Joel Merry for his hard work in getting the website set-up.

Committee

o Executive Committee Update

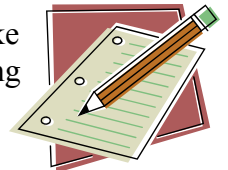
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The Executive Committee met in April and took the following actions:

- Approved February meeting minutes
- Approved check register for February and March
- Approved the Treasurer's Report from February and March
- Received reports from the following committees; conference, social, education, program and technology.
- Discussed the MnGFOA representation on the Accounting and Auditing Student Conference Committee and the need to begin to search for a replacement. Chris Miller will be stepping aside at the end of 2008.
- Scholarship awards will be discussed next month.

Update from the Education Committee Mark Your Training Calendars

The Education Committee would like everyone to plan for the upcoming training opportunities in 2008. Please mark your calendars for the following opportunities:



July 16, 2008 - "Long-Range Financial Planning" seminar at Craguns in Brainerd. Rooms are \$129.00 per night. We are also working with the social committee to offer some activities along with this training. More information will be coming shortly from GTS along with registration information.

October 22 - Beginning Governmental Accounting in the St. Cloud Area

October 23 - Intermediate Governmental Accounting in the Metro Area

November 19 - a Professional Development topic yet to be determined at the Sheraton Four Points.

More information will be available from GTS as plans are finalized. If you would like to join the Education Committee or have any comments, please contact Sue Iverson, Education Committee Chair at (651) 792-7816 or sue.iverson@ci.arden-hills.mn.us.

JOB POSTINGS

FINANCE DIRECTOR

(Salary Range: \$74,853 - \$93,567)

The City of West Saint Paul is accepting applications for the position of Finance Director. This position is responsible for the overall financial management of the City including the annual budget, CAFR, investments, debt management, risk management, payroll, benefit administration, and purchasing. The Finance Department consists of an Assistant Finance Director, Accountant, Payroll Clerk, and Accounting Clerk. Minimum qualifications include a bachelor's degree in accounting, business administration or a related field and three years of municipal finance experience. A master's degree in business administration and five years of municipal experience are preferred. Applicants must submit a City employment application, resume, and a cover letter to the Assistant City Manager at 1616 Humboldt Ave., West Saint Paul, MN 55118 no later than May 16, 2008 at 4:30 p.m. Applications are available on the City's web site www.ci.west-saint-paul.mn.us or by calling (651)-552-4100. An Equal Opportunity Employment/Affirmative Action Employer.

Accounting Technician (Part-Time)

The City of Vadnais Heights is seeking a part-time (3 days per week) Accounting Technician to prepare and maintain a variety of financial records including processing of accounts payable claims; accounts receivable; utility billing; assisting in preparing annual financial report and annual budget; processing vendor payments for sales tax, income taxes and withholding; and maintain computerized records system.

Requires: Two years of formal training beyond high school and one year of related work or experience. Expected hiring range is \$19.21 - \$20.49/hr., plus benefits. EOE. Visit the City's web site at www.cityvadnaisheights.com and click on News & Events/ Job Postings to obtain a City application and job description. City application, resume and cover letter must be submitted by 4:30 p.m. on Monday, May 12, 2008.

Job posting are also made to the MnGFOA web site and you can check there on a continuing basis for new posting.

Congratulations To:

- Gino Businaro, Finance Director/Treasurer for the City of Mound who has retired at the end of March. Gino was an active member of GFOA and had been at Mound since 1992. The MnGFOA wishes Gino the best in his retirement.
- Catherine Pausche, was appointed as the Finance Director at the City of Mound.
- Congratulations and best wishes to Beth Widstrom-Anderson, CFO of the Metropolitan Council, as she takes her leave on June 2nd. Beth was President of Minnesota GFOA in 1996. She says her work at the Met Council has been very rewarding and fulfilling; in fact her whole career she has worked with "so many great people" and had "so many great opportunities". We will miss Beth as she moves on to "whatever comes next" but we know she will keep in touch.



ACCOUNTING & AUDITING STUDENT CONFERENCE

For the last ten years, Chris Miller has been the Minnesota GFOA representative to the Accounting & Auditing Student Conference which takes place in the fall every year in Minneapolis. 2008 is the year that MnGFOA is the chair of that conference and Chris is therefore acting as our representative. However, Chris has notified the Executive Board of his desire to step away after 2008 and let someone else to take this on. My message here is two fold:

- 1.) If you are interested in taking on the role of MnGFOA representative to the Accounting & Auditing Student Conference, please contact me (Robin Roland) as soon as possible. The executive committee will discuss this at our meeting in May, but moreover, who ever takes over from Chris could shadow him during this year and learn about the "job", and
- 2.) A WHOLEHEARTED THANK YOU to Chris Miller for his dedication to this project. Part of MnGFOA's mission is to attract up and coming talent to our profession. This conference helps us do that. It's been Chris's "baby" since Ed Burrell retired and he's done a great job.

Larry Jacobson
City of Robbinsdale
4100 Lakeview Avenue N
Robbinsdale, MN 55422-2280



Happy Mother's Day

2008 Meeting Dates

Monthly Meetings

No June Meeting
July 16 – Quarterly Training
August 20
No September Meeting – Annual Conference
October 15
November 19 – Quarterly Training
December 10

Education Training Dates:

July 16 – Long Range Financial Planning – Cragun's
October 22 – Beginning Gov. Accounting – St. Cloud
October 23 - Intermediate Gov. Accounting – Metro
area
November 19 – Topic to be determined

Annual Conferences:

GFOA – Fort Lauderdale, FL	June 15-18, 2008
MnGFOA – Alexandria, MN	Sept. 24-26, 2008

Membership Information

If you need to update your membership information, because you have changed jobs, or for some other reason, you can do it online at the MnGFOA website. You will need your username and password. If you have forgotten your username and password, please email timesaver1@aol.com with your request.

Message from the Editor

If you wish to share any items of interest with the members I look forward to receiving them. Send your job openings, ads, career moves, or other items of note to me by the 20th of each month and they will go in the next newsletter. Thanks!

Larry Jacobson, City of Robbinsdale
4100 Lakeview Avenue North
Robbinsdale, MN 55422-2280
Phone: 763-531-1215
Email: Ljacobson@ci.robbinsdale.mn.us





MGFOA 2008 GOLF OUTING



OAK MARSH

Date: Thursday, May 29, 2008 Cost: \$54 per person, includes:
greens fees, golf cart, contests, and prizes.

GPS system including electronic tournament
scoring will be used

Place: Oak Marsh Golf Course,
526 Inwood Ave. No., Oakdale, MN 55128
www.wpgolf.com/oakmarsh

Time: Tee times @ Noon - **A SHOTGUN START**
(A shotgun start is when all golfers start (and hopefully finish) at the same
time with each foursome on a different hole.)

This tournament is for golfers of all skill levels. You do not have to be a good golfer to participate. This is a team event. Just come prepared to have a good time!! To promote the social aspect of this event, entries will be grouped in foursomes, mixing skill levels. After golfing, we will meet in the clubhouse area for the presentation of prizes. The registration deadline is Monday May 12, 2008.

We will be having a shotgun start, so all tee times at Noon. Please be at the course at least 30 minutes prior to the tee time. They have a grill available for lunch. If you have any questions, please contact Jim Eichten at Malloy, Montague, Karnowski, Radosevich at 952-545-0424 or Ron Hedberg at the City of Cottage Grove, 651-458-2832, or email, rhedberg@cottage-grove.org.

Golf Outing Registration Form

Name(s) _____

Email: _____

Organization _____

**Make checks payable to MGFOA and
mail your registration form and
payment to:**

Average score for 18 holes _____

MMKR
Attn: Jim Eichten
5353 Wayzata Blvd., Suite 410
Minneapolis, MN 55416

Enclosed is a check for \$ _____ for _____ golfers