



MINNESOTA GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

# MnGFOA NEWSLETTER

May 2009

*Excellence and Leadership in Government Finance*

[www.mngfoa.org](http://www.mngfoa.org)

## Message from the President

By Larry Jacobson

Who would like to audit me next? Just get in line, pick a number and the next will be served.

It seems like everyone wants to audit the local government. There is the old standby, the independent auditor; to audit the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. The audit includes the usual questions and review of account balances and operating results. That stuff is all fine and good, and doesn't cause a lot of extra work.

The last couple of years though, there is the new Statement on Auditing Standards – “Internal Control Suite” of pronouncements. This new requirement added both cost and time to my audit the last couple of years. I not only got to complete the series of documents last year, but got to review and update them this year changing some into new formats. There was an added benefit though; the additional management letter comments generated addressing the lack of proper segregation of duties in our small City with limited staff.

Next is the Minnesota legal compliance portion of the annual audit, where the auditors test the compliance with all the state statutes. Some of which make a lot of sense, and some that seem to make no sense at all. Not their fault, they are just following the prescribed requirements of the statutes.

Don't forget the single audit requirements, if you receive federal financial assistance. Still one more level of compliance to deal with.

Speaking of federal, don't forget about the Internal Revenue Service. Local units of government don't have to file income tax returns, but the IRS oversight is still

there. There is the payroll audit. Now that is a ton of fun.

The IRS will review your filing of W-2's, 941's, withholding tax compliance, FICA and Medicare withholdings, uniform and auto allowances and reimbursements, and don't forget my favorite, the 1099 filing. Can you say - form W-9 on file?

Oh - almost forgot the annual work compensation audit. This audit sort of rounds things out. You get to provide all your wage information reconciled to unemployment reports classified by work compensation codes.

The last one (and my least favorite) is the Minnesota Department of Revenue Sales Tax Audit. The state reviews all your expenses, revenues, and whatever else, to make certain you have paid, collected, and remitted the proper amount of sales and use tax to the State. What gets me here is the fact that we get to pay sales tax on our purchases to help balance the State budget. Then - we get audited to make sure we pay enough - and then the State cuts our LGA or MVHC. I contend that if we didn't have to pay sales tax to the State, we wouldn't need so much state aid or need to have such a large property tax levy. Guess that would be too rational.

All for now, I think the energy auditors are here.

## 2009 Important Dates

### MONTHLY MEETINGS/EVENTS:

- May 20, 2009 – Monthly Luncheon, Sheraton Four Points
- June 2009 – Quarterly Training: “Generating Non-Tax Revenues” (date and place TBD)

- June 28-July 1, 2009 – National GFOA Conference, Seattle WA
- July 15, 2009 – Monthly Luncheon, Sheraton Four Points
- July 20-24, 2008 – GFOA National Training, Hyatt Regency Minneapolis
- August 19, 2009 – Monthly Luncheon (boat ride)
- September 23-25, 2009 – Annual Conference, Alexandria MN
- October 21, 2009 – Monthly Luncheon, Sheraton Four Points
- October 2009 – Beginning Governmental Acctg, St Cloud MN
- October 2009 – Advanced Governmental Acctg, Metro Area
- November 18, 2009 – Quarterly Training (topic TBD), Sheraton Four Points
- December 9, 2009 – Monthly Luncheon & Holiday Social, Sheraton Four Points

## Monthly Meeting

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**DATE:** Wednesday, May 20, 2009  
**LOCATION:** Sheraton Four Points, Minneapolis  
**TOPIC:** “Legislative Update”  
**SPEAKER:** Gary Carlson & Jennifer O’Rourke  
**TIME:** 11:30 am – Speaker  
 12:00 pm – Luncheon  
**LUNCH:** Croissant Duet  
**COST:** \$15

**Reservations:** It is preferred that you register on the MnGFOA website ([mngfoa.org](http://mngfoa.org)) – there is a link on the home page to go to register for the luncheon event. You could also send an email to Jessie Hart ([jessie.hart@ci.white-bear-township.mn.us](mailto:jessie.hart@ci.white-bear-township.mn.us)) or leave a voice mail for Jessie at 651.747.2760 no later than Friday, May 15th.

**Topic:** Gary and Jen will provide an insightful update of current legislative actions and proposals and potential impacts on local governments. You do not want to miss this informative session!

**Speakers:** *Gary Carlson, Director of Intergovernmental Relations ~ League of Minnesota Cities*

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.

*Jennifer O’Rourke, Intergovernmental Relations Representative ~ League of Minnesota Cities*

Jennifer is an intergovernmental relations representative with the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) working in the areas of aid to cities, economic development and redevelopment, general revenue sources for cities, property tax system, TIF and liquor and tobacco. Jennifer O’Rourke has been involved with Minnesota state government and politics since the mid-90’s, and has lobbied for the League since 2001. Before beginning with the LMC, Jennifer worked as a legislative staffer with the Minnesota Senate for six years. Jennifer served as the committee administrator for the Economic Development Committee under the chairmanship of both former Senator Jerry Janezich, and Senator Tracy Beckman. Jennifer completed her undergraduate degree in political science and public administration at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse in 1994 after growing up on a farm in southern Minnesota.

## National GFOA Training A Look Ahead

The National GFOA will be offering a series of trainings from July 20-24, 2009 at the Hyatt Regency Minneapolis.

Topics include Evaluating Internal Controls, Introduction to Performance Management, Preparing a CAFR, Advanced Governmental Accounting, and Investing Public Funds. For course descriptions and registration information, please visit their website at [www.gfoa.org](http://www.gfoa.org).

# Committee

## Executive Committee Update

The 2009 Executive Committee met on April 15 for the monthly board meeting. Discussion included:

- Approval of March 2009 minutes and Treasurer's reports from March 2009
- Heard committee reports from MnGFOA committee chairs
- 990 filing update
- Approved new representative to Student Accounting & Auditing Conference
- Review of GTS contract proposal for 2009

## 2009 MnGFOA MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

The 2009 MnGFOA Membership Directory will be available on-line via [www.mngfoa.org](http://www.mngfoa.org) website. We have had some minor technical difficulties due to file size but are confident it will be available soon. ALL current members will receive an email through the listserv that will tell you where the document is on the web site and how to access it. This document will be available for ONLY those members who have a current membership.

The Executive Committee would like to thank the members for your patience as we continue to utilize the technology we have available and to assist us in cost saving measures for the organization.

## Upcoming Social Events

### Mark Your Calendar



The MnGFOA Annual Golf Outing is scheduled for Wednesday, July 29 at the Oak Marsh Course in Oakdale starting at 11 a.m. Watch for details in the next newsletter and on the website.

Plans are underway for the Boat Cruise in conjunction with the MnGFOA monthly luncheon on August 19. More details in upcoming newsletters.

## Risk Management Seminar May 21, 2009

Come join the Minnesota Public Risk Management Association (MN PRIMA) on May 21, 2009 for seminars on Network Security/Identity Theft and Risk Management.

Kevin Kalinich, J.D., Aon Risk Service's Co-National Managing Director of Professional Risk Solutions, will be presenting the Network Security/Identity Theft portion of the program. His session will focus on privacy and data breaches for which entities may have potential liability, as well as available programs available to protect and insure your data.

For the second portion of the program, Tracie Chamberlin, Loss Control Manager with the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust (LMCIT), will be presenting Risk Management 101 ("So You're Stuck with Risk Management"). This portion of the program will be especially beneficial for those people who have just recently been, or may be assigned the task of handling your entity's Risk Management Program as part of their "other duties as assigned." Following Tracie, risk managers throughout the State will participate in a panel discussion that will emphasize their real life experiences as to how they handle wearing multiple hats.

The program runs from 10:30 am - 2 pm on Thursday, March 21st, and is being held at the Brooklyn Park Community Center. The cost of the program is \$15 for non-members and includes a delicious lunch, or \$10 for 1-4 co-workers of a Government MN PRIMA Member, or \$7.50 per co-worker if you have more than 5 additional people attending.

You can get full details of the seminar, including registration information, by visiting MN PRIMA's website at [www.mnprima.avenet.net](http://www.mnprima.avenet.net) or by calling Amy Larson, MN PRIMA President and City of Bloomington Risk Manager, at 952-563-4932 or Chris White, PRIMA Treasurer, at 651-215-4069.

## JOB POSTINGS

*The City of Cottage Grove* is recruiting for the position of Finance Director. This position is responsible for overall planning and administration of all financial activities and information technology systems. Essential functions include: act as financial advisor to City Administrator and other departments; manage the City's cash flow and administer the investment program; implement approved financial and accounting procedures; prepare five-year CIP; responsible for the preparation of annual budget; monitor and develop internal control procedures; monitor and direct development and use of computer services; supervise employees in finance and MIS. This position requires a Bachelor's degree in accounting, finance, or related field, and at least five years progressively responsible experience in governmental accounting. CPA is preferred (not required).

Applicants must complete an official City of Cottage Grove application packet and supplemental questions to be considered for the position. A complete application packet and job description is available at the City of Cottage Grove City Hall or online at [www.cottagegrove.org](http://www.cottagegrove.org). Submit applications to Jesse Swenson, City of Cottage Grove, 7516 - 80th Street South, Cottage Grove, MN 55016. **All applications must be received by 4:30 p.m., Friday, May 8, 2009.**

## Congratulations to...

*Ron Hedberg* –

Ron took over the helm as Finance Director for the City of Apple Valley on April 17. He previously served as Cottage Grove's finance director for eight years. Ron graduated from St Thomas with a bachelor's degree in accounting and started his profession in the private sector. He found his niche working in the public sector, where he feels he can make a difference and enjoys interacting with the residents. Ron currently serves as secretary for the MnGFOA Executive Board. Congratulations to Ron and we wish him the best in his new career.



*Amy Sevig* –

Amy Sevig from the City of Bloomington was approved as a new MnGFOA representative to the Student Accounting and Auditing Conference. She will serve on their board along with Darin Nelson from Minnetonka.

## CHANGED JOBS OR CONTACT INFORMATION CHANGED?

Have you changed jobs or has your contact information changed recently? If so we would encourage you to update this information directly on the MnGFOA web site in the Members section under "Update Members Information." If you do not remember your login information (user name and/or password) there is a link on the home page to make a request for that information to be emailed directly to you. The web site data base is the official member data base and should be current so to ensure you receive timely information from the organization; please keep your information current. *THANKS!*

## MnGFOA WEBSITE CHECK IT OUT!!



Have you seen the new look of the MN GFOA website? Now is the time to check it out! Go to [www.mngfoa.org](http://www.mngfoa.org) and be ready to browse our great new website. You can register for the monthly luncheon, check out previous newsletters, download forms, send a listserv, and so much more.

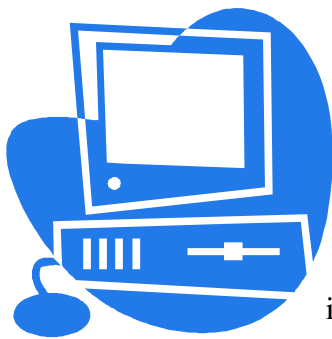
## National GFOA Conference in Seattle

We are putting together a list of members attending the annual GFOA conference. If you are going and would like to share with others where you are staying please let us know. We will share the list with members who provide the information. The list has been useful in the past to assist attendees in locating other members from Minnesota. If you would like to provide your hotel information, please send an e-mail to our State Representative, Jim Knutson, at [JKnutson@ci.maple-grove.mn.us](mailto:JKnutson@ci.maple-grove.mn.us).

Cathy Shuman  
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## Message from the Editor



Please send me any news for our newsletter: job openings, ads related to government finance, career moves, committee updates, or other noteworthy items. You are encouraged to submit general items of interest in any area of government finance. The cutoff date is the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month, and the newsletter will be emailed or mailed about the first day of the upcoming month. Thanks.

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