



MINNESOTA GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

MnGFOA NEWSLETTER

November 2007

Excellence and Leadership in Government Finance

www.mngfoa.org

Message from the President

By Greg Sticha

The tragedy of the I-35 Bridge collapse earlier this summer had an impact in some way on all of us. I remember thinking the person who told me must have gotten some bad information, because how is it even possible for something like that to happen. As it turns out the person who told me was sadly not giving me bad information, but I still did not believe it until I got home and saw it for myself on TV.

At our October Lunch meeting we had Matt Jensen and Gary Morien from Bonestroo Engineering give us some information on our bridges in the state and the way funding for improvements to them are handled. The acronyms that are associated with the construction and funding of bridges was confusing in itself.... SALT, STIP, CSAH, MSAS, HUTDF for example. I know some of you, including myself, are familiar with many of them.

After you get past all the acronyms associated with bridges you then can dive into definitions of what a bridge is, and the labels they receive based on their current condition. I did not know for example, that in order to be considered a bridge by the state of Minnesota it must be at least ten feet in length, but the federal definition is twenty feet in length. Matt then also went on to give a couple terms that we may have heard of because of the tragedy, "Structurally Deficient" and "Functionally Obsolete".

I can not tell you what makes a bridge fall into either of those definitions, but they are important in the eyes of the State when it comes to funding for replacement of our bridges. In order to be qualified for funding they must be designated with one of those labels and have a sufficiency rating of less than 80.

Matt also noted that the State of Minnesota in terms of bridges with these labels and bridge conditions in general, is far better off than most of the other states in the country.

So bottom line, how do you get your funding for improvements to your bridges? Well based on what Matt and Gary discussed there is no guarantee, but if you start identifying the bridges that need improvement early and can demonstrate that your agency is serious about funding the project by either having them in our CIP's or by passing resolutions to dedicate funding for the local share, you are ahead of the game. Thank God most of us have engineers that help us through the funding and application process for our bridges.

Our next meeting is half day training on Internal Controls at the Sheraton Four Points on November 14th. Get your reservation in early; last year this session quickly sold out!

November Training

DATE: November 14, 2007
LOCATION: Minneapolis Sheraton Four Points
TIME: 10 AM – 3 PM

The topic is "Internal Controls: Building Documentation for Your Organization" and the speaker is Steve McDonald. This seminar was filled to capacity last year so we have asked Steve back. He will be giving us more information and in a different format than last year. The seminar will start at 10:00 AM and end at 3:00 PM. A brochure and on-line registration are available on the Government Training Services website at www.mngts.org. ***Please remember that you can not use the MNGFOA website to register for this training or the lunch option.***

NOVEMBER FOOD DRIVE

The Social Committee is once again sponsoring the Annual Food Drive. This is our 10th Annual! Please bring non-perishable food items to the November (training) luncheon and we'll see that the collection is distributed to local area food shelves.



2007 Meeting Dates

Monthly Meetings:

November 14 – Quarterly training: *Internal Control*
Canned food drive
December 19 – Monthly luncheon, Sheraton Four Points
Toys for Tots drive
Holiday Social to follow meeting

Annual Conferences:

GFOA – Fort Lauderdale, FL June 15-18, 2008
MnGFOA – Alexandria, MN Sept. 23-26, 2008

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED -

Springsted, Inc. is holding their 2007 Upper Midwest Regional Symposium "The Art of the Long View" on Thursday December 6th in Downtown St. Paul. Registration deadline is November 29th. For more information or to register, please visit the website at www.springsted.com or call Margaret Culligan at 651-223-3058 or 800-236-3033.

OOPS! We missed this one!

MnGFOA has an Internship Grant program which is normally advertised in July and awarded in October each year. This year, we totally missed it!

So here's the "ad" for the 2007 Internship Grant. The application form is online or in the Membership directory. The grant is a matching grant for the salary and benefits of an intern hired by a member's organization.

Submit the application to Greg Sticha by November 30th. Applications will be considered by the Executive Board in early December and awarded by year end. Questions? Contact Greg Sticha or Robin Roland.

Committee

Executive Committee Update

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

- Approved August meeting minutes.
- Approved check registers for June thru September operations.
- Received report from the Conference committee on the Annual Conference.
- Received results from the "Vendor Booth Survey". The results from the survey and the roundtable discussion at the conference were overwhelmingly in favor of retaining the current structure of the conference and not including vendor booths. The Executive Committee appreciates the responses received and the commitment of our Associate members to the organization.

Update on MnGFOA Student Outreach Efforts

As part of the MnGFOA's student outreach program, MnGFOA representatives recently attended the 10th Annual Accounting & Auditing Student Conference. The event was held on September 26, 2007 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. An estimated 500 students stopped by the MnGFOA's exhibit booth to talk with members about careers in governmental accounting and finance. In addition, the MnGFOA also participated in the St. Cloud State Career Fair on October 11, 2007. From these two events, over one hundred (100) resumes were collected and are available on the MnGFOA's website at www.mngfoa.org. Many of these students are nearing graduation and have impressive GPA's and relevant work experience. Members are encouraged to consider these students for internships and entry-level positions.

Also, we have received a request from Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall, Minnesota for a representative of the MnGFOA to speak to the University's Accounting Club to help inform students on career opportunities in governmental accounting and finance. If you are interested in participating, please contact Chris Miller at 651-792-7031, or by email at chris.miller@ci.roseville.mn.us. If you are a SMSU graduate, this is a unique opportunity to promote the MnGFOA and give back to your alma mater.

JOB POSTINGS

Finance Director - City of Fairmont

The City of Fairmont, Minnesota (pop. 11,000) is seeking a Finance Director to direct its financial affairs and manage the operations of the Finance and Administration Department. 2007 budget for all funds is \$25 million. Requires a Bachelor's degree in accounting, finance, business or public administration and 3 years of responsible municipal finance experience. CPA or CPFO a plus. Salary range: \$60,736 to \$75,290 DOQ. Resume, cover letter, salary history, and professional references to Sharon Klumpp, Springsted Incorporated, 380 Jackson Street, Suite 300, St. Paul, MN 55101; 651.223.3053, fax 651.223.3002 or e-mail, fairmont@springsted.com. Open until filled. EOE

MANAGER OF BUDGET

Metro Transit is the largest operator of bus service, the first and only operator of light rail in the Twin Cities, and future operator of additional rail lines in the region. This position will provide strategic leadership and vision to the budgeting, planning and forecasting processes of Metro Transit Bus and Light Rail Operations and its 2,600 employees. Responsible for planning and coordinating the development of a \$264 million bus and rail annual operating budget, a \$649 million six year capital improvement plan and will be strategically involved in a six year \$947 million Transitway capital improvement plan which includes the future Central Corridor Light Rail. Additional responsibilities include guidance and input in the development of the transit biennial operating and capital requests to the State Legislature; operating and capital budget amendments; performing long-range forecasting and strategic planning for revenues, expenditures and capital projects of bus and rail operations; providing financial analysis to identify financials trends, risks and opportunities; provide leadership in the identification and resolution of budget challenges, and developing budgeting procedures and financial models.

Individuals interested in applying for this Metro Transit Manager of Budget position should visit the website at <http://metro council.org/jobs/apply.htm> for more information about this position and for employment application forms.

FINANCIAL ANALYST/PRINCIPAL FINANCIAL ANALYST

This position provides leadership of the budgeting and financial support services for Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS) - a unit within the Metropolitan Council. MTS has an annual operating budget of over \$75 million which includes the operations of Metro Mobility, the region's ADA transit service program; regular route and community-based transit services provided through private providers and Suburban Transit Authority Providers; and also the regional transportation planning functions and activities.. This position will coordinate the preparation of MTS's 6-year capital improvement program and annual capital and operating budgets; assist in development of the regional transit biennial budget request to the Legislature; coordinate operating and capital budget amendments; coordinate development of the budgets with the Council's finance division, Suburban Transit Authority Providers, Metro Transit and other external stakeholders; make budget presentations to the Council Transportation Committee and senior management; manage and oversee the capital contracts and grants program; develop budgeting procedures and design, implement and prepare financial reports for the MTS division.

Position is responsible for leading all aspects of the capital and operating budget processes; developing financial recommendations and policies to guide MTS's financial processes and decision-making; preparing and presenting finance and budget related issues and actions to the Transportation Committee and full Metropolitan Council; and, providing leadership in the identification and possible resolution of budget issues and challenges. Individuals interested in applying should submit an application on the Council's website at www.metro council.org.

ASSISTANT FINANCE DIRECTOR

The City of South St. Paul seeks applications for the position of Assistant Finance Director, who provides leadership for all finance related functions. Directly supervises and manages day-to-day functions of accounts payable, payroll, cash management, utility billing, general accounts receivable and general accounting of the department. Works extensively on all phases of City annual budget and CAFR. Works in close collaboration with the Finance Director in the administration of all financial, accounting, and related computer activities. Excellent career track opportunity. (Continued...)

Robin Roland
City of Farmington
325 Oak Street
Farmington, MN 55024



Requires degree in accounting, finance, related field or equivalent experience in addition to five years of accounting or auditing experience. Starting salary range: \$53,912 to \$63,568 depending on qualifications. Excellent benefits. For detailed position description and application materials visit www.southstpaul.org. Send resume and application to: Human Resources, City of South St. Paul, 125 Third Avenue North, South St. Paul, MN 55075. Phone (651) 554-3203. Deadline: Open until filled.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

- Brian Swanson, returning to St. Louis Park as their Assistant Finance Director
- Josh Feldman, the new Finance Director at South St. Paul

Good luck to both of you!

Message from the Editor

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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