



MnGFOA Newsletter

December 2025

Excellence and Leadership in Government Finance

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President's Message

By: Mark Ebensteiner

Wow! What a year 2025 has been! Here we are in December.... Holidays and cold weather here we come! As I wrap up my last month as president of MNGFOA and as I ponder how to best summarize my thoughts in the last edition of my newsletter article, I am filled with gratefulness for the opportunity. I have thoroughly enjoyed my tenure on the executive board and am proud of this organization.

Thank you! to all the chairs, co-chairs, and members of our committees. I appreciate your efforts in the execution of all the social events, monthly meetings, training courses and annual conference. There are so many things that go on behind the scenes and your commitment to this organization does not go unnoticed.

Thank you! to the executive committee members I have had the privilege to serve with. I appreciate your support and guidance as I have navigated my roles.

Thank you! to all the members of MNGFOA! I am grateful for the opportunity to represent this organization. Government finance has its challenges, but our members do a great job supporting each other.

Individually we may not have all the answers, but there is always someone who can point you in the right direction...or have a policy you can borrow.

Throughout my newsletters I have challenged myself to share tidbits about myself that maybe others can relate to. As an analytical person, I attempt to always have a solution or formula to best solve the problem at hand. In the end, there are some aspects that aren't so strait forward. Being a father of 4 kids ranging in age from 5-16, I find myself somewhere between "when I was a kid" and leaning on co-workers for advice. And as a government finance professional, as much as I'm confident in my knowledge and skillset, I continually lean on colleagues for advice and guidance. In the end, we are not perfect, and for the most part strive to be the best versions of ourselves we can be.

Recently I read a quote that hit home... Nick Saben, the prolific college football coach said "**Outcomes are a distraction. Focusing on the PROCESS of what you have to do to get the outcome is the most important thing you need to do.**" I can relate to this as many times I'm so focused on the goal I forget to enjoy the ride. I challenge all of you to slow down a little, focus on some of those stress points that may create some challenges in your life, and buckle up for success.

As we look ahead to 2026, I am excited to hand over the reins to Tina Lannes. I know her leadership will continue to guide MNGFOA in service to our membership.

Stay warm, stay energized and have a very Happy Holiday Season! I look forward to seeing you all in 2026 and continuing the good work of the Minnesota GFOA!

HAPPY
Holidays!

DECEMBER MONTHLY MEETING

December 10, 2025
11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
Zoom Meeting

Cost: Free

CEU: 1.0 on request. Please complete the online form to request an emailed certificate: [CEU Request Form](#)

Topic: HR and Payroll Compliance Updates

As the new year approaches join us as Abdo reviews the important items every employer needs to be prepared for.

Speaker: Brenna Ramy, Abdo

Brenna Ramy joined Abdo in 2019 and is a Senior Manager. She has experience in organization development and working with leaders to determine the most effective employment model to meet business needs and strategic direction. She has over 20 years of Human Resources experience in the industries of hospitality, retail, multifamily housing, and consulting. She has worked in a variety of organizations in size ranging from less than 20 to over 300,000 employees. Brenna believes in finding practical solutions to HR needs and determining where the best place to spend time is. Brenna brings energy to every meeting, training, and event she participates in. She is most at home connecting with owners, leaders, employers, civil servants, and volunteers in meaningful ways that help them achieve whatever success they're looking for. Brenna has created and presented dozens of webinars, podcasts and trainings over the last 20 years and loves connecting with groups in that way.

Happy Retirement Wishes

Congratulations to Michelle Pietrick on her upcoming retirement in February 2026, after 40+ in government Finance. Over the years Michelle has served as a past president on the MNGFOA Executive Board, on the conference committee for over 20 years and has served as the chair twice. In addition, she served on the program committee.

Congratulations to Ron Hedberg on his retirement in December 2025, with over 38 years working with local governments. Over the years Ron has served as a past president on the MNGFOA Executive Board, as the MNGFOA state rep and over 20 years on the social committee in addition to several years on the mentorship program.



EXCITING NEWS!

Congratulations to Candi Lemarr on her new position as Finance Director for the City of Apple Valley, and on completing GFOA's Certified Public Finance Officer Program (CPFO).

Congrats!

Congratulations to Lindsey Hamers on her new position as the Assistant Finance Director for the City of St. Michael.



2025 MNGFOA Second Harvest Heartland Fundraising Drive



MN GFOA Members,

We are committed to making sure local families have food on their tables this year. Help our team reach our goal of raising \$2,500! Thank you for making a difference for the more than half a million people in our region who are living with the daily uncertainty of where their next meal will come from. With your support, we can help families meet the moment. Last year MN GFOA members raised \$2,100!

<http://support.2harvest.org/goto/MNGFOA2025>




- \$10 can provide 1 month of healthy breakfasts for a senior.
- \$25 can provide 75 meals for kids in school.
- \$50 can provide 1 month of medically-tailored meals for patients with diabetes.
- \$100 can provide 1 month of produce, proteins, and dairy for a family of 4.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH IF YOU CAN HELP OUT THIS YEAR!



First Quarter 2026 MNGFOA Networking Events: SAVE THE DATES!

The Social Committee is excited to share a great lineup of networking events for the first quarter of 2026. Mark your calendars and join your colleagues for opportunities to connect, recharge, and have fun:

- 
Wednesday, January 21, 2026 | Time TBD - MN Frost Women’s Hockey game
- 
Thursday, February 19, 2026 | Time TBD - Pickleball event
- 
Friday, March 6, 2026 | Time TBD - Fun & charitable winter tradition supporting Special Olympics Minnesota

GFOA’s Spring 2026 Leadership Academy

Invest in the leader you want to become. GFOA’s Spring 2026 Leadership Academy, taking place March 22–27, 2026 at Arizona State University, offers a unique, immersive experience for senior-level state and local government finance professionals. Throughout the week, participants will engage in sessions designed to enhance leadership skills, gain new ideas to improve their organization and communities, steer organization vision, manage stakeholders, and more!

Earn 30 CPE credits with your participation. Spots are limited. Apply by **January 16, 2026** to be considered.

JOB POSTINGS

Summary of Job Openings:

Position Title	Entity	Closing Date
Accountant I	City of Chaska	12/05/25
Finance Director	Steele County	12/01/25

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



2025 OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

President
 Mark Ebensteiner
 City of Becker
 763.200.4250

At-Large
 Dalton Larson
 Anoka County
 763.324.1755

President-Elect
 Tina Lannes
 City of Albertville
 763.496.6802

At-Large
 Chris Knopik
 CliftonLarsonAllen
 612.397.3266

Secretary
 Gina Foschi
 City of New Brighton
 651.638.2105

State Representative
 Sarah Rathlisberger
 City of Monticello
 763.271.3201

Treasurer
 Joel Merry
 City of Minnetonka
 952.939.8254

Past President
 Mary Kaye Wahl
 Carver County
 952.361.1511

2026 Annual Conference

MNGFOA Annual conference will be moving to Cragun’s Resort in Brainerd. **2026 Conference dates will be Tuesday, September 22nd – Thursday, September 24th.** (2027 dates Wednesday, September 29-Friday, October 1st)



2025 Committee Chairs & Vice Chairs

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

Co-Chairs Melissa Schlingman, City of Shakopee 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 952-563-8725
 Michelle Hoffman, Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority 612-335-3513

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

Chair Hannah Lynch, Moreton Capital Markets 952-777-7930

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

Co-Chairs Joe Starks, City of Fridley 651-277-5230
 Katie Gray, City of Fridley 763-572-3528

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 952-953-2547
 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 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!

Tina Lannes
 MNGFOA President Elect
 763-496-6802

