



# MnGFOA Newsletter

March 2025

*Excellence and Leadership in Government Finance*

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## President's Message

By: Mark Ebensteiner

Another month has flown by, March is upon us, and with that audit entries and financial statement preparation is in full swing. As much fun as that is, it got me wondering "What else is March known for?". In addition to Mardi Gras and St. Patty's Day, March symbolizes transformation and new growth. As this growth occurs, March is also considered the most unproductive month in the U.S. due to college basketballs "March Madness" with estimates of U.S. employers losing around \$13.3 billion in productivity. It's a little reminder to focus on that positive transformation and growth but still find a little time to fill out that bracket and cheer on your favorite teams.

Thanks to all those that contributed to the 2nd Annual MNGFOA Polar Plunge, which was held on February 28<sup>th</sup>. The MNGFOA Plungers received just over \$2,000 in contributions which support the great cause of Special Olympics Minnesota. Our numbers are growing, with 8 plungers this year.



Let's all join in for continued financial statement preparation growth and register for the ACFR Review that is happening March 26. Registration is open on the GFOA website under the events tab. Thanks to all who have provided report comments as this looks to be another great educational event.

Our members are what makes our organization so wonderful! If you are a member and know someone who is not (and could benefit from what MNGFOA has to offer), encourage them to consider membership in 2025! If more information is needed to get them over the fence, please reach out to me!

I recently had the opportunity to travel to Lake Havasu City, AZ to visit my retired parents while they vacationed for a few weeks. With a cancelled flight throwing a wrinkle into our plans, my family of 6 flew into Vegas, and made the additional drive south. For four days we got to experience breathtaking sunsets, hiking trails, a boat tour, some good eats, a few puzzles, and a tourist town dedicated to donkeys in Oatman, AZ. As a professional and father that many times



burns both ends of the candle, I found this vacation invigorating. It was an opportunity to connect with my wife and kids all while experiencing something new and exciting. With the long winter season hopefully coming to an end soon, I challenge all of you to find the right opportunity to unwind a little and enjoy a new experience or revisit one that makes you smile 😊

I hope you all have a fabulous March and find yourself with opportunities for transformation, new growth, and possibly a green beer! Thanks for being a part of MNGFOA!

Challenges are what make life interesting. Overcoming them is what makes life meaningful.



# MARCH MONTHLY MEETING

Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025  
 Time: 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM  
 Location: Wherever you are  
 Cost: Free  
 CEU: Available upon request  
 Speakers: Andy Grice and Dustin Opatz (Creative Planning)

**Topic: ACFR Review Session**

The Education and Program Committees invite you and your staff to attend the Annual ACFR Review Session on Wednesday, March 26th. The session will be presented by Andrew Grice and Dustin Opatz from Creative Planning and cover submitted certificate review comments and suggested changes.

Please visit the [EVENTS CALENDAR](#) on the MNGFOA website to register online so we can send you instructions on how to tune in to the session.

## ACFR Comments Needed!

In preparation for the ACFR Review Session in March, we are asking for any comments received from GFOA submissions. Please send your comments received to Dustin Opatz ([dustin.opatz@creativeplanning.com](mailto:dustin.opatz@creativeplanning.com)).

Comments were due Friday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, but will still be accepted going forward. To allow plenty of time for the presenters to incorporate into the session, please send to Dustin Opatz's by Monday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>. While comments will still be accepted after that date, they may or may not be able to be incorporated into the presentation.

## Membership Renewals

Annual Memberships expire at the end of February each year. All renewals must be done online at [www.mngfoa.org](http://www.mngfoa.org). You may still pay by check by following the renewal steps online and then sending your check made payable to MNGFOA to the 2025 Treasurer:

Joel Merry, MNGFOA Treasurer  
 City of Minnetonka  
 14600 Minnetonka Blvd.  
 Minnetonka, MN 55345

Joel may be contacted at:  
 952-939-8254

### Exciting News!

Congratulations to Julie Weiers Accountant at City of Otsego on completing GFOA's Certified Public Finance Officer Program (CPFO).



## **St. Patrick's Day Networking Event!**

Date: Thursday, March 13  
Time: 4:00 p.m. – Happy Hour Gathering  
Location: *The Local – Minneapolis*  
**931 Nicollet Mall,  
Minneapolis, MN 55402**

*Please note that street parking is limited in central areas and is not available after 4:00 PM. We recommend using ramp parking at **910 LaSalle Ave Parking (910 La Salle Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55402)** or any other convenient options.*

### **Join the Technology Committee!**

The MNGFOA Technology Committee is looking for members who would like to join the committee. Along with continuing to support the work of the various other committees, over the next year they are hoping to enhance the website and further expand communication tools. Please reach email [technology@mngfoa.org](mailto:technology@mngfoa.org) if you are interested.

### **MNGFOA Member Feedback Survey**

The MNGFOA is looking for your feedback on a couple of initiatives for 2025 to determine how to serve members effectively. The survey is looking to get members' feedback regarding preferred method for member-to-member communication and member user groups. Please keep an eye out for the survey to arrive in your email or go to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JWPP7SX> to complete the survey now.











### **Congrats!**

Congratulations to Lucas Chase on starting his new position as the Finance Director for the City of Credit River.



# 2025 MN GFOA Networking Events: Save the Dates!

The Social Committee is excited to announce a fantastic lineup of networking events for 2025! Mark your calendars and join your colleagues for opportunities to connect, collaborate, and have fun throughout the year:

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**March 13, 2025** | 5:00 PM: Celebrate at our St. Patrick's Networking Event at the Local in Downtown Minneapolis
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**April 9, 2025** | 4:00 PM: Join the fun and try your luck at the Meat Raffle Event. Big Louie's Crystal, MN supporting the West Metro Fire Relief Association
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**May 15, 2025** | 6:00–9:00 PM: Put your knowledge to the test at Trivia Night at the Birdhouse in Robbinsdale.
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**June 12, 2025** | 7:00 PM: Cheer on the MN Aurora FC at a Women's Soccer Game at TCO Stadium in Eagan.
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**July 17, 2025** | 3:30 PM: Paddle your way to fun at a Paddle Tap boat cruise on Lake Minnetonka
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**August 6, 2025** | 1:00 PM: Take in a St. Paul Saints Game at CHS Field.
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**September 24–26, 2025**: Attend the Annual Conference in Alexandria, MN, with exciting networking events in store.
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**October 2025**: Give back at the Feed My Starving Children Event in Chanhassen, MN.
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**November 6, 2025** | 4:00–7:00 PM: Make a difference at the Tie Blanket Event at Autumn Grove Park Building in Roseville, MN. Help create blankets for charitable organizations supporting at-risk teens.
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**November–December 2025**: Participate in the Second Harvest Heartland Online Food Drive to support those in need.

# Annual National GFOA Conference Scholarship Opportunity



Registration is now open for the National GFOA Conference, which will be held June 29 to July 2, 2025 in Washington, DC. The MNGFOA, along with Ehlers will award a scholarship to a MNGFOA active member for the purpose of funding their registration to the annual national conference. The scholarship will reimburse the registration fee for the recipient, it does not include coverage of items such as lodging, mileage or other out-of-pocket costs not covered by the registration fee. Applications are accepted on the MNGFOA website.

[Robert L. Ehlers, Sr. MnGFOA Scholarship Program - National Conference - Scholarship Information - Minnesota Government Finance Officers Association](#)

Applications are accepted through March 31, 2025, and the scholarships will be awarded before April 30, 2025.

## JOB POSTINGS

Summary of Job Openings:

Position Title	Entity	Closing Date
Senior Accountant	SouthWest Transit	March 17, 2025
Accountant – Part-Time/Temporary	Plymouth	March 10, 2025
Senior Accountant	Anoka County	March 6, 2025
Director of Budget and Revenue	Metropolitan Council	March 9, 2025
Procurement Specialist	SouthWest Transit	March 7, 2025
Assistant Finance Director	Hopkins	March 4, 2025

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

## Did you know?

The MNGFOA has a Forum page on the website. It is an online platform where members can openly discuss topics of mutual interest by posting messages, asking questions, sharing information. You can subscribe to threads that are of interest or post a new one for others to join. Check it out at [MNGFOA Forum](#).

## 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

