



MnGFOA Newsletter

September 2026

Excellence and Leadership in Government Finance

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President's Message

By: Tina Lannes

It is that time of year when the nights get cooler, the leaves begin to change colors, warmer clothing comes out of the closet, preliminary levy discussions begin, and the kiddos head back to school. This will be the first year, since both of my sons have graduated, that I won't be part of the group making sure the boys get to the bus on time. Weird!

As the baseball season starts to wind down, I know many of you are already getting ready for football. I've been hearing plenty of talk about fantasy players, with the first Vikings game coming up on August 28th. I, however, always have one last baseball holdout – and that is due to a birthday.

My son shares his birthday with Patriot Day, September 11th. When he was younger, he knew about what happened on that tragic day, but I always tried to remind him that he also shared his birthday with a good friend of ours, Jackie Hernandez.

Jackie was an infielder and a member of the 1971 World Series Champion Pittsburgh Pirates. We became friends when Jackie and Mike Cuellar were coaches for the Duluth Dukes over several years. When they first arrived in Duluth, they

thought Lake Superior was the ocean, which my family thought was pretty funny!

During their time in Duluth, we spent many of their days off fishing and having BBQs. Over the years, we became good friends and would trade off on who was doing the cooking. When it was their turn, Jackie would make his Cuban rub for the steaks. The Duluth Dukes relocated in 2002, but I was fortunate enough to continue seeing Jackie when he returned as a coach for the St. Paul Saints. He even had the opportunity to meet my oldest son during a MNGFOA Saints Game outing. Unfortunately, Jackie became manager of the Charlotte County Redfish near his home in Miami, Florida, in 2006, so he never got the chance to meet my youngest son in person, who was born in 2007 and they shared a birthday. We never made it to Miami to visit Jackie before he passed away, but we have plenty of pictures, stories, and memories to remind us of the friendship we were lucky enough to share with the "Boys of Summer".

Speaking of music, September 25th is One-Hit Wonder Day. Some of the top songs often included on rock-and-roll one-hit-wonder lists are In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida, My Sharona, Spirit in the

Sky, Black Betty, and Mississippi Queen. That seems like a pretty good soundtrack to get us ready for what is coming next!

September also means getting ready for the 62nd Annual MNGFOA Conference, being held at Cragun's Resort in Brainerd, September 22–24, 2026. This year's theme is "Rock and Roll Hall of Fame: Keeping Government Finance in Tune."

The Conference and Social Committees have been busy finalizing the details for another conference that will truly "rock your socks off!" We are looking forward to a great few days filled with opportunities to expand your knowledge, connect with peers, share ideas, and, of course, have a little fun along the way.

Hopefully, the weather will cooperate and give us a beautiful autumnal equinox as we gather in Brainerd. Until then, enjoy the changing season, the last days of baseball, and maybe even a little one-hit-wonder music!



GET EVERYTHING IN TUNE AT THIS YEAR'S MNGFOA CONFERENCE

The conference is almost here! Sign up now to secure your spot at the 62nd Annual MNGFOA Conference in Brainerd, Minnesota! The conference will be held September 22 to September 24, 2026 at Cragun's Resort. Registration can be completed at mngfoa.org. Check out the Annual Conference Info tab on the website for more information. The Conference and Social Committees are hard at work to make the upcoming conference fun and rewarding to all those that attend! A listing of the current sessions and speakers are listed below. If you have any questions or additional items regarding the conference, please contact a member of the conference committee or the conference chairs - Joshua Kent or Jackie Heinz.

Tuesday, September 22, 2026

Keynote: Quarter Turns, Change, Opportunity & the Next Normal (Tim Furlong)
Legislative Update (Troy Olsen, Mike Lund & Joe Bagnoli)
Auditing 101 / Internal Controls (Bonnie Schwieger)
Municipal Cannabis Operations (Brenda Springer & Shane Mikkelson)
MN Paid Leand & OT Lessons Learned (Brenna Ramy)
Negotiating with Unions "Fundamentals of Collective Bargaining & Union Negotiations" (Greg Butler & Ryan Chester)
GASB Update (Rebecca Peterson and Andy Hering)
Small City Roundtable (Mark Ebensteinder & Greta Pudas)
Large City Roundtable (Matt Burt, Pa Thao & Amy Hove)
County Roundtable (Dalton Larson & Dave Kent)

Wednesday, September 23, 2026

An Update from the Office of the State Auditor (Julie Blaha)
Powered by Energy - Rock Steady Through Change (Kristen Brown)
Website ADA Compliance (Jay Wyant)
Economic Update (Graham Acheson)
Create Inspiration & Engagement with Charisma: Comm. Tactics All Finance Leaders Should Master (Ulrich Jensen)
Stress to Strength: Keep Your cool When the Pressure's On (Kristen Brown)
Investments 101 (Corey Boyer, Annette Storm & Nate Reinhardt)
Excel Basics (Phillip Granley)
Create Inspiration & Engagement with Charisma: Comm. Tactics All Finance Leaders Should Master (Ulrich Jensen)
Excel - Intermediate / Advanced Users (Dave Seelen)
Cybersecurity / Fraud Prevention (Charles Banks)
The Local Government Revenue Toolbox (Jason Aarsvold & Kelly Horn)
Debt 201: Building on the Basics of Local Government Financing (Nick Anhut & Heather Casperson)
MNGFOA Mentorship Program (Cory Kampf, Lynn Cornwell & Nate Reinhardt)

Thursday, September 24, 2026

AI in the Local Government : Practical, Safe, & Effective (McKaia Dykema, Luke Hemken & Shaylan Hurely)
TIF 201 (Schane Rudlang & Keith Dahl)
Capstone: Linked for Impact - Hall of Fame Teamwork (Erik Therwanger)



2026 Conference Networking Events

The Social Committee has planned some great entertainment and networking events for the annual conference, and we would love you to join us! Pick up your networking card at registration and have Social Committee members initial the events you attend. Attend five or more events and enter to win prizes!

Tuesday, September 22

7:30–9:15 AM – Tuesday Morning Trot & Tour – Northland Arboretum

Kickstart your conference with some fresh air and good company! Join us for a walk or run at the beautiful Northland Arboretum in Baxter. Arrive at 7:30, then the shuttle will depart promptly from Cragun's Resort at 7:45 AM and return by 9:15 AM, in plenty of time for the 10:00 AM keynote. New to the conference? Lynn Cornwell will be joining the walking group and can share tips for making the most of your conference experience. Shuttle space is limited, so register online at <https://mngfoa.org/meetinginfo.php> to reserve your spot.

3:30–6:45 PM – Various Networking Events:

- **3:30–4:30 PM – Gull Lake Cruise Night #1**
Set sail and unwind on beautiful Gull Lake! Enjoy a relaxing 60-minute cruise with lake views and plenty of time to connect with fellow attendees. The cruise departs directly from Cragun's, so no shuttle is needed. Boarding will start at 3:00PM. Space is limited; reserve your spot by signing up at the conference registration/check-in desk.
- **4:45–6:45 PM – Texas Hold 'Em Tournament**
Ready to go all in? Sign up at the registration table during the day and arrive by 4:45 PM to secure your seat at the table. May the best hand win!
- **5:00–6:00 PM – First-Time Attendee Social Hour**
New to the MNGFOA Conference? Meet fellow first-time attendees and seasoned members in a relaxed atmosphere with appetizers, a cash bar, helpful tips, and plenty of conversation.
- **5:00–6:30 PM – Hospitality Room**
Stop by the Hospitality Room to unwind and catch up with fellow attendees before dinner.



2026 Conference Networking Events - Continued

7:00–8:00 PM – Dinner

Join fellow attendees for a casual dinner before the evening festivities begin.

8:00–11:00 PM – Casino Night

Try your luck at Casino Night! Enjoy casino tables, music, friendly competition, and plenty of opportunities to mingle. In honor of this year's Rock & Roll Hall of Fame theme, wear a T-shirt featuring your favorite band or artist. No casino experience necessary, just bring your best poker face and rock & roll spirit!

11:00 PM–1:00 AM – Late-Night Hangout

Not ready to call it a night? Keep the fun going at our late-night hospitality room. Bring your favorite beverage and stop by for more conversation and laughs.

Wednesday, September 23**4:45–6:45 PM – Dan Jordet Memorial Bags Tournament & Beverage Tasting**

Celebrate the life and legacy of our friend and past MNGFOA President, Dan Jordet, with the annual beverage tasting and bean bag tournament. Bring a favorite beverage to share — beer, wine, seltzer, or a non-alcoholic option — and feel free to wear a fun bowtie in Dan's honor. If you'd like to participate in the tournament, sign up at the registration table during the day and arrive by 4:45 PM.

5:00–6:00 PM – Gull Lake Cruise Night #2

Set sail and unwind on beautiful Gull Lake! Enjoy a relaxing 60-minute cruise with lake views and plenty of time to connect with fellow attendees. The cruise departs directly from Cragun's, so no shuttle is needed. Boarding will start at 4:30PM. Space is limited; reserve your spot by signing up at the conference registration/check-in desk.

7:00–8:00 PM – Dinner

Enjoy dinner and connect with fellow attendees before another evening of conference fun.

8:00–11:00 PM – Rock & Roll Variety Night at Irma's Kitchen

Keep the rock & roll spirit going with a night of music, games, and plenty of laughs! The evening will feature karaoke, bingo, and other fun interactive activities. Grab the mic and channel your inner rock star, test your luck at bingo, or cheer on your fellow attendees. Wear your favorite band or artist T-shirt and come ready for a fun night!

11:00 PM–1:00 AM – Late-Night Hangout

Wrap up the evening at the Hospitality room. Bring your favorite beverage, unwind with fellow attendees, and keep the conversation and laughs going until the night winds down.



Internship Grant Opportunity

The MNGFOA Internship Grant provides valuable work experience to a student interested in a career in government finance. The grant also allows an active member of MNGFOA and their government to employ an intern who can supplement the current staff by assisting with various tasks and projects. The Internship Grant is a 50/50 matching grant of up to \$3,000. The grant will be awarded by October 31 this year and may be used any time during the following calendar year. **The grant application deadline is September 30, 2026.** Each government receiving a grant may select an intern to fill the position or, if requested, the MNGFOA may assist by providing resumes of interested students. Please see the “Scholarship” section of the MNGFOA website or click [HERE](#) for the application!

GFOA Fall Leadership Academy – Lori A. Webster Scholarship Available

The GFOA Fall Leadership Academy will be held in Charleston, SC from November 15-20, 2026 and applications are due September 11, 2026. Application for the program is completed through the National GFOA website at [GFOA's Leadership Academy](#). Visit the national website for more information.

The MNGFOA is offering one scholarship for a member to attend the fall Leadership Academy session. The scholarship will be awarded for up to \$3,400 – current tuition of \$2,500 plus \$900 towards travel and hotel expenses. You must be a member of the MNGFOA to qualify for the scholarship and be willing to serve on one of the MNGFOA committees.

The scholarship is named in honor of Lori Ann Website, an active member of the MNGFOA from 1987 until 2005 and the first chair of the organization’s Education Committee. Lori was diagnosed with cancer during her term as President in 2004 and passed away on June 15, 2005 during her term as Past-President.

If you are selected for the GFOA Leadership Academy, please contact MNGFOA President Tina Lannes at tinal@albertvillemn.gov.



October Government Accounting Classes

The October Accounting classes are posted and ready for registering on the MNGFOA website. The classes are taught by Government Finance Professionals who provide real world examples and insights. The classes cost \$40/person for MNGFOA members, and \$50/person for non-members. Classes run from 9 am to 3 pm and lunch is provided during the day. Each location and time is listed as a separate event. Please [visit the Events page](#) to register or for more information.

Beginning Governmental Accounting – This class starts with Basic Accounting Theory: Classification of account types, chart of accounts, accounting systems & records, fund accounting, basis of accounting (cash, accrual, modified accrual), and basic budgeting.

Tuesday, October 6th from 9 am to 3 pm
Bunker Hills Activities Center – Andover
550 Bunker Lake Blvd NW
Andover, MN 55304

Wednesday, October 7th from 9 am to 3 pm
Paradise Commons Sun Room – Waconia
8170 Paradise Ln
Waconia, MN 55387

Intermediate Governmental Accounting – This class will cover Government vs. Private Business, fund accounting, cash & investments, assessments, capital assets, bonds, fund equity, revenue/expenditure recognition, GASB vs. GAAP, interfund transactions and financial reporting.

Monday, October 19th from 9 am to 3 pm
Paradise Commons Sun Room – Waconia
8170 Paradise Ln
Waconia, MN 55387

Thursday, October 22nd from 9 am to 3 pm
Bunker Hills Activities Center – Andover
550 Bunker Lake Blvd NW
Andover, MN 55304

Advanced Governmental Accounting – This class will cover GASB updates, internal controls, a more in-depth look at the ACFR preparation process, including government-wide conversion, cash flow statements and internal service funds.

Tuesday, October 27th from 9 am to 3 pm
Eagan Community Center – Eagan
1501 Central Parkway
Eagan, MN 55121

Wednesday, October 28th from 9 am to 3 pm
Bunker Hills Activities Center – Andover
550 Bunker Lake Blvd NW
Andover, MN 55304

MNGFOA Mentoring Program



"To help engage our members in developing our future and the future of local government finance in Minnesota."

The MNGFOA Mentoring Program will run from approximately December 2026 to September 2027 and is a critical component to the future of local government finance leadership within our State. Please consider being a part of this program. We need your participation to make this a successful program! **We invite you to attend our Presentation at the MNGFOA Conference, Wednesday September 23rd at 3:30 pm (See conference schedule for location). Applications are due by October 6, 2026. We will be hosting an in-person Mentor Program Training Luncheon in November. Please stay tuned for updates.**

Mentor

- Gain personal satisfaction
- Facilitate growth in the mentee
- Share resources and networks
- Give back
- Build your leadership skills
- Improve your communication skills
- Build your network
- Share your knowledge & experiences

Mentee

- Build your network
- Learn new perspectives
- Advance your career
- Improve your communication skills
- Build your resume
- Develop greater self-awareness
- Help provide direction in your career
- Gain valuable advice

If you are interested or know of someone who would be an excellent mentor or mentee, please contact any of the Program Leadership Team Members for more information and an application. Appointments will be made in early October. For application and program dates, please visit www.mngfoa.org and select MNGFOA Mentor Program from the menu on the left side.

Program Leadership Team Members

Nate Reinhardt nreinhardt@shakopeemn.gov	Cory Kampf cory.kampf@anokacountymn.gov	Lynn Cornwell lynn.cornwell@moretoncm.com
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In learning you will teach, and in teaching you will learn." – Phil Collins



SAVE THE DATE: Final MNGFOA Networking Event of 2026



The Social Committee has planned a great lineup of networking events for 2026. Mark your calendars and join your colleagues for the final opportunity to connect, recharge, and have fun. The November 5th event will include a card making service project at the City of Lino Lakes.

August 18 United Way Snack Pack Event

Thank you to everyone who donated and joined us for our August 18 United Way Snack Pack event! Together, we raised \$1,357 to support local youth! During the event, MNGFOA volunteers assembled 186 snack packs and helped fill backpacks with school supply packs for 192 students. The completed packs were picked up later that day by a local school district to distribute to students in the community. We also had a lot of fun working together and socializing while we packed! It was a great way to connect with fellow MNGFOA members while giving back to the community. Thank you to everyone who helped make the event a success!



JOB POSTINGS

Summary of Current Job Openings:

Position Title	Entity	Closing Date
OIG Budget Analyst / Management Analyst 3	MN Department of Human Services	September 4, 2026
Assistant Finance Director	City of Shoreview	Open Until Filled

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

2026 OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

President

Tina Lannes
City of Albertville
763.496.6802

At-Large

Dalton Larson
Anoka County
763.324.1755

President-Elect

Gina Foschi
City of New Brighton
651.638.2105

At-Large

Tyler See
ABDO
952.939.3230

Secretary

Joel Merry
City of Waconia
952.442.3108

State Representative

Sarah Rathlisberger
City of Monticello
763.271.3201

Treasurer

Justin Juergensen
City of Hutchinson
320.234.4256

Past President

Mark Ebensteiner
City of Becker
763.200.4250

Congratulations!

Congratulations to **Melissa Schlingman** on her new position as Assistant Finance Director for the City of Minnetonka!

Congratulations to **Joe Rotz** on his new position as Chief Financial Officer for Mille Lacs County!

Each year, in partnership with Baker Tilly, the MNGFOA awards scholarships to two members for the purpose of funding their registration to the annual State conference. Congratulations to our 2026 recipients: **Natalie Santillo**, Finance Director for the City of St. Francis, and **Tracy Schafer**, Finance Clerk for the City of Mayer. See you at the conference!

2026 Committee Chairs & Vice Chairs

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

Co-Chairs Jackie Heinz, City of Montrose 763-575-7435
Josh Kent, City of Buffalo 763-684-5465

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 Brandon Zabel, Carver County 952-361-1938
Brent Foiles, City of Eagan 651-675-5018

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 Dalton Larson, Anoka County 763-324-1755

Technology Committee – operate and improve the organization's website and other technology

Co-Chairs Jeanette Boit-Kania, Ramsey County 651-266-8057
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 or 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!

Gina Foschi
MNGFOA President Elect
651-638-2105

