



# Communiqué

**Mark Moline...**  
on your calendar for  
September 7 – 9, 1997  
IGFOA Conference  
at the **MARK!**

**Inside this issue...**

President's Message .....	1
Member News .....	1
Calling All Members .....	2
New Members .....	2
Certification Corner .....	3
Certification Dates .....	3
February Training .....	4
Innovation Opportunities ....	4
Job Announcements .....	5
Book Review .....	5
1997 Training Calendar .....	6

## President's Message: IGFOA Board to Address Challenges in 1997

IGFOA is working to meet several challenges this year, including short- and medium-term financial planning, completion of the Illinois Government Finance Officers handbook, and updating the Certified Government Finance Officers Program.

recognized that this action would create operating deficits, but continued in light of the following:

- The association had generated an operating surplus for the past several years
- Recent initiatives would provide additional revenues
- Membership dues and annual conference fees had not increased for several years

### IGFOA Board to address fiscal challenges

Slightly over a year ago, the IGFOA Board decided to fill the vacant position of Executive Director as a full-time position. The Board did so due to the increasing services provided by the association and the resulting demands on the Executive Director. The Board

The Board adopted a budget for 1996 which projected increased revenues and expenses. The budget also projected an operating deficit, but the fund balance was sufficient

*continued next page*

## Member News

**Paul Mehring** is now Assistant Finance Director for the Village of Palatine. Paul previously served as Manager for Crowe Chizek.

**Marlene Dantino** joined the Cook County Highway Department as Chief of Finance. Prior to that, Marlene served as Budget Director for the Cook County Clerk of the Circuit Court.

**Jim Egeberg** has been named Director of Finance and Administrative Services for the City of Des Plaines. Jim was previously Finance Director for the Village of Riverside.

**Best wishes to all in their new ventures!!**

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## President's Message

*Continued from front page*

to absorb that deficit. This, the Board believed, would provide more than adequate time to adjust the budget to bring it into balance.

Unfortunately, the budget has not worked out as planned. While expenses have kept close to budget, revenues fell short in two areas. The number of new registrants for the certification program declined this year. While participation is still strong, we might have expected that first year registration was unusually large. Net revenues from the annual conference met the higher level established in 1995, but did not increase as expected. As a result, the operating deficit will be larger than expected, and the remaining fund balance will cover only one additional year at this pace.

What is the Board doing about this situation? The Board is accelerating its review of the budget to bring it into balance in the near future. I have appointed an ad-hoc committee which will report back to the Executive Board in January. The committee is comprised of the following members:

-  Stan Helgerson, President-Elect, Chair
-  Dave Cook, Secretary
-  Spiro Hountalas, Vice-President and former Treasurer
-  Gary Szott, Treasurer
-  Sherry Lauterbach, Executive Board Associate Member

I will work closely with the committee, as will Executive Director Marianne Shank.

How will the committee conduct its review? I believe that the services of the association are sound. While we should continually evaluate them, and we often add to them, I do not see the need to justify our basic services.

However, I believe we must question how we deliver our services. Do we use some methods

which provide little benefit to our members? Do we incur expenses which make us feel we've accomplished something rather than produce a tangible result? The committee will examine all expenses to see where we can cut costs with little or no effect on services to our members. The committee will review revenue options as well.

The committee will actively seek input from the various IGFOA committees, who are the key to the association's success in any endeavor. I also seek your input directly. Please call or write any member of the committee, me or Marianne with your thoughts and comments.

## Handbook to be Published

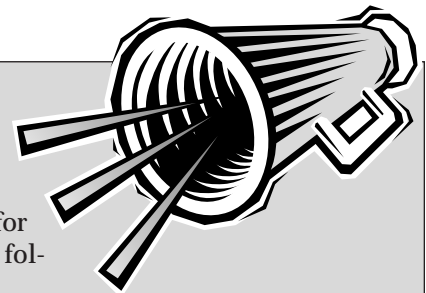
You may recall that a significant amount of work was done in 1995 to draft a handbook for Illinois government finance officers. IGFOA will finalize and publish this handbook during 1997. In subsequent years, the handbook will be expanded to cover additional topics and kept up-to-date on changes affecting finance operations.

## Certification Program

Almost two years have passed since the IGFOA introduced the Certified Government Finance Officers Program. At the time of this writing, three individuals have complete all certification requirements. National GFOA will launch a certified public finance officer program in 1997, and will fully implement the program by 2002. The IGFOA Certification Committee is working diligently to bring the study guide and testing materials up-to-date and clarifying program requirements. We will continue to work closely with our partners at Northern Illinois University and Texas GFOA to ensure our certification program remains one of the most comprehensive in the country.

I look forward to serving you and encourage you to actively participate in the association. Together we will maintain our high service levels and our fiscal integrity.

*Richard Schnuer, President  
Finance Director, City of  
Champaign  
217-351-4401*



## Calling All Members!

IGFOA's resource center is only as useful as YOU make it! We need sample requests for proposals, contracts for services and internal policies for the following topics:

- Auditing – general and special area
- Data processing – hardware and software selection, as well as technical consultants
- Financial advisors
- Fixed asset management
- Investment management

Please forward samples that have worked well for you to IGFOA on hard copy and diskette or e-mail to Marianne Shank at [103022.433@compuserve.com](mailto:103022.433@compuserve.com).

## Certification Corner

As of December 1, 1996, there are three Illinois GFOA members who have completed the requirements of the IGFOA Certified Government Finance Officer Program. Each of these individuals was asked, "What does Certification mean to you?" Here are their comments.

### David C. Jepson, Finance Director (retired)

"When I first heard about the Texas Certification Program in 1987, my immediate reaction was that this type of program would also be very worthwhile for Illinois GFOA members.

"The Texas Program included proficiency tests in the five core areas of Governmental Finance: 1) Accounting and Financial Reporting; 2) Budgeting; 3) Cash Management; 4) Debt Management; and 5) Financial Management. In addition, the Program required certain levels of experience. My feelings were based upon my own experience as a Government Finance Officer. After working eighteen years in the Finance Department of the City of Elgin, I became Finance Director of the Village of Mount Prospect in 1983. I soon realized the seriousness of the responsibilities inherent in the Finance Director job, and that I was lacking in some of the necessary areas. I was convinced that the basics of the Texas Certification Program covered these necessary area and that they would help any Government Finance Officer to better prepare for these responsibilities.

"Because I recently retired, Certification has a different meaning for me than for an active Finance Officer. For me, it means having fulfilled personal goal and proving that it can be done. However, it also gives me great satisfaction to know that the Program is now in place and is available to anyone who is willing to commit the time and effort to better prepare for the Government Finance profession.

"I believe the Government Finance Officer fulfills a very

## 1997 Certification Exam Dates

Date	Time	Location	Contact
January 11	8:30 am – 12:30 pm	DeKalb	NIU
March 1	1:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Hoffman Estates NIU	IGFOA
June 28	8:30 am – 12:30 pm	DeKalb	NIU
September 6	8:30 am – 12:30 pm	Moline	IGFOA
November 15	8:30 am – 12:30 pm	DeKalb	NIU

If necessary, testing can be arranged within one week prior to or one week after the scheduled exam date. Candidates must contact NIU prior to the registration deadline for the scheduled exam date and provide a valid reason for not being able to attend the scheduled exam session. The candidate will be charged a \$25 fee per exam for all testing other than the scheduled exam date.

### Contact information:

NIU – Northern Illinois University  
Chris Welch, Center for  
Governmental Studies  
Social Science Research Institute  
DeKalb, IL 60115  
Phone 815-753-0927  
Fax 815-753-2305

IGFOA  
Marianne Shank,  
Executive Director  
P.O. Box 1088  
Lombard, IL 60148-1088  
Phone 630-629-1460  
Fax 630-629-1526

important role in government and that the responsibilities of the job will continue to increase. In an era of high expectations from government employees, I believe Certification will help demonstrate the professional competence of those finance officers who achieve this designation."

### Robert Amoruso, Finance Director, Village of Wilmette

"My experience has been that there are a number of areas of expertise that are needed by a Government Finance officer that are not included in the training for other accounting and finance related positions." Bob stated that insurance issues and employee benefits, along with the responsibility for investing significant sums of money, are areas in which he had limited experience before becoming a Government Finance Officer. Bob added that Certification will not guarantee the quality of an individual's performance, but: "Above all, the designation of Certified Government Finance Officer indicates a well-rounded background. I

believe the long-term effects on the profession are very positive."

### Michael O'Keefe, Finance Director, Village of Villa Park

"To achieve certification as a Government Finance Officer was a challenge to me!" Mike exclaimed. He went on to say that the IGFOA Certification Program has substance and it required serious study to prepare for the tests. "I think I learned more from studying for the tests than I have from many training programs I have attended," Mike stated that most Finance Officers are caught up in the day-to-day activities of the job and would like more background in other areas, such as debt issues, that occur less frequently. The basics of the IGFOA Certification Program help to fill that void. Mike concluded by saying, "The Certification process was a good experience for me. I think Certification as a Government Finance Officer adds credibility to someone in the profession."

*Prepared by David C. Jepson*

## **Forecast: February to be Full of Finance Training Opportunities**

### **Learn the Law**

The Illinois Public Finance Law Seminar is scheduled for Wednesday, February 26 from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm. The agenda will include discussions on:

- Changes during the 1996 legislative session
- A look at what looms ahead in Springfield
- Statutory responsibilities affecting various finance officer roles
- Cyclical reporting requirements in Illinois
- Changes in telecommunications regulations
- Bidding and contracting requirements in Illinois, and
- Ramifications of ethics statutes and codes

### **Interested in the Institute?**

IGFOA will host the third annual Illinois Government Finance Officers Institute on Thursday, February 27 and Friday, February 28 from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, and Saturday, March 1 from 8:00 am to

noon. This two and a half day seminar will cover:

- Accounting and financial reporting
- Budgeting and capital planning
- Cash management
- Debt management
- Financial administration (risk management, pensions, data processing and general administration)

Limited space is available — so register early!

If you have not yet received your registration packet for these training sessions, contact IGFOA at 630-629-1460.

## **Welcome Aboard!**

Illinois GFOA welcomes new members Bill Drennon, Treasurer for the Village of Wadsworth, and Don Weis, Finance Director for the City of Geneva.

## **Opportunities for Innovations**

Throughout 1997, IGFOA will highlight potential partners for innovation in our communities. IGFOA is pleased to be a supporter of the **Urban Innovations** program. While IGFOA does not endorse any one service provider, we do encourage members to shop around to find vendors that will help you work smarter and save limited resources. In this edition, we highlight a non-profit community organization. If you have information about potential innovations, please contact IGFOA.

The **Jewish Vocational Service** (JVS) manages and operates ten small businesses in some of the fastest growing industries, with operations in the Loop, Chicago's south and west sides, O'Hare Airport and the suburbs. JVS has expertise in mailroom, warehousing, supply room, duplicating, shipping and receiving, data entry, vehicle maintenance and janitorial operations.

JVS uses service contracts as a vehicle to employ and train people with disabilities in real work situations with responsible jobs and competitive pay. The Agency guarantees that its Community Based Services Department will produce the productivity and quality required by the entity's specifications.

The wide variety of employment and training sites in metropolitan Chicago ensures that people with severe disabilities can be served in close proximity to their places of residence, on jobs of their choice. Some workers are coached on the job and helped to find independent competitive employment once trained. For those who require continuous support, the setting offers "real" work integrated within the entity's business.

Here are highlights of some JVS projects: the Environmental Protection Agency, office support and warehouse jobs are available in 13 different areas. The Federal Aviation Administration contracts with JVS to provide warehouse and light vehicle maintenance services. Workers are trained in the provision of janitorial services at 20 Department of Defense buildings.

Employees learn mail handling and processing jobs at Chicago State University, and the Agency has recently trained workers in the Cook County Hospital Records Recovery program. Others work in Hillside for Levy Entertainment.

All in all, JVS employs and trains more than 100 people with disabilities each year in its community-based sites. This is great for the workers, but it's equally good for employers who benefit from a trained labor pool, conservation of management time, and hassle-free supervision. JVS provides on-the-job training and support services that help these workers become productive, competitive employees.

*For more information, contact Martin Kaplan at 312-357-4500.*

**See the  
back cover  
for a  
month-by-month  
breakdown of  
IGFOA's 1997  
training schedule.**

## Job Announcements

### Financial Analyst/Accountant – Speer Financial, Inc.

Speer Financial, Inc. is a municipal finance consulting firm based in Chicago with government clients throughout the Midwest. We are seeking to expand our seven person professional staff by adding an individual with good accounting and computer skills in a full-time position. The main part of the business is bond issue focused, with occasional other financial assignments.

Job responsibilities — Prepare official statements describing bond issuers and specific financing including but not limited to the following: Structure the financing; Describe the security, authority, type of government, management and administration, regional economy and points of interest, socio-economic data including population, employment, income and housing trends derived from census and other source material; Prepare abstracts of issuer's financial history including debt history, summaries of audited financial reports, annual budgets and financial ratios of direct and overlapping debt; Prepare pro forma financial operations including coverage analysis, description of public enterprise systems and abstracts of bond ordinances and/or resolutions in the case of revenue bonds; compile information from records available in county courthouses including overlapping bonds, historical trends of equalized assessed valuations, tax rates, tax collections, and major taxpayers; either via direct visits or telephone requests. Other duties: compile material for presentation to investment rating firms or insurance companies to review and evaluate the credit of the issuer; Answer specific questions of rating agencies or insurance companies regarding the financing; Prepare financial reports on governments' operations, usually utility-based systems. Contact Susan L. Jenson, Business Manager, 55 East Monroe Street, Suite 3435, Chicago, IL 60603; telephone 312-346-3700; fax 312-346-8833.

### Accountant – Village of Burr Ridge Finance Department

The Village of Burr Ridge, Illinois, is seeking a qualified person to fill the position of Accountant in the Finance Department. Candidates must demonstrate knowledge of advanced accounting principles and analysis in order to maintain Village's general accounting systems. Data-entry skills and those in the use of a personal computer are necessary. Microsoft Excel or Lotus 1-2-3 spreadsheet application skills are required. College degree in accounting, business or public administration required. Two years' experience in governmental accounting or related field necessary. Starting salary is \$31,433. Please send resume to Jerry C. Sapp, Finance Director, Village of Burr Ridge, 7660 South County Line Road, Burr Ridge, IL 60521. Application deadline is January 31, 1997. The Village of Burr Ridge is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

### Director of Finance/Treasurer – Village of Riverside

Salary range \$55,000 – \$59,000. Starting salary DOQ/E. Requires a Bachelor's degree in accounting or other closely related field, Master's degree or CPA preferred; minimum five years' progressively responsible experience in the various aspects of Municipal Finance Administration. The successful candidate will be responsible for the fiscal affairs of the Village, including cash and debt management, health insurance, tax levy preparation, annual budget and capital improvement plan preparation. Strong problem solving, decision making and computer skills required. Send resume no later than February 7, 1997 to Village Manager, 27 Riverside Road, Riverside, IL 60546.

## Revenue Collection Reviewed

By Raul Menendez, Assistant Finance Director City of Aurora

**Revenue Collection Administration: A Guide for Smaller Governments, by Ian J. Allen**, published by the Government Finance Officers Association, is very easy to read with large print and allowing space for comments and notes. The subject is thoroughly covered. The title indicates it is intended for "smaller" governments, but in fact finance staff in any size government would find it useful. This book is especially useful for staff new to collections administration or management and it also will serve as a solid refresher for those with more experience. In discussing credit card processing, the author notes that VISA and MasterCard regulations prohibit passing credit card processing fees on to cardholders by way of surcharge, though such prohibitions are not enforced. This reviewer has found contrary information that VISA and Mastercard have indeed enforced that prohibition and an institution allowing a surcharge to be passed along to cardholders may be dropped from the credit card service. During the past two to three years, DiscoverCard has been promoting both the surcharge or discount method. Readers should be aware that in addition to the "Denver boot" parking ticket enforcement tool, Illinois State Statutes provide for the suspension of a driver's license if the individual has ten or more outstanding violations. The book does need to be brought up-to-date to include information about newer technologies such as e-mail, resources on the Internet, etc. This book is available for \$18.00 (member rate) from the national GFOA, 312-977-9700.

*Volunteers are sought to review new publications related to government finance and public sector management. Reviewers will receive a complementary copy of the publication in exchange for an objective written review opining on the practical relevance of the publication for government finance professionals in Illinois. Please contact Marianne Shank at 630-629-1460.*



## 1997 Training Calendar

Watch upcoming newsletters and seminar announcements for the dates and locations of seminars coming to locations near you in 1997!

along with the Media

February	Public Finance Law Seminar Illinois Govt. Finance Officers Institute
March	Illinois Public Pension Institute
April	Technology and its Potential in the Finance Department
May	Seeking and Using Banking Services
June	Payroll 101 for Governments in Illinois
July	HOT TOPIC: The New Reporting Model
September	Annual IGFOA Conference in Moline
October	Internal Controls
November	Governmental Accounting for Support Staff

***See inside this newsletter for  
the February Forecast of Finance Training Opportunities!***



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## Communiqué

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***Inside:***  
***“What Certification means to me”***  
***and 1997 Certification dates***