



the dispatch

members' update from the Illinois Government Finance Officers Association



A conversation with the new IGFOA President

New IGFOA President Melissa Gallagher on the year ahead

IGFOA has a full agenda for the year ahead

New IGFOA President Melissa Gallagher predicts a very busy year ahead for the association.

"Learning about and then meeting the needs of all IGFOA members, both public sector and partners, building on the many initiatives currently in place, and placing a strategic focus on engaging young people into the government finance profession will be the Board's focus," she says.

What do members want from their association?

"Underlying everything we do is a constant review and discussion of what the association can do to meet the needs of its members. So it is imperative to stay in close contact with members from around the state," Melissa says. "Hearing what all our members are thinking is a major goal for me."

While attending the 2018 GFOA Annual Conference in St. Louis, Melissa gathered perspectives from state GFOA representatives from around the country. "One common issue was the challenges of staying connected across broad geographical areas," she notes.

To that end, she will participate in IGFOA events across the state. This will include

Professional Education Committee (PEC) sponsored training, standing committee and task force meetings, Chapter Board meetings, and Chapter-sponsored events. "Since members are spread geographically throughout the state, this is especially important to give all members a voice in the direction of the association," she says.

Building on initiatives already in place

The current strategic plan was built on a survey where members responded with their priorities for the association. The strategic plan was implemented on July 1, 2016, with a mission to "promote excellence in government finance." Three Executive Board Presidents have closely monitored the association's progress in creating initiatives to meet the goals: Rita Kruse, Stephanie Masson, and Chris Minick. "IGFOA has many new initiatives, such as the use of social media to engage members and raising awareness of IGFOA through collaboration with other professional organizations," Melissa explains. "It is essential that we continue to grow and expand on these and our many other initiatives. At the same time, we must carefully evaluate new initiatives to continue to move the association forward."

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Melissa Gallagher is Finance Director at the City of Rolling Meadows.

At September's Annual Conference, she was elected IGFOA President.

“

I hope that in the year ahead IGFOA members will:

- 1 Take advantage of the high-quality education provided by IGFOA and attend both the in-person seminars and webinars
- 2 Keep looking at IGFOA.org for Chapter training opportunities and current information
- 3 Take a step back and remember all the resources available through IGFOA
- 4 Subscribe to the Knowledge Exchange if you have not done so already and share insight along with your issues and concerns
- 5 Make the time to attend Lunch & Learns for quick training on hot topics"

A conversation with the President

continued from front

“Member engagement and communication throughout the state can be greatly assisted through social media,” she continues. “In the year ahead, I expect the Social Media Task Force will continue to coordinate with IGFOA staff on successfully implementing the most effective platforms for member communication.”

Work will continue on developing and strengthening organizational partnerships that serve the membership. “Current partnerships with the Illinois Municipal League, GFOA, ILCMA, IAMMA, GMIS, the State Comptroller’s Office, and NIU’s Center for Governmental Studies are very beneficial. We will continue to seek out new partnerships that bring value to the association,” she says.

A new strategic plan

The current strategic plan ends on June 30, 2019. Accordingly, in the first quarter of 2019, the Executive Board will develop a new strategic plan. “We expect this plan to focus on the efforts spearheaded last year by Immediate Past President Chris Minick for outreach to college and graduate level students as well as young professionals to determine how best to engage them in the IGFOA and the public finance profession,” Melissa says. “Efforts like these are going on across the country: at the GFOA conference, state GFOA representatives shared major concerns about recruiting talent into the public finance profession and engaging young people to become more active participants in both the profession and state associations.”

Another focus for the strategic plan is a two-year project to update the IGFOA website. In fiscal year 2019, IGFOA and its IT provider, Spinutech, will gather user feedback, benchmark the site against current practices, and generate purposeful design recommendations. The goal is to implement proposed design recommendations in fiscal year 2020.

The value of IGFOA membership

“My first exposure to IGFOA came when my finance director encouraged me to attend a training. I came away so impressed – the level of instruction was on par with a graduate level course,” Melissa recalls.

“That’s how it is with this organization – even someone brand new to the profession



Congratulations to the 2018-19 IGFOA Executive Board

The elected positions of the 2018-19 IGFOA Executive Board were approved unanimously by the IGFOA public sector members in attendance at the Annual Business Meeting on September 17, 2018.

Melissa Gallagher, President

Finance Director, City of Rolling Meadows

Christopher Minick, Immediate Past President

Finance Director, City of St. Charles

William Hannah, Vice President

Finance Director, Village of North Aurora

Kevin Wachtel, Secretary

Finance Director, Village of Villa Park

William McCarty, Treasurer

Director of Budget and Management, City of Springfield

John Harrington, Member-at-Large

Finance Director, Village of Minooka

Tricia Dubiel, Member-at-Large

Superintendent of Business and Finance, Bolingbrook Park District

Andrew Brown, Member-at-Large Non-CFO

Deputy Director of Finance, Village of Buffalo Grove

Rita Kruse, GFOA State Representative

Finance Manager, City of Geneva

Christopher Daly, Partner Representative

BMO Harris Bank

Molly Talkington, Downstate Chapter Representative

Finance Director, City of DeKalb

Arlette Frye, South Metro Chapter Representative

Treasurer, Village of Lansing

Rob Fredrickson, Chicago Metro Chapter Representative

Finance Director, United City of Yorkville

has access to world-class resources,” she says. “The one-to-one communication that IGFOA members have with one another has also been extremely valuable to me. We tend to get busy with our daily work, and not be able to stay up to date with training,” she continues. “But don’t skip it. **GO**. It will spark a new idea, or provide a new way of

doing something that you haven’t thought about before. You will attend a training, go back to the workplace and use what you’ve learned right away.”

Melissa has been in Rolling Meadows for 12 years. She started as a Senior Accountant, then moved up to Finance Director in 2012.

Volunteer spotlight



Christina Coyle

Finance Director
Village of Glen Ellyn

Chairperson,
IGFOA Technical
Accounting Review
Committee (TARC)

Christina Coyle knew from the start that she wanted to be a part of the IGFOA Technical Accounting Review Committee.

“At the urging of Kevin Wachtel, I joined IGFOA soon after starting as Assistant Finance Director at Glen Ellyn,” she recalls. “Because I came over from public accounting, I lived and breathed financial reporting standards. The TARC was a natural fit for me.”

“The first major projects in which I was involved were GASB 67 and GASB 68,” she continues. “The TARC formed a subcommittee to work through the standards and develop whitepapers for IGFOA members.” More recently, the TARC worked on a response to the proposed GASB Financial Reporting Model and Revenue and Expense recognition.

Testifying to the GASB

With Board Liaison Bill Hannah, Christina has testified to the GASB on the IGFOA TARC’s views on several issues including the proposed reporting model and recognition issues. “It seemed that they took some of our opinions to heart and we’re waiting for final decisions to be issued,” she says. “It’s important that the government finance community in Illinois gives its feedback on these key issues – after all, we can’t say we don’t like how something turned out if we don’t speak up.”

A different kind of committee

Christina notes that the TARC is different from other IGFOA committees that meet on a very regular basis. “When GASB issues a draft or an opinion, that’s when we get active, either commenting to GASB or giving guidance to the members,” she says.

There have also been issues closer to home on which the TARC has provided guidance to the membership – including how to deal with PPRT payments by the state, and how to account for telecom taxes. “The goal is to

achieve consistency in how local governments in Illinois handle reporting,” she explains. “At any level, when we see things that may be unclear, the TARC tries to provide guidance.”

Plans for the TARC’s future

Looking ahead, Christina notes that the committee wants to attract more public sector members. “This is not just where the auditors go,” she says. “Every IGFOA member can make a difference on the TARC. I encourage all members to just come, read the materials and talk it through. Don’t be intimidated – we’re in this together.”

Volunteer opportunities

Professional Education Committee 2019 Conference Planning Team:

The Conference Planning team is looking for public sector members to join in the challenges and rewards of planning the IGFOA Annual Conference in 2019. For more information, contact Team Leader Jennifer Johnson at jennifer.johnson@champaignil.gov

Downstate Chapter topics and/or speakers

The Downstate Chapter is soliciting topics and/or speakers for the Downstate Conference program. The Downstate Conference will be held in Springfield, Illinois at the President Abraham Lincoln Springfield: A Double Tree Hotel, on February 21-22, 2019. Note: the location has changed from Decatur to Springfield. Please contact Sandy Evans, City of O’Fallon, at sevens@ofallon.org.

Chapter Boards:

The Chicago Metro, South Metro, and Downstate Chapters are looking for enthusiastic Chapter members in good standing to join the Chapter Boards in the positions noted below.

Chicago Metro: Secretary, Member-at-Large (Chapter public sector members only)

South Metro: Member-at-Large (Chapter public sector members only)
Program Support (Chapter public or private sector members)

Downstate: Program Support (Chapter public or private sector members)

IGFOA members should email the specific Chapter President indicating the position of interest with a brief explanation as to why they wish to serve on the Chapter Board. Applications must be received by October 31.

Chicago Metro President: rfredrickson@yorkville.il.us

South Metro President: lheglund@lockport.org

Downstate President: molly.talkington@cityofdekalb.com



The spirit of working together

Christina has found that one of the best things about IGFOA is the members’ ability to come together to help out one another.

“Everyone has such a spirit of cooperation,” she says. “We’re all here to learn, do our jobs and grow as professionals. Our way of sharing our governments’ policies and best practices, and how we share what others have done – including successes and failures – is amazing. Those are just some of many things that make IGFOA such a great organization.”

Professional Education Committee update – CPFO Team

by By Laurel Warren, CPA, Fiscal Operations Manager for the Village of Hoffman Estates

The GFOA's Certified Public Finance Officer (CPFO) program is a **self-study program consisting of five examinations covering the major disciplines of government finance**. In addition to passing the five exams, a candidate must work full-time in the government finance field for three of the last ten years, and maintain 30 hours of CPE each year (or 60 CPE over two years) to obtain the CPFO designation. CPFO candidates have up to seven years to complete all requirements to attain the designation. The CPFO program is administrated by Radford University's Governmental and Nonprofit Assistance Center.

The CPFO Team is part of the Professional Education Committee, chaired by Rachel Musiala, Finance Director, Village of Hoffman Estates. The CPFO Team is working hard to bring awareness of the CPFO designation program to IGFOA members and provide support to those who are interested in attaining that designation.

Thus far, the team has presented two webinars and an informational session at the 2018 IGFOA Annual Conference to provide an overview of the designation program and the benefits of participating. In addition to

the exam offerings in conjunction with the Annual Conference, four other exam dates were scheduled in 2018. The team is currently assembling materials and volunteers to assist IGFOA member candidates with pursuing the CPFO designation.

A new initiative for the CPFO Team is a **mentorship program** to provide resources and support to candidates as they navigate through the five exams. This program matches an interested candidate with a CPFO-designated peer who then answers questions such as:

- ▶ What the exam process was like for him/her;
- ▶ Helpful study tips;
- ▶ How the CPFO designation has helped in his/her career; and,
- ▶ Be a resource-or help find a resource.

A mentor within close geographical proximity may be beneficial to afford the opportunity to meet in person. Other valuable attributes to consider are finding individuals with similar study habits or someone strong in an area that a candidate is less experienced. Several IGFOA CPFOs have volunteered their time to serve as

mentors. IGFOA members interested in serving as a mentor or CPFO candidates seeking a mentor may contact Patrice Sutton, Chair of the CPFO Team, psutton@lakecountyil.gov.

Additional information about the CPFO exam is available on the GFOA website: <http://www.gfoa.org/cpfo>.

Additional study resources are available through Radford University's Governmental and NonProfit Assistance Center: www.radford.edu/content/cobe/gnac.html.

Contact any of the IGFOA CPFO team members for any additional questions:

Patrice Sutton, CPFO, Chair,
Lake County
psutton@lakecountyil.gov

Julie Ciesla, CPFO,
Peoria County
jciesla@peoriacounty.org

Kristin Kazenas, CPFO,
Village of Hawthorn Woods
kkazenas@vhw.org

Laurel Warren, CPFO Candidate,
Village of Hoffman Estates
laurel.warren@hoffmanestates.org

IGFOA Associate Partners

Many thanks to the IGFOA Associate Partners for their continuing support and collaboration.

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Third Millennium Associates, Inc.
Tyler Technologies, Inc.
Wells Fargo Bank, NA

Learn more about the IGFOA Partners program at www.igfoa.org/membership

2018 IGFOA Annual Conference highlights

Thank you to everyone who attended the 2018 IGFOA Annual Conference September 16-18. Once again, IGFOA experienced **record registration and a new record of 71 vendor booths**. Due to the increasing attendance and expanding Vendor Showcase, the Conference was held at the Peoria Marriott Pere Marquette Hotel and Peoria Civic Center.

Conference highlights included:

- ▶ Jennifer Johnson and Bill Hannah arriving on Saturday to help with attendee packets and organizing the registration area;
- ▶ Stephanie Masson and Rachel Musiala proctoring the two CPFO exam offerings;
- ▶ The Early Bird sessions on Sunday by Peter Burchard and Susan Jones;
- ▶ The informal networking breakfast and football/tailgate lunch at the Pere Marquette;
- ▶ The Planning and Responding for an Active Shooter/Violent Incident session by the Will County Sheriff's Office;
- ▶ The keynote sessions featuring Steven Ford and Carla Harris;
- ▶ The IGFOA Hospitality Dinner on Sunday evening;
- ▶ The Monday night social event at the Peoria Riverfront Museum with the streaming of the Chicago Bears game;
- ▶ The raffle prizes game in the Vendor Showcase;
- ▶ Volunteers from CliftonLarson-Allen serving as CPE Coordinators;
- ▶ The shuttle bus between the Pere Marquette and the Peoria Civic Center; and,
- ▶ The Legislative Update with IML Executive Director Brad Cole.

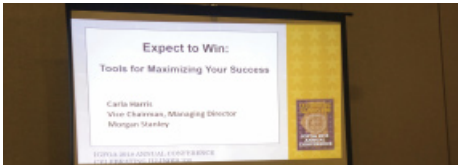


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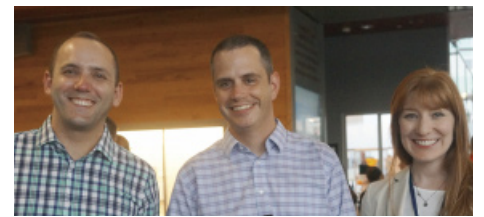
2018 IGFOA Annual Conference highlights *continued*



2018 IGFOA Annual Conference highlights *continued*



2018 IGFOA Annual Conference highlights *continued*



**Save the dates: 2019 IGFOA
Annual Conference
in Bloomington/Normal
September 8-10!**

Make your Accounts Payable department more efficient

by Kristen Saranteas, SVP, Head of Treasury Management at First Midwest Bank

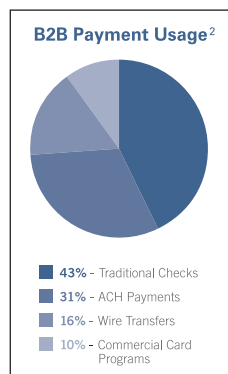
It costs time and money for organizations to make purchases, incur expenses, and process bills through the accounts payable department. Make your accounts payable department more efficient with a commercial card program.¹

B2B Payment Options

Traditionally, organizations have four payment options when making purchases from vendors: traditional checks, wire transfers, Automated Clearing House (ACH) payments and purchasing cards.

Traditional checks dominate B2B payments, with 43%² of the total. Buyers like them because suppliers usually allow generous 45 to 60-day payment terms. But for suppliers, the high processing costs and additional three to five-day waiting periods for the check to clear make for an expensive, lengthy (48-65-day) payment cycle.

ACH payments account for 31% of B2B payments.² The one-day settlement period for the buyer to adhere to terms and submit payment offers suppliers extra assurance compared to traditional checks, since they receive good funds in their account as of the settlement date.



Wire transfers, at 16%,² offer same-day settlement when the buyer initiates, but are often limited to large sum or international transactions due to unwieldy transaction fees. Like with ACH, however, wire transfers also require trading partners to share bank account information – something many are reluctant to do as information security breaches have become increasingly common.

Commercial card programs currently account for only 10% of B2B payments.² Some synergies are found in centrally-billed travel and entertainment card programs (“T&E”).

However, for purchases, purchasing cards (“P-Cards”) have the lowest processing cost of the four options and include embedded controls to ensure compliance and reduce fraud. Most importantly, they can replace the cumbersome purchase order, invoice and approval processes. Switching to P-Cards, especially for small purchases under \$1,000.00, offers significant value to suppliers and buyers.

Value and Cost Savings of P-Cards

Organizations that transition to electronic payments and forego the costly, cumbersome accounts payable process, enjoy a host of benefits. In a survey of organizations that made the switch, 57% report financial savings, 46% experience improved cash forecasting, and 39% see better fraud control.³ Additional benefits include more efficient reconciliation, as there are fewer small payments to reconcile, and improved supplier/customer relations, thanks in part to reduced missed or late payments. Finally, 16% of organizations report receiving payment discounts after switching to electronic payments.³

Using a traditional purchase order method, buyers face a \$90.20 average transaction cost on each account payable. With P-Cards, buyers pay a \$20.38 average transaction cost – a difference of nearly \$70.00 – and it includes savings from sourcing, purchasing process, receipt of invoice, payment and reconciliation.⁴

The biggest potential benefit for an Accounts Payable Department may be cash rebates or cash-equivalent rewards. Depending on the rebate or reward program, your organization has the ability to earn cash back or other tangible perks based on dollar value of purchases within a specified time period. By using the P-Card for any vendor that will accept a credit card for payment, organizations can accumulate true benefits.

P-Card Benefits to Suppliers Unlike paper checks, P-Cards are advantageous to both buyers and suppliers. Suppliers receive payment from the buyer’s P-Card immediately, and the buyer enjoys an average period of 35 days before needing to remit payment.

When suppliers accept P-Cards, they potentially expand their customer base. They also collect payments faster to boost working capital, save time and money on accounts receivable, and avoid bad debts. Finally, the electronic process reduces errors and speeds up reconciliation for both supplier and buyer.

From eliminating the hassles of small invoices to improving your relationship with suppliers, Commercial Cards bring multiple benefits to your organization. Many buyers are discovering it’s the better way to pay.

For information on making your Accounts Payable Department more efficient, please visit firstmidwest.com/commgovernment.

¹ Subject to credit approval.

² Source: First Annapolis primary research (April 2013).

³ Source: www.afponline.org

⁴ Source: Richard J. Palmer and Mahendra Gupta, “2014 Purchasing Card Benchmark Survey Results,” RPMH Research Corporation (2014). Page 77.

About the author



Kristen Saranteas

Senior Vice President,
Head of Treasury
Management

Kristen is Senior Vice President, Head of Treasury Management at First Midwest. She has over 25 years in sales and management experience in the Treasury Management industry. Kristen speaks frequently at industry conferences and events, most notably at the Windy City Summit and the Association of Financial Professionals Annual Conference.

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Visit [www.igfoa.org/
membership](http://www.igfoa.org/membership)
for details.



Don't miss the Debt Institute on October 11!

Are municipal interest rates going up or down? What's the latest finance news from Springfield for local governments?

Answers to those questions and many more will be provided at the IGFOA Debt Institute to be held from **8:00 am to 4:00 pm on Thursday, October 11 at the NIU Naperville Campus**, 1120 East Diehl Road in Naperville.

A talented group of finance directors and other public finance industry experts, as well as a rising star in the Illinois Senate have been assembled for this full day conference. In addition to both a bond market update and a legislative update, other discussion topics include how to improve your bond rating, the risks and benefits of a pension bond financing, and an introduction to tax increment finance (TIF).

This event may not happen again until 2020 so you won't want to miss it! Questions? Contact Larry White, Chapman and Cutler LLP, PEC Debt Team Leader, at white@chapman.com.

REGISTER ONLINE AT
IGFOA.ORG

TO GET THE MEMBER RATE,
REMEMBER TO SIGN IN
WITH YOUR USER NAME
AND PASSWORD

Have an idea for a topic or speaker?

Contact Professional Education
Committee Chair Rachel Musiala,
Finance Director, Village of
Hoffman Estates, at
rachel.musiala@hoffmanestates.org

Coming events

Friday, October 5 • 11:30 am-1:00 pm, Orland Park
South Metro Chapter Luncheon: Investing in a Rising Rate Environment

Thursday, October 11 • 8:00 am-4:00 pm, Naperville
Debt Institute

Thursday, October 18 • 10:00-11:15 am
Webinar: What Employees Tell Us They Want in a Leader

Thursday, October 25 • 8:30 am-3:00 pm, Naperville
Payroll Seminar

Friday, October 26 • 9:30 am-2:15 pm, Mt. Vernon
Downstate Chapter Southern Region Professional Development Seminar

Friday, November 2 • 8:30 am-9:30 am, Tinley Park
South Metro Chapter Board Meeting

Friday, November 2 • 11:30 am-1:00 pm, Schaumburg
PEC Lunch & Learn: A Smart Investment for Public Entities

Thursday, November 8 • 8:30 am-4:30 pm, Naperville
Seminar: Illinois Public Pension Institute – Part II

Thursday, November 15
IGFOA Executive Board Meeting

Thursday, November 15 • 11:30 am-1:30 pm
Growth & Engagement Network Lunch & Learn: Save the Date

Thursday, November 29 • Noon-1:00 pm, Rockford
Rock River Region Luncheon

Friday, November 30 • 11:30 am-2:00 pm, Lombard
Chicago Metro Chapter Holiday Luncheon

Wednesday, December 5 • 10:00-11:15 am
Webinar: Revenue Webinar

Friday, December 7 • 11:30 am-2:00 pm, Homewood
South Metro Chapter Holiday Luncheon

Wednesday, December 12 • 11:45 am-1:00 pm
Quad Cities Holiday Luncheon

Friday, December 14
Downstate Chapter Central Region Holiday Luncheon