

IGFOA Professional Education Committee Budget Team presents:

Illinois Government Finance Professionals' Budget Seminar

June 3, 2025

NIU Naperville, 1120 E. Diehl Rd., Naperville, IL 60563

AGENDA

8:00 – 8:30 AM Registration & Coffee

8:30 – 8:50 AM Welcome & Introductions

Molly Talkington, Finance Director, *City of Rolling Meadows*

Julie Zolghadr, Retired Budget Division Manager, *City of Springfield*

8:50 – 10:00 AM Budget Process

Speakers: Molly Talkington, Finance Director, *City of Rolling Meadows*

Julie Zolghadr, Retired Budget Division Manager, *City of Springfield*

This session will cover public budgeting foundations. Participants will learn the legal framework, the reason why government entities budget, and key factors to include in a public budget. The focus will be on the purpose of budgeting and how to incorporate the four functions of a budget: Policy, Financial, Operational, and Communications.

Learning Objectives: *Participants completing this session will be able to:*

- Create and understand the need for a budget timeline
- Learn the basic filing requirements and legal framework of a budget
- Understand why tax estimates and allocating the tax burden is important
- Learn the basis of accounting
- Recognize the need for public accountability and availability
- Learn how to handle budget amendments and understand their importance.

10:00 – 10:10 AM Break

10:10 – 10:40 AM MythBusters

Speaker: Julie Zolghadr, Retired Budget Division Manager, *City of Springfield*

This session will be a group exercise to test the participants knowledge of common misconceptions about public budgeting. This session ties into the session before, Budget Process, as a way to also reinforce the information that was just taught during the prior session. By proving the information in a question/answer form versus the lecture type teaching in the prior session, we are also helping people with different learning styles to absorb the information better. The learning objectives remain the same as the Budget Process session.

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- Understand why tax estimates and allocating the tax burden is important
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- Learn how to handle budget amendments and their importance.

10:40 – 10:55 AM Networking Break

10:55 AM – 12:15 PM Budgeting Games

Speaker: Shayne Kavanagh, Senior Manager of Research, GFOA

This session delves into the tactics or “games” used by participants in the budget process to secure more resources. The session will describe the many games budget officers encounter....and how to contain and even defeat these gameplay tactics. This can be done by creating a budget process and decision-making environment that is inhospitable to gameplay and by employing countermeasures against specific kinds of games.

Learning Objectives: *Participants completing this session will be able to:*

- Identify the common budget games that are played during the budgeting process
- Learn what the underlying features are of each game
- How to counteract the budget games for a better budgeting outcome
- Learn how to redirect from the budget games during the budget process
- Learn the budget game play environment in order to break the cycle

12:15 – 12:55 PM Networking Lunch

12:55 – 1:45 PM Breaking the Law of Triviality

Speakers: Shayne Kavanagh, Senior Manager of Research, GFOA

Many budget officers have had an experience like the following during budget deliberations with the governing board: The governing board spends what seems like (or may be) hours discussing the line item for office supplies (“Can we reduce it by sending more emails and using printers less?”) and then afterward passes a multimillion-dollar capital project budget with little discussion.

This phenomenon is not limited to local government budgets. It is so common across time and disciplines that it has a name: Parkinson’s Law of Triviality. The first step is to understand why the phenomenon of bike-shedding occurs. Solutions can then be designed accordingly.

Learning Objectives: *Participants completing this session will be able to:*

- Understand the why the phenomenon of triviality occurs
- How to counteract triviality decision making
- Using advanced meeting designs to focus on key areas for decision making

1:45 – 2:00 PM Networking Break

2:00 – 2:50 PM Capital Projects & Department Collaboration

Speakers: Molly Talkington, Finance Director, City of Rolling Meadows
Aaron Grosskopf, Public Works Director, City of Rolling Meadows

This session will explore the various components of budgeting for capital projects. Participants will learn what differentiates a capital budget from an operating budget and discuss why capital budgeting is an important component of a long-term financial strategy. The session will focus on developing a capital plan with emphasis on collaborating with departments and specifically, the Public Works Department. The session will emphasize the importance of bringing key stakeholders to the table during the development process.

Learning Objectives: *Participants completing this session will be able to:*

- Establish an understanding of how capital budgets are different from operating budgets
- Learn how a multi-year capital plan and budget are developed
- Learn about the importance of having key stakeholders involved at the development stage of the plan

2:50 – 3:55 PM

A Primer on Salary and Benefit Costs

Speaker: Julie Zolghadr, Retired Budget Division Manager, *City of Springfield*

This seminar will take a deep dive into how to building financial models to track salary and benefits. Participants will be able to learn how to gather data for costing, discern what is meaningful to include in the overall models, and how to make data driven decisions for employment levels.

Learning Objectives: *Participants completing this session will be able to:*

- Gain a good understanding of all aspects of labor costs
- How to build all-encompassing labor models for management and elected officials
- Define criteria for how to measure labor needs
- How to prepare simple internal and external comparables for collective bargaining

3:55 – 4:00 PM

Closing Remarks

Molly Talkington, Finance Director, *City of Rolling Meadows*

Delivery method: Group-Live

Program Level: Basic

Prerequisites: No prerequisites required

Advanced Preparation: No advanced preparation required

Field of Study: Finance - Technical

Last Review/Revision/Update: June 3, 2025

NASBA CPE Credits: Earn about 6.5 CPE Credits

IGFOA reserves the right to modify the agenda, sessions, and speakers.