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*Session Description*



**Graduate School**  **USA**



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## Accounting and Auditing Year In Review

MORE INFO

Monday, May 18, 2020 - 3:20pm

Each year at the annual conference GFOA presents this can't miss round-up to discuss key developments in accounting, auditing, and financial reporting that affect state and local governments. Topics covered will include recently promulgated standards, including GASB's statements on public-private and public-public partnerships, the transition from LIBOR, and IRC Section 457 deferred compensation; the AICPA's and GAO's auditing standards developments, and the standard setters' on-going projects likely to affect issuers and auditors in the near future.

## Authentic Confidence: The Secret to Loving Your Work and Leading an Unstoppable Career

MORE INFO

Tuesday, May 19, 2020 - 11:00am

What if the only thing standing between you and greater success for your organization, your team, and your career is confidence? Much has been documented on how an over or under confident leader can create a negative environment and damage a team. In this session, Ben Fauske, a Certified Professional Behavioral Analyst and Trainer, respected researcher, and sought after consultant and author, will provide the secret pattern relied on by some of the greatest recording artists of the past half century to overcome their confidence challenges and achieve significant levels of success. Attendees will discover what happens to their confidence under stress, understand confidence bias and core beliefs of world-class influencers, and learn empowerment strategies to build their leadership capacity and the culture of their team.

## Public Engagement to Believe In

MORE INFO

Tuesday, May 19, 2020 - 3:00pm

Effective public engagement goes beyond website surveys, required public meetings, and ongoing conversations with interest groups. Governments, through the capital planning and budgeting process, allocate funding to invest in initiatives, projects, and services that can have a profound impact on the communities they serve. For an effective process, public engagement is not only a legal mandate, it is a necessity for identifying needs, understanding the complex social, environmental, and demographic factors in play, and being responsive to stakeholders. In this session, speakers will present case studies of how enhanced public engagement improved the decisions they made. Each case study will identify lessons learned on how to implement effective strategies for "real" public engagement.

## Enterprising Accounting: Business-Type Activities and Proprietary Funds

MORE INFO

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 - 11:00am

Governmental business-type entities (BTAs), such as public utilities, transit systems, airports, colleges, and hospitals occupy a special place in the world of accounting and financial reporting. Subject to GASB standards, including many based on old private-sector guidance, these governments have unique challenges. This session will be a discussion of current accounting and financial reporting topics of particular interest to BTAs, based on the experiences of current officials responsible for such entities. Likely topics include the impact on BTAs of recent GASB guidance, such as on leases, PPPs, interest capitalization and those that affect governments that follow regulatory accounting.

## Preventing Fraud Before It Happens...Uncovering Fraud When It Does

MORE INFO

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 - 3:00pm

Governments are on heightened alert regarding fraud matters that impact their entities, especially the treasury office. Of particular concern are the sophisticated methods being used by external players to commit fraud, including phishing scams, cyber attacks, and false vendor invoicing or banking information. Governments need to have strong prevention policies, procedures, and plans in place to identify and address fraud before it becomes a reality in the finance office. In this session, attendees will hear from experts in the field and fellow finance officers who have experienced instances of external fraud and cyber attacks about lessons-learned and discover appropriate tools to prevent and react to fraudulent schemes.

## Data Analysis, Decision Making, and Long-Term Planning

MORE INFO

Thursday, May 21, 2020 - 11:00am

## Financial Transparency in an Age of Extensive Data Availability

MORE INFO

Thursday, May 21, 2020 - 3:00pm

The availability of data has increased exponentially in recent decades. As the use of technologies such as artificial intelligence and natural language generation have emerged, organizing and searching big data has become easier, making this trend likely to continue. This increase in data availability in the private sector has left some government struggling to keep up. Financial information can be complex and nuanced and the rules governing how public money must be managed can be difficult to explain. This session will focus on how local governments can be transparent in an appropriate and responsible way. Speakers will offer ways how best to provide context to financial data as it's shared with various audiences.

## Reserves and Risk Management

MORE INFO

Tuesday, May 26, 2020 - 11:00am

If reserves are a hedge against risk, how do they complement the other risk management tools that local governments have at their disposal? In this session speakers will present case studies on how they have calibrated their reserves to the risks that they face. Speakers will also describe the process used to get there and how the analysis into the various risk factors, and the likely occurrence and impact of each, helped them think about reserves differently and prepare more effective risk management programs for their government and community.

## Conscious Decision-Making: Becoming Aware of Your Inner Storyteller

MORE INFO

Tuesday, May 26, 2020 - 3:00pm

Everyone, even finance officers, have biases. Some biases reside in our subconscious and are formed through our different life experiences. More importantly, our biases affect the decisions we make. How do we become more aware of them both personally and professionally? Dedicated life coach,

trainer, and facilitator, Kenston Henderson Sr., will define what implicit bias is and how we can mitigate it. As the Citywide Training & Development Coordinator, he will also share the implicit bias programming the City of Columbus, OH offers its employees to help understand the diverse perspectives of the community they serve.

## Incremental Steps to Move Away from Incremental Budgeting

MORE INFO

Wednesday, May 27, 2020 - 11:00am

Incremental budgeting is easy, convenient, and readily accepted as a standard process in government. But is it the best approach? Incremental budgeting can make it difficult to reallocate funding based on current priority, compare funding to service levels or performance, or facilitate strategic long-term decision making. Unfortunately, many governments never test what is best because changing a key organizational process is difficult. This session will provide a plan forward using smaller (achievable) steps to build a better budget process. Speakers will discuss how they were able to initiate efforts to reform the budget process and how they overcame common challenges along the way.

## Leases & Daughters – GASB 87, Leases, and New Guidance on Cloud Computing and P3

MORE INFO

Wednesday, May 27, 2020 - 11:00am

Since issuing GASB 87, Leases, GASB has followed up not only with extensive implementation guidance for that statement but also with guidance on accounting and financial reporting for cloud computing and public-private (and public-public) partnerships that is explicitly based on the leases standard. This session will be an opportunity to review the authoritative literature and hear about governments that have begun or completed GASB 87 implementations. In addition, speakers will present on the similarities and differences between the newer guidance and lease accounting and provide tips that all governments can use to prepare for this next change.

## Help! Our Data Has Been Taken For Ransom!

MORE INFO

Wednesday, May 27, 2020 - 3:00pm

Ransomware attacks are becoming more frequent in government and each week we learn of additional governments that have become victim to these paralyzing hacks. While governments need to understand risks and prepare preventative strategies, they also must be prepared in the event you fall victim. Do you have a plan when you find your electronic files have become encrypted and cannot be unlocked unless you pay a ransom? Some governments have elected to give in to the criminals while other governments have decided to fight – often at great cost. Listen, as your peers and professionals in the industry discuss how to react in the event of ransomware attack, considerations for paying the ransom, other strategies you may have available to deal with this latest threat to our communities.

## Practice of Leadership

MORE INFO

Wednesday, May 27, 2020 - 3:00pm

Most of us can recognize a good leader when we see one. Becoming one, however, can be much more challenge. Even after reading some of the best selling books on leadership, attending keynote lectures, or working with a leadership coach, many find it difficult to apply these principles into their day to day work. In this session, speakers will translate leadership theory into practice by providing practical and actionable steps to help you develop as a leader and integrate leadership into your organization.

## Bridging the Gap: Best Practices for Audit Committees

MORE INFO

Thursday, May 28, 2020 - 11:00am

An audit committee provides an independent review and oversight of a government's financial reporting processes, internal controls, and independent auditors. GFOA's best practice guidance recommends that all governments establish an audit committee. This session will be based on GFOA's best practice statement and will provide answers to frequently asked questions on audit committees including: what should the committee do, who should serve and how much financial knowledge is required to serve, how often should the committee meet, what is the proper level of funding, and more.

## Matching Investment Strategy to the New COVID-19 Landscape

MORE INFO

Thursday, May 28, 2020 - 11:00am

Finance officers must stay aware of the many factors that impact a government's investments, especially given the new investment landscape in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis. While the core principles of an investment strategy—liquidity, safety, and return—rest within a government's investment policy, knowing about market conditions, current events, and investment products are important to ensure your entity's access to liquidity as well as maintain longer-term investment strategies. Speakers for this session will provide an economic update and expert predictions on interest rates and other factors related to government investing, provide an overview of new products that are being used by your peers, and engage in conversation about what governments need to do in order to prepare for investing post-COVID-19 crisis and in the years ahead.

## Asset Management: The Bedrock of Your Community

MORE INFO

Thursday, May 28, 2020 - 3:00pm

Capital infrastructure underpins the vitality of our communities. However, the investments required for good infrastructure are substantial. Effective asset management practices allow a local government to get the most bang for the buck across the asset's life cycle. They also protect original investments in infrastructure by adequately maintaining assets. In this session, you will learn how different types of local governments have put in place strong asset management practices while respecting resource constraints.

## Seeking Clarity with Transition from LIBOR

MORE INFO

Thursday, May 28, 2020 - 3:00pm

Starting in 2022, the Secured Overnight Financing Rate (SOFR) will replace the London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR) as the benchmark for derivative and swap transactions in the municipal market. This session will summarize work done so far by representatives from GFOA to the Alternative Reference Rate Committee (ARRC) on the transition to the alternative rate. Speakers will also discuss how governments can understand their potential exposure and the complexities of the conversion process to inform on how all finance officers should approach existing and future transactions.

## FEMA Disaster Management Guide

MORE INFO

Friday, May 29, 2020 - 11:00am

Virtually all communities are susceptible to some unexpected events that can put a strain on daily life. When disaster occurs resources need to be made available immediately so recovery and repair can begin. But how do you know if your jurisdiction is prepared? What is required to successfully navigate the financial needs that a disaster can bring? FEMA experts will provide an overview of the Disaster Financial Management Guide, provide a presentation on their new Just In Time Training program, and practitioners at the local level will share how their experience has affected preparedness in their communities.

## StartUp.Gov

MORE INFO

Friday, May 29, 2020 - 11:00am

Technology infrastructure has traditionally been left to the private sector. However, as technology becomes more integrated into our lives, it has become an indispensable utility. Citizens of communities without adequate technology infrastructure could find themselves with reduced educational and economic opportunities. This session will explore the role local government has in investing in technology infrastructure, either by encouraging private investment or through public investment.

## Addressing Economic Risks and Opportunities of Climate Change for Local Governments

MORE INFO

Friday, May 29, 2020 - 3:00pm

Climate change is real, but the type of change that governments will encounter and the severity of impact will likely differ. This session will explain how climate change impacts will be felt at a local level and discuss projected scenarios across the United States and Canada. As we continue to witness changes to sea-level, frequency of flooding or drought events, severe weather intensity, and long-term weather patterns, finance officers must understand the implications of climate change upon the health, security and economic vitality of their communities, and prepare those professionals to better manage financial risks and seize related opportunities. Speakers will identify key threats, mitigation strategies, and solutions so governments can start reacting on a local level to these global environmental trends.

## Capital Planning Done Right

MORE INFO

Tuesday, June 2, 2020 - 11:00am

It's common for governments to develop multi-year plans. Oftentimes, though, plans are not comprehensive and are written as simple wish lists that change from year-to-year based on political considerations or the influence of outspoken citizen groups. To develop a true multi-year capital plan, governments need a structured approach to capturing capital needs, identifying both capital and operating financial impacts, prioritizing project requests, and developing appropriate funding strategies. Speakers in this session will highlight GFOA's best practice and provide case study examples of multi-year planning in governments of varying sizes, types, and complexity.

## Streamlining the Payables Function

[MORE INFO](#)**Tuesday, June 2, 2020 - 11:00am**

Governments make payments every day through a variety of methods, including checks, ACH, wire transfers, procurement cards, cash, and other methods. It is critical that governments have appropriate policies and procedures in place, as well as efficient payable processes, to ensure timely payments, maintain government operations, and prevent against fraud. The use of emerging payables technologies can help make governments more efficient and streamline processes, but can also add challenges and risks if proper controls are not implemented. This session will provide attendees with an overview of payables methods typically used by governments, examine the third-party relationships required and available for governments to make payments, and discuss strategies for implementing new technologies in the treasury office.

## Cloudy with a Chance of Storms: Be Prepared for Your Next SaaS Project

[MORE INFO](#)**Tuesday, June 2, 2020 - 3:00pm**

Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) products are becoming the standard for most public sector applications. With the shift from on-premise software to cloud technologies, finance officers must also reset their expectations for how to evaluate, contract for, and implement software. Speakers in this session will identify how SaaS is different, its potential benefits, and the critical steps that governments need to take to control cost and mitigate risk.

## ESG and Municipal Bonds

[MORE INFO](#)**Tuesday, June 2, 2020 - 3:00pm**

While the term may not be as prominent in the municipal bond space, many governments are already incorporating environment, social, and governance (ESG) factors in their issuance process and more broadly in decisions related to strategic planning, capital planning, and budgeting. In interacting with the investor and analyst communities, issuers should be prepared to discuss ESG risks and considerations. Speakers in this session will discuss the emergence of ESG investing and what questions issuers should be prepared to address when accessing capital in the municipal bond market.

## We've Always Done it This Way: Process Improvement and the Finance Office

[MORE INFO](#)**Wednesday, June 3, 2020 - 11:00am**

Financial management processes often evolve over time. However, these changes can build in inefficiency, complexity, lack of standardization, and confusion. Speakers in this session will present how simple tools and strategies, like asking "Why?" can break a pattern of "we've always done it this way" and lead to effective process improvements. The session will also provide practical strategies for leading process improvement efforts, change management, documentation, training, and developing a plan for sustaining the change.

## Pulse Check: What's Happening in Public Pensions

MORE INFO

Wednesday, June 3, 2020 - 3:00pm

Market volatility, a low interest rate environment, and ongoing pressure to manage costs are just some of the issues facing public pension plans. What are plans to do when they're facing state reforms or recurring initiatives at the federal level? This session will highlight the challenges for pension plans and strategies that they have adopted or are on the horizon, and explain the implications for local government finances.

## New in the Blue (Book)

MORE INFO

Thursday, June 4, 2020 - 11:00am

New in 2020, GFOA will release a brand new edition of Governmental Accounting, Auditing and Government Reporting (the "Blue Book") GFOA's signature publication and the definitive source on the subject. This is the first new edition since 2012, and the first release since the 2014 supplement. In addition to updated content, this edition marks the beginning of a new era, with the transition to an on-line subscription service that will keep the Blue Book - and you - up-to-date going forward. Come to this session to find out what's new in the book and to get tips on using the on-line subscription.

## What COVID-19 Means for Issuer Disclosure Practices

MORE INFO

Thursday, June 4, 2020 - 3:00pm

As the COVID-19 crisis continues, issuers are still required to meet their disclosure responsibilities for their outstanding debt obligations. This session will include a discussion on the issuer experience managing their disclosure programs and guidance from outside professionals on the advice they provide to their governmental clients. Attendees will also be updated on changes to GFOA best practices and advisories related to disclosure practices.

## 3-D Accounting: Developments in Debt Disclosures and Derivatives

MORE INFO

Friday, June 5, 2020 - 11:00am

Governments already have several required disclosures for debt, but users of financial statements continually want more. As a result, finance officers must now become familiar with the latest round of new reporting requirements for debt. In this session, speakers will discuss what constitutes debt and the additional debt disclosures required by GASB 88, the issuance of GASB 91 for conduit debt, and the soon-to-be-issued new guidance on derivatives related to changing from LIBOR to SOFR.

## Can't Get Enough: Trust in Government

MORE INFO

Friday, June 5, 2020 - 3:00pm

Trust is the most important asset finance officers and our communities have, especially in times of financial distress when hard choices must be made. Without trust, we can't do our jobs. With it, we can perform at our best. This session will show you how finance officers and their communities have built and lost trust. You will leave the session with practical steps you can take to build and maintain trust in your career and between your government and your community.



## How to Make Technology Work for You in the Treasury Office

MORE INFO

Monday, June 22, 2020 - 11:00am

There are myriad ways in which governments can embrace technology solutions in the treasury office to better facilitate receivable and payable functions. These include integrating treasury data and procedures into government-wide ERP systems, facilitating cash and check handling in a more streamlined and anti-fraud manner, and accepting customer payments using new technology platforms. Embracing technology solutions can also enhance processes when physical operations are limited as staff works remotely. Finance officers should be aware of solutions that can assist with the processing of treasuring functions, know about technology solutions that can assist with preventing fraud, and what may be on the horizon that could be of value to your government's treasury operations.

## Presto Chango! Your 457 Plan is a Pension Plan

MORE INFO

Monday, June 22, 2020 - 11:00am

While GASB's new statement on deferred compensation plans may be only a few paragraphs long, it has the potential for significant changes to many local governments and will plunge them to the world of pension and benefit accounting. Speakers at this session will discuss GASB's new statement, explain why it is necessary, provide an overview of pension accounting, and show examples of how local governments have been successful with implementation.

## How Much is Too Much? Policies on Debt Capacity

MORE INFO

Monday, June 22, 2020 - 3:00pm

Most governments have a local debt limit prescribed by state or provincial law. However, this limit is rarely calibrated to local conditions. Without a sense of what is truly affordable, it is impossible to make truly wise decisions about the use of debt. This session will review the best measures of local debt affordability, show you how to come up with local limits that make the most sense for your community, and how to create a policy that facilitates responsible, affordable use of debt.

## It's Not Voodoo: It's Just Your Actuarial Report

MORE INFO

Monday, June 22, 2020 - 3:00pm

Actuarial reporting can be complex, but important for understanding the status of pension and OPEB plans. Speakers in this session will focus on key components of an actuarial report and will guide finance officers on how to interpret their government's actuarial reports. In addition, speakers will address frequently asked questions about the actuarial reports to allow for finance officers to better understand and explain this information to other stakeholders in the government.

## CAFR Bafflers: Common Reporting Deficiencies by CAFR Sections

MORE INFO

Tuesday, June 23, 2020 - 11:00am

Each year, GFOA reviews almost 5,000 submissions to the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Program (CAFR Award Program). Using data from those reviews, speakers will identify the most common reporting deficiencies by CAFR sections and will discuss how all governments can improve their financial reporting. Speakers will also discuss the best way to prepare your CAFR for submission to the GFOA Award Program or how you can participate as a volunteer reviewer.

## The Ins and the Outs – GASB’s Proposed Changes to Revenue and Expense Recognition

MORE INFO

Tuesday, June 23, 2020 - 3:00pm

When GASB issued Statement No. 33, Accounting and Financial Reporting for Nonexchange Transactions, it required the reporting of taxes, grants, fees, and fines with an economic resources measurement focus. However, different interpretations and application of these principles by governments have led to inconsistencies in financial reporting. In the near future, the GASB plans to issue a preliminary views due process document proposing a very different model for classifying and recognizing inflows and outflows of resources. This document is expected to have a profound effect on government accounting and financial reporting. Speakers in this session will preview proposed changes and prepare GFOA members to provide feedback to GASB on these fundamental changes.

## Land Use Planning and Financial Planning

MORE INFO

Tuesday, June 23, 2020 - 3:00pm

For most governments, a large part of their revenues and expenditures are determined by how land is used within the jurisdiction. However, land use planning usually happens with little consideration given to how land use choices will impact the long-term financial health of the local government. In this session, you will hear about how to bridge the divide between land use planning and financial planning in order to build communities that are both livable and that have a strong financial foundation in the future.

## Prioritizing Your Values: How to Avoid Slash and Burn in an Economic Downturn

MORE INFO

Wednesday, June 24, 2020 - 11:00am

Budgeting is just as much about values and priorities as it is about dollars. Unfortunately, in times of fiscal distress, governments can fall into focusing too much on getting the dollars to work out and abandon those principles. While universally true, but especially important in times of fiscal stress, it is important for governments to communicate their priorities and values to improve budget transparency, demonstrate fairness, and help justify difficult decisions. As your government works to address and recover from fiscal distress, how much have you communicated “why” you budget the way you do? In this session, speakers will present practical strategies to help you prioritize your organization’s values and develop a framework to make those tough decisions and communicate them to those most impacted.

## Retirement Jambalaya: Different Strategies for Pension, OPEB, and DC Plans

MORE INFO

Wednesday, June 24, 2020 - 3:00pm

Headlines about the market impacts caused by COVID-19 tend to focus only on unfunded liabilities when it comes to public employee retirement. But the bigger picture—the factors that could affect employees’ retirement readiness and local government finances—is not always obvious. Join this session to learn about the jumble of factors in the ever-changing retirement landscape, including strategies states are employing for defined benefit plans or changes in federal law that impact defined contribution participants.

## Giving Voice to Values: GFOA’s Code of Ethics in Action

MORE INFO

Thursday, June 25, 2020 - 11:00am

GFOA’s new code of ethics outlines the values that are essential to building trust in our communities, but putting these values into action can sometimes be difficult. In fact, ethical tragedies are often the result of people who sit silently on the sidelines afraid or uncertain of what to do about a transgression. In this session, you will learn a distinctive new approach to these situations called “Giving Voice to Values” by discussing real-life scenarios of ethical challenges that have occurred in governments.

## Trust Me – Fiduciary Activities and Fiduciary Fund Reporting


MORE INFO

Thursday, June 25, 2020 - 3:00pm

GASB Statement No. 84, and the related implementation guide 2019-2, both named Fiduciary Activities, became effective for reporting periods beginning after December 15, 2018, eliminating the ambiguity that has existed in defining a fiduciary activity, but also changing the way that many governments will report on fiduciary funds. This session will provide a comprehensive review of fiduciary activities and fiduciary fund accounting and financial reporting, including discussion of challenges of implementation by finance officers who have recently implemented the standard.

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