

GEORGIA GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING – Conference Call

February 24, 2010 10:00 a.m.

**Present:** Melody Marlowe, Larry Johnson, John Hulsey, Jim Pehrson, Lynn Robinson, Janet Camburn, Angie Sorrow, Stacey Inglis, Sabrina Cape, Cindy West, Logan Propes, Michaela Thompson

**Absent:** Stephanie Black, Kelly Bush, Tina Wetherford

**Call to Order:** Made by Melody Marlowe, President.

**Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the Board Meeting of December 3, 2009 were presented. Motion was made by Larry Johnson to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Lynn Robinson; the motion passed by unanimous approval.

**Treasurer's Report:** John Hulsey re-presented the fiscal position as of October 31, 2009 given that the final accounting for the annual conference was received from CVIOG. Mr. Hulsey stated that revenues exceeded expenditures by \$1,306.66 for the twelve months ended, October 31, 2009. Mr. Hulsey reported that our fiscal performance for the year was excellent given the fact that at the beginning of the budget year reserves were used to balance the budget in the amount of approximately \$50K. It was also reported that the annual conference function was profitable for the year at \$20,613.55.

Mr. Hulsey also presented the fiscal position as of February 23, 2010. Mr. Hulsey reported that revenues were exceeding expenses by \$17,547.81 and also reported total equity of \$198,224.58. However, it was noted that after the reports were prepared, a check in the amount of \$10,000 was made payable to GFOA for the support of the National Conference to be held in Atlanta and mailed to Mr. Jim Pehrson for delivery. Mr. Hulsey also brought to the attention of the board the fact that membership renewals to-date were not representative of past performance. The lag in membership renewals is resultant of the economy or the somewhat flawed process that was used to send renewal notices to the membership. A discussion ensued about how we were handling bounce backed emails for membership renewals etc.

Hearing no further discussion a motion was made by Larry Johnson, seconded by Janet Camburn to approve the financial report and check detail as presented. The motion passed by unanimous approval.

## **New/Old Business:**

### **Administrative Services Proposal from Georgia Municipal Association:**

Melody Marlowe gave a historical perspective on how the administrative affairs for GGFOA had been handled and the transition of the administrative responsibilities. Melody stated that, previously CVIOG was handling all administrative services for GGFOA and in November of 2007, GGFOA was informed that after June 2008, CVIOG could no longer handle the money portion of our contract. In April of 2008, the board began negotiating a contract with Bram Management for handling the administrative affairs of GGFOA. However, when the Bram Management contract came up for renewal it was decided that given the number of challenges that we had in various areas it was in the best interest of the organization not to renew the contract. As a result, the administrative piece of our organization was brought back in house (check writing/financial reporting-membership renewal process/web-site management) and the training and event management/annual conference piece was contracted out with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government. Melody reported that we certainly had experienced challenges and asked that the Treasurer and Technical Resources Committee Chair provide insight to the Board. Challenges included lag in membership renewals, problems with re-invoicing due to the limited capabilities of the web-site and database used to track renewals, checks for renewals without information for who the renewal is for, emailed invoices that may not have reached the intended recipient, etc.

Melody reported that we had visited with GMA about managing the membership, web-site, and newsletter, portion of our organization. Melody reported that GMA has four or five agencies that they handle administrative services for. The proposal from GMA was in the amount of \$12,500/year. This proposal includes maintaining the database and processing the dues/billing and collection (\$6,000). It was reported that the process for accessing our website would be more stream-lined in the fact that there would be only one password to access the site. GMA will provide unlimited correspondence and most of that will be electronic. The plus side for GGFOA is that GMA has a vast amount of information at their disposal that can be a valuable from a communications perspective for GGFOA – i.e., cross referenced data-base to be used for email-blasts, etc. GMA will re-develop our website and assist in our quarterly newsletter production for \$500/ year. GMA will also work on our logo and design new stationary for our organization as, we, at the present have no camera ready art-work etc. A graphic artist will be provided to assist with this. Additionally, GMA will be proactive about posting and communicating current events affecting government finance for GGFOA.

Jim Pehrson inquired had we contacted any other organizations that use GMA for administrative management purposes. Sabrina Cape reported that she had heard good reports from other affiliates about services GMA provides. Melody viewed sites maintained by GMA and was impressed. It was noted that ACCG does not provide similar service and that they were sought out for price/proposal comparison purposes. It was reported that the price was reasonable and that in years past that software was considered for purchase to manage our membership; however, it was cost prohibitive at the time. A discussion ensued about fire-wall concerns regarding email-blasts, bounced back emails etc. Melody reported that GMA

would follow-up on rejected and bounced back emails. GMA will also mark members as active or inactive and that can be useful in future recruiting and marketing. Janet Camburn inquired as to whether or not GMA could help promote the National Conference and Annual Conference through their relationships with other organizations. It was noted that they probably could and Sabrina noted that GMA might even be able to reach out to other state affiliates (i.e., the National League of Cities).

Hearing no further discussion, a motion was made by Jim Pehrson to approve the proposal and authorize Melody Marlowe, our President, to execute the agreement. The motion was seconded by Larry Johnson and approved unanimously.

#### **Approval of 2009-2010 Budget:**

Mr. Hulseley presented the proposed 2009-2010 budget for consideration. Mr. Hulseley reported that the total proposed budget was in the amount of \$193,510 down 19.5% from the prior year. Mr. Hulseley reported that even though there was a contract with CVIOG for managing the annual conference and career development seminars that projected revenue and related expenses had been included for these events for comparison purposes only.

Sabrina reported that the date for the career development seminar was going to be April 22, 2010 and that the instructors will be Jim Pehrson and Patti Lee. Dave Rosenberg and Logan are working to get this information posted to the GGFOA Web Site and send an email blast to the membership apprising them of this training opportunity.

It was reported that the budget was balanced with \$10K of prior years' reserves; however, we were optimistic that the reserves would not have to be used. However, this is certainly less than the \$50K budgeted in the prior fiscal year. A general discussion ensued about the various expenditure categories – highlighting the fact that provisions had been made in the budget for all contractual obligations.

A motion was made by Jim Pehrson to approve the budget as presented; the motion was seconded by Lynn Robinson and approved unanimously.

#### **National Conference Update:**

Limited information to report as GFOA is handling most everything relative to the National Conference. However, we have encountered a hurdle for our fund raising event in that Melody was informed that we would not be able to use artwork from the brochure and sell t-shirts as GFOA will be selling t-shirts at the conference. Therefore, we need to come up with another idea for our fund raising event. Melody inquired about whether we wanted to even have a fund raising event or do something else. Sabrina suggested that we contact the Atlanta Chamber and Visitors Bureau about selling Atlanta stuff. Larry Johnson thought that was a good idea. Other suggestions included selling things that were representative of our state. Sabrina suggested that someone contact the Commissioner of Agriculture and do something from that angle to promote our state (peaches/peanuts). Moreover, we may be able to just hand out

small gifts or promotional items from state offices/agencies. Melody suggested bottled cider with GGFOA labels etc. Melody will keep working on this.

Sabrina mentioned that she is concerned that GFOA may not be lining up speakers in Georgia and she is concerned that if they wait too late to schedule many may have booked calendars. Melody will inquire and look into. Jim Pehrson will check with Amy in Chicago as she is his contact and or Barb ~~Malow.~~ *Mello*

## **Committee Reports:**

### **Annual Conference –**

Angie reported that she wanted to thank Sabrina for coming up with the annual conference theme, "Finding the Silver Lining in the Dark Economic Cloud". It was reported that this would be our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Angie reported that we are aggressively working on sponsorships and that while we had not received the checks, we had received four sponsorships from various vendors in the amount of \$10,500. Angie will begin in the next few weeks looking at speakers and breakout sessions and piggy back on the classes that they are going to hold at the National Conference. Committee meetings will be held soon. Melody asked Angie to email to the Board Members the sponsorship forms so that the board could help promote and solicit/encourage sponsorships for the annual conference. Sabrina noted that those forms should also be on our website as well. Angie is to send to Logan for posting. Melody noted that sponsors are linked to specific events and will be able to do the welcoming at those events. It was reported that Larry Johnson and Sally Kerr will be aiding in the scheduling of the competitive events golf, tennis, etc. Sally is reserving the golf-course and tennis courts. Angie is considering having one tour for Monday afternoon that could be for spouses and participants. However, they would have to pre-register for that tour. Janet Camburn asked where we were with respect to future annual conference venues. Angie is still considering Savannah, Columbus, Augusta, and Athens. However, with Athens you have to consider the football games and associated challenges. It was reported that Columbus was a good venue in prior years; however, there is not one hotel to serve all of our registrants. Angie suggested Savannah for 2011 and the Athens venue for 2012. ACCG/GMA convenes the last week of September and Fall Policy is the first week of October; therefore we need to be sensitive to the scheduling of our conference.

### **Career Development -**

Sabrina Cape – The training event is scheduled for April 22<sup>nd</sup> – Stretch Your Budget. The career development committee will be surveying the membership to find out different areas of interest and brainstorm about speakers for annual conference. Sabrina reported that Diane McNabb had a great idea about best practices just released by GFOA that have been passed along to Angie as ideas for annual conference. Sabrina reported that hopefully the survey and registration form would go out this week. Sabrina inquired of Cindy West about the possibility of having a career development seminar at her government because, geographically, we needed to have one in that vicinity. Cindy was receptive to the idea and just needed to work

through the details with Sabrina. Sabrina also suggested that we begin exploring webinars as a vehicle for training such as the IRS webinar that is in the near future. Sabrina reported that the IRS seminar has been blasted to the membership because the committee feels that apprising the GGFOA membership of training opportunities is one of their roles.

#### **Communications Committee-**

Cindy is optimistic that the newsletter will go out by the end of this week or the first of next week. It was reported that a number of good articles were submitted for the news letter. We are now just working through cosmetics (formatting etc.).

#### **Government Relations Committee –**

Michaela reported that she had been familiarizing herself with the GGFOA website and thought that there was a lot of good information on the site. Michaela noted that the inflation rate calculator only goes up to 2007 and needed updating. Michaela noted that she had sent out an email regarding updating the strategic plan. Upon receipt of information, Michaela will compile the strategic plan and make a recommendation to the board for consideration. Michaela reported that Hall County is still working with the Georgia Department of Revenue on the sales tax pilot project. Michaela expressed that the pilot program seeks to cross reference business license information with the department of revenue registered sales tax identification numbers. However, information is considered proprietary and the DOR is reluctant to share information with governments.

Melody reported that she received an email from GFOA and that they have partnered with several national associations/organizations to do something about sales tax on internet sales. Moreover, there are already agreements being put together in several states and they are trying to get Georgia on the list. Sabrina inquired as to whether there was any confusion about how W-2's were to be submitted to the State of Georgia. Sabrina reported that she is hearing that governments are no longer allowed to submit paper copies of W-2's to the State of Georgia. Moreover, they are being required to key their W-2 and 1099 information to the State because they are not over the limit in numbers of employees/vendors that would require electronic filing.

#### **Membership Committee –**

Melody reported that unfortunately Laurie Bohon had to resign her position due to additional job responsibilities. Melody asked for suggestions to replace Ms. Bohon as committee chair. Melody reported that the re-work of the membership brochure initiative is something that GMA can assist us with and that she would follow up as the contract is finalized.

#### **Scholarship/Awards Committee –**

Stacey Inglis reported that the committee will be updating the forms and websites. Stacey reported that she does not have any of the documents in a writable format and that it is going to be a labor intensive process to create the forms. Janet inquired as to whether we have any idea of how many applications we have received in the past. Stacey Inglis reported that she

had conversations with Mark Kirkland and that last year they only had one application for the scholarship and actually it was someone that worked in Valdosta with him. However, Stacey reported that there was some interest in the scholarship as she had received a call from a gentleman in Roswell inquiring about the deadline for making application as some of the information on our website is outdated and where to submit applications. Stacey reported that now that she is expecting that she will be unable to attend the conference this year. Sabrina inquired as to whether or not we could add on the scholarship administrative process to the GMA contract. Melody commented that they would probably consider adding it on. Janet reported that Channel 11 News has scholarship information available and inquired as to whether we could get a link to that site to encourage interest in our program. Stacey reported that she would look into this and report back. Melody noted that at one time we had looked at partnering with the local colleges and universities.

### ***Invitation to Job Fair – North Georgia College & Brenau University***

Melody reported that we had once again received an invitation to participate in the job fair to be held on March 27<sup>th</sup> at Brenau (three - hours). Melody encouraged the board and committee chairs to volunteer for this exciting opportunity to talk to up and coming graduates about government finance and related job opportunities as well as promote GGFOA. Last year, was the first year and there were over 60 attendees.

### **Board Member Reports:**

Larry Johnson reported that he had researched changing the logo and that it did not have to go back before the membership for approval. Larry reported that he is still looking into the Scholarship and Awards Program and welcomed ideas. Melody noted that GFOA offers an advanced finance officers program. Jim Pherson reported that he had participated in the program. Melody Marlowe has participated as well. However, due to the cost of participating maybe we should consider making this program eligible for one of our scholarships. Jim concurred. Mr. Hulsey reported that we are continuing to work on the annual audit and would provide the report as soon as it was finished. Mr. Pherson inquired about the check for GFOA in the amount of \$10K and was told that the check was in the mail. Mr. Pherson also noted that he would follow-up with Barb Mallow on the list of potential speakers for the National Conference.

*Mallow*

No further business being before the board the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:

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John G. Hulsey, Secretary-Treasurer