

March 2014

Issue 11



CENTRAL ARKANSAS CHAPTER

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings,

It's a great time to be a governmental accountant! Why, one might ask, with all of the budget turmoil and uncertainties, with the closer scrutiny and focus on transparency? Well, those reasons are exactly why our profession is needed, and why we must constantly rise to the new challenges.

We just celebrated March as CGFM Month. This is an opportunity to emphasize to outside parties and to ourselves that what we do is not just a job, but it is a profession. Governmental accounting is more complex, more visible, more subject to examination than accounting in the business arena.

If you are a Certified Government Financial Manager, we salute you as a professional with special knowledge, skills, and abilities. If you are considering the CGFM, we salute you as well, as you strive to learn more and be more. If you have not yet considered the CGFM program, I encourage you to look into it. Even the studying process is a good investment of your time.

Speaking of special knowledge, skills and abilities, please join us for the Central Arkansas Chapter's Spring Seminar on May 16. More details can be found in this newsletter.

Accountably yours,

DeeVee Pearson





UPCOMING MONTHLY MEETINGS

Monday, April 21, 2014

Don Bellcock, Arkansas Department of Career Education
Topic TBA

Monday, May 19, 2014

Bruce Moore, Little Rock City Manager
Little Rock City Government

All monthly meetings are held from 12:00 noon until 1:00 p.m. in the 5th floor conference room of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services building located at 2 Capitol Mall in Little Rock, Arkansas. One hour of CPE will be granted to all attendees.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Spring Seminar

The 2014 Spring Seminar will be held Friday, May 16, 2014, at the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension, from 8:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m. Please watch your e-mail for information regarding registration and topics.

Awards Banquet

The 2014 Central Arkansas AGA Awards Banquet will be held Monday, June 16, 2014, 5:30 p.m., at Cajun's Wharf. The cost will be \$15 for members and \$25 for non-members. Please contact Kaki Roberts, Kathryn.a.roberts@arkansas.gov, to RSVP or for additional information.

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Maintaining your CGFM Certification

<http://www.agacgfm.org/CGFM-Certification>

To retain the CGFM certification, all CGFMs must adhere to the AGA's Code of Ethics. In addition, to continue using the CGFM designation after their name, CGFMs must be in an active status.

Requirements for maintaining the CGFM certification in an active status are as follows:

- pay the CGFM renewal fee by the due date every year;
- complete at least 80 hours of continuing professional education every two years in government financial management or related technical subjects (within the designated two-year CPE cycle); and
- maintain and, if requested by AGA, provide detailed information on CPE hours completed.

The 80 CPE hours must be completed within the CGFM's two-year CPE cycle. The first CPE cycle starts on Jan. 1 of the year following the one when the CGFM designation was earned. For example, if the CGFM was awarded any time in 2008, the first CPE cycle starts on Jan. 1, 2009 and ends on Dec. 31, 2010.

The CPE requirements apply to all active CGFMs, whether employed or not, and whether employed full- or part-time by a government or other organization. Active CGFMs must complete a minimum of 80 CPE hours every two years to maintain their CGFM certification. While there is no minimum number of hours required to be earned each year, CGFMs are encouraged to earn CPE hours throughout their two-year cycle.

CGFMs do not need to submit supporting documentation of the CPE hours at the time of renewal. The payment itself serves as the CGFM's affirmation of his or her compliance with the CPE requirements. CGFMs are required to maintain supporting documentation on CPE hours earned for a minimum of three years and provide it to AGA upon request. The CPE documentation requirements are described in section 16 of this publication. This documentation may be requested by AGA as part of the annual audit of a random sample of CGFMs.

If a CGFM fails to meet the requirements to maintain the CGFM in an active status, the CGFM becomes inactive.

Here are three great reasons to take the CGFM Examinations this April or May:

1. The updated CGFM Examinations administered in April and May (the beta period) are offered at a discounted rate of \$89 per exam (to get the \$20 discount per exam, enter "2014 BETA" promo code when scheduling your appointment with Pearson VUE).
2. Individuals taking the CGFM Examination(s) during this beta period will receive complimentary access to the 2014 version of the corresponding online CGFM study guide(s) from March until May 31 (to get your access, schedule your CGFM testing appointment for April or May and forward your testing appointment confirmation email from Pearson VUE to studyguides@agacgfm.org).
3. Exam statistics collected during this period will help AGA to continue offering fair, high-quality CGFM Examinations.

The State of Arkansas Recognizes March as CGFM Month



The City of Little Rock Recognizes March as CGFM Month

Proclamation

Know Ye All People By These Presents Greetings:

WHEREAS, the Central Arkansas Chapter of the Association of Government Accountants (AGA) is a professional organization, which is part of the Association of Government Accountants, a network of more than 15,000 members in 90 chapters throughout the United States and the world; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 200 active members who represent state, federal, municipal, and private-sector accountants, auditors, and financial managers in Arkansas; and

WHEREAS, members of the Arkansas Chapter have responded to the AGA's mission by advancing governmental accountability and by continuing broad educational efforts that emphasize high standards of conduct, honor, and character in its Code of Ethics; and

WHEREAS, the AGA Central Arkansas Chapter is making significant strides in both its professional ability and its service to the citizens of Arkansas through mastering increasingly technical and complex requirements; and

WHEREAS, the Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM) program of AGA provides a means of demonstrated professionalism and competency by requiring that each CGFM candidate has an appropriate educational and employment history, abides by AGA's Code of Ethics, and passes a rigorous examination requiring expertise in all facets of government management, accounting, and budgeting. All CGFM holders must also maintain certification by completing comprehensive training sessions; and

Now **THEREFORE**, I, Mark Stodola, Mayor of the City of Little Rock, Arkansas, do hereby proclaim March 2014, as

"Certified Government Financial Manager Month"

in the City of Little Rock.



IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Little Rock to be affixed on this 1st day of March, in the year of our Lord, 2014.

Mark Stodola
Mark Stodola
Mayor



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: March 10, 2014
 Meeting Time: 11:30 a.m.
 Meeting Location: AR Dept. of Workforce Services, 5th floor
 Conference Room

Members Present:

DeeVee Pearson	Florence Price
Shannon Todd	Richard Drilling
Lateisha Moore	Kaki Roberts
Tyler Cain	Steven Petersen
Brenda Jackson	Gerald Plafcan
Joshua Walker	

DeeVee Pearson called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m.

Minutes

Chandria Willis e-mailed the minutes from the February 2014 meeting to all board members prior to the meeting. No corrections were made. Kaki Roberts made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Brenda Jackson seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

Discussion was held regarding the audit bill. It was decided that the budget for the audit should be increased to \$1500. Steven Petersen has a hard copy of the audit. Shannon Todd made a motion to accept the audit report. Tyler Cain seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

Accountability

Per Gerald Plafcan, we have received a CCR Certificate from National.

CGFM

Per Brenda Jackson, the photo with the Governor has been rescheduled to March 12, 2014, 10:00 a.m. The photo with the Mayor of Little Rock has been rescheduled to March 17, 2014. Brenda has sent out an e-mail containing this information. DeeVee has forwarded the e-mail to all AGA members.

Website

Florence Price stated that she needs to update the next meeting date on the website. She also needs a copy of the CCR to post on the website. Gerald Plafcan will send her a copy of the CCR.

Community Service

Per Lateisha Moore, the only current community service effort is the collection of canned goods for the food bank. DeeVee asked for ideas on how to increase donations. Kaki suggested adding a blurb about the food drive to the slideshow that is shown before the meetings.

Kaki will send Lateisha the contact information for AETN.

Education

Per Joshua Walker, an audio conference will be presented following the next membership meeting. Joshua has received the Ethics audio conference CD and will request the Internal Controls audio conference as soon as it is available.

Joshua is waiting on speaker confirmation for the Spring seminar. Lateisha recommended Donna Cates, President of the Arkansas Employee Credit Union.

The April membership meeting will be held on April 21st.

Historian

Discussion was held regarding saving the history files to the Cloud.

Meetings & Awards

Per Kaki Roberts, there are no additional sponsorship funds available at this time. We can recover our costs by charging more for attendance. The awards banquet was slated to be held at Creegans, but Kaki has heard that the restaurant is now closed.

Discussion was held regarding awards. Brenda suggested that names of individuals who are being nominated be e-mailed to Kaki by March 24, 2014. The e-mail should include information regarding the reason that the individual is being nominated. Kaki will develop a list of nominees to present to the board.

Membership/Early Career

DeeVee is requesting that someone volunteer to assist May Neal in this area.

Other

There are still two vacant board positions: Newsletter and Membership & Early Career.

The Sectional Leadership Meeting (SLM) will be held April 24-26. It was recommended that the incoming President and one other individual be invited to attend. AGA National covers all expenses. Will Cottrell suggested that Joshua Walker attend. Kaki Roberts made a motion that Will Cottrell and Joshua Walker attend the 2014 SLM. Tyler Cain seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

Per Kaki, the chapter can have a logo developed by Land's End for a \$90 set-up fee. Logos are free through March 14th, and after that individuals will pay \$5.95 to have the logo embroidered. The logo number is 1352268W. Kaki Roberts made a motion that the chapter pay the \$90 set-up fee for logo printing. Gerald Plafcan seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

The PDT hotel scholarship information is due to national by June 20th. The chapter can choose who will receive the scholarships. Discussion was held on who should receive the scholarships. DeeVee Pearson tabled the discussion.

Discussion was held regarding the PDT silent auction. Brenda Jackson made a motion that the chapter participate in the PDT raffle. Kaki Roberts seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

The next board meeting will be held April 7, 2014.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:47 p.m.

Association of Government Accountants
Central Arkansas Chapter
FY 13 Statement of Activities
March 31, 2014

Revenue	Unrestricted
Education Seminars	5,165
Banquets	590
Chapter Sponsorships	2,250
Dues	163
AGA National	248
Interest Income	10
Miscellaneous Income	-
Total Revenues	8,426
Expenses	
Program Expenses	
Fall Seminar	645
Spring Seminar	-
Audioconference Expenses	192
PDC Expense	-
Holiday Party	2,947
Awards Banquet	200
Awards	-
Speaker Expense	-
Scholarships/Memorials	1,000
Community Service	321
Promotional Supplies	-
Recruitment	45
Website	188
Total Program Expenses	5,538
Management and Administrative Expenses	
Professional Fees	1,500
Post Office Box Rent	88
Executive Committee meeting expense	212
Banking Fees	34
Miscellaneous	-
Total Management and Administrative Expenses	1,834
Total Expenses	7,372
Change in Net Assets	1,054
Net Assets - Beginning of the Year	26,351
Net Assets - End of Year	27,405

Member Corner



Please join us in welcoming the following individuals to our chapter! We LOVE getting new members, and are ecstatic to welcome each of you to the Central Arkansas AGA Family!!!

Member Name	Place of Employment
Mike Britton	Arkansas Department of Human Services
Joanne Cheng	Arkansas Public Employees Retirement Systems
Chin Ku	Arkansas Public Employees Retirement Systems
Tracie Thomas	Arkansas Public Employees Retirement Systems
Robin Scott	Thomas & Thomas LLP
Deanna Morehead	US Bankruptcy Court
John Joyner	Arkansas Department of Finance & Administration
Rebecca Rutherford	Arkansas Department of Finance & Administration
Cynthini (Cindy) West	Arkansas Department of Finance & Administration

WHAT IS MY MEMBERSHIP WORTH?

JOIN OR RENEW
www.agacgfm.org

Your AGA membership dues are a solid investment in your career, both now and for the future. With the substantial savings and benefits AGA members receive, you quickly recoup the membership fee with the potential to earn more than a 500 percent return-on-investment! We have calculated some of the benefits, many are inestimable.

Connecting

To Leadership Opportunities
Growing your professional and personal networks
Working as a neutral third party, fostering cooperation and communication among different levels of government as well as with the private sector
Commenting on standards and to policymakers on behalf of government financial management

IMMEASURABLE

CGFM Renewal

Discount on the Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM) renewal fee

\$35

Online ToolKits and Thought Leadership Library

Fraud Prevention
Risk Assessment Monitoring
Cooperative Audit Resolution and Oversight Initiative (CAROI) Guide
Annual CFO, CIO and IG Surveys
Best Practices Research Studies

INVALUABLE

Continuing Professional Education

Annual Federal Financial Systems Summit | 6 CPE
Annual CFO-CIO Summit | 4 CPE
Quarterly Webinar(s) | 1 CPE each

UP TO

14 CPEs FREE

Career Center and Online Mentoring

FREE

Publications

Journal of Government Financial Management | \$95 value
Topics weekly e-newsletter | \$52 value

\$147 VALUE

Journal CPE Online

Discount earning online CPE after reading the Journal of Government Financial Management

\$26

Events

Registration Discounts:
National Leadership Training | \$175
Government Performance Summit | \$100
Professional Development Training | \$200
Internal Control & Fraud Prevention Training | \$175

UP TO

\$650



New Spending Transparency Grades Issued for States

A new report finds that while most state governments continue to post more spending data online, progress has been uneven. See how your state compares.

BY: [Mike Maciag](#) | April 8, 2014

Whether it's economic development subsidies or copies of vendor contracts, more state government spending information is becoming available at taxpayers' fingertips online.

A [report](#) published this morning by U.S. Public Interest Research Group (U.S. PIRG) grades states' online spending transparency efforts. While most state governments are expanding the scope of spending data posted online, progress has been uneven across the country.

All 50 states maintain some form of "checkbook-level" transparency -- what U.S. PIRG considers publishing of contracts, goods, services and other state expenditures. Some states have established their own robust [transparency portals](#) with searchable datasets; others integrate spending data into multiple agency websites.

This year, Indiana received 94 out of 100 possible points -- the highest score of any state. The report lauded the Indiana Economic Development Corporation's new website for posting detailed information, including reclaimed subsidies when recipients fail to hold up their end of an agreement.

Seven other states also earned an "A-" grade.

The report identified eight states that launched new or revamped transparency websites over the past year: Colorado, Hawaii, Indiana, Montana, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont and Wisconsin. Last week, Connecticut also launched an open data portal covering a range of state government programs.

"This has been a trend that moves in one direction," said Phineas Baxandall, a U.S. PIRG analyst who co-authored the report. "Once a state has established that this information is online, people come to expect it."

In grading the states, U.S. PIRG reviewed the availability of a range of information on state contracts, economic development subsidies and other expenditures. States also received higher marks for user-friendly website features, such as searchable databases and downloadable reports.

Alaska, California and Idaho were slapped with "F" grades.

U.S. PIRG identified several areas where states could improve transparency. Data on economic development program remains limited, with only six states disclosing information for all major programs. About half of states fail to specify the types of

payments they aren't publishing online. For other states, spending data cannot be downloaded or found easily via search.

U.S. PIRG also noted a lack of transparency for independent agencies, such as transit authorities and pension boards. No single state, according to the report, published checkbook-level spending information for all of its quasi-public agencies earlier this year.

Such agencies typically employ separate budgeting and procurement systems, making information more difficult to obtain.

"The less scrutinized areas of state spending should get more, not less transparency," Baxandall said.

Along with making governments more accountable, the report shows how transparency websites have helped states save money or achieve policy goals.

Transparency sites can be particularly useful in the area of contracting. Agencies might contact companies to bid on contracts if they see the companies are providing similar services to other agencies, or they may work to consolidate orders to get a better deal. States may also use other state transparency websites to compare how much they're paying for contracts.

Texas, for example, renegotiated a copier machine lease to save \$33 million over three years. Florida reported it saved \$3.2 million between October 2012 and June 2013 by renegotiating contracts.

Posting spending data online also trims the amount resources states need to fulfill information requests.

Some of the more innovative practices highlighted in the report include:

- Massachusetts awarded grants to six of its cities to fund efforts aimed at posting spending information online.
- While most states issue disclaimers that published information is not verified to be correct, South Dakota audits its checkbook every year.
- Some states identify types of payments excluded from online checkbooks, but Tennessee's website lists both the type and value of the excluded payments.

This article and the accompanying report can be reviewed at the following website:
<http://www.governing.com/news/headlines/gov-online-spending-transparency-state-grades-issued-2014.html>

Note: Arkansas received a B- on the report.

Central Arkansas AGA 2014 Board Members

President	DeeVee Pearson: Department of Workforce Services deevee.pearson@arkansas.gov 683-0471
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Past President	Shannon D. Todd: Public Service Commission stodd@psc.state.ar.us
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Secretary	Chandria Willis: Department of Finance & Administration chandria.willis@dfa.arkansas.gov 371-1467
Education Chair	Joshua Walker: Department of Workforce Services joshua.j.walker@arkansas.gov 978-3996
Membership/Early Ed. Chair	May Neal: Department of Workforce Services may.neal@arkansas.gov 682-3703
Programs Chair	Tyler Cain: Department of Workforce Services tyler.c.cain@arkansas.gov 683-5359
Meetings & Awards Chair	Kaki Roberts: Department of Workforce Services Kathryn.A.Roberts@arkansas.gov 683-1355
Accountability Chair	Gerald Plafcan: Department of Finance & Administration gerald.plafcan@dfa.arkansas.gov 683-4632
CGFM Chair	Brenda Jackson: Department of Human Services brenda.jackson@arkansas.gov 682-6250
Community Service Chair	Lateisha Moore (co-chair): Department of Workforce Services lateisha.moore@arkansas.gov 682-3750 Elouise Evans (co-chair): Department of Human Services Elouise.evans@arkansas.gov 683-1560
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BKD National Governmental Group

1:5 PARTNER TO STAFF

What are you pushing toward? Improved financial accountability? Increased transparency? You need guidance. BKD National Governmental Group can help. **BKD's partner-to-staff ratio is lower than the average found in most other national firms**, so we can offer personal attention and understand the tough issues you face.

BKD is pleased to sponsor the Association of Government Accountants.



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