Getting the Word Out: How to Communicate Financial Information to Citizens

Time/Date: 10:20 am – 12:00 pm, 6/2/2015

Description: The high level of participation in the GFOA’s professional award programs for comprehensive annual financial reports and budget documents amply demonstrates that many governments are already successful at communicating high quality and highly detailed financial information. Making key financial information accessible to ordinary citizens, however, often remains a continuing challenge. This session explores different ways to do just that: from the preparation of a popular annual financial report to various website options, such as the “open checkbook.”

Moderator: Ross VanderHamm, Finance Director, Edmond, OK

Speakers: Karin Smith, Partner, Heinfeld Meech, AZ
Andrew McCreery, Finance Director, Mount Lebanon, PA
Lenny Moore, Controller, Montgomery County, MD

Session Outline:

1) The Changing Environment of Financial Reporting (Karin Smith)
   • Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) preparation
   • Reporting and Compliance
   • Developing Reporting Policies and Procedures
   • Financial Reporting and the Budget Award
2) Smaller Government Financial Reporting (Andrew McCreery)
   • Decisions on What to Report
   • Adapting with Smaller Enterprise Financial Systems
   • Operational and Other System Data Reporting
   • Developing and Utilizing Dashboards
3) State of Maryland OpenData (Lenny Moore)
   • Project History
   • Relationship to Administrative Systems
   • Data Decision-making
   • SpendMontgomery - Financial Transparency to County Citizens
   • CountyStat and other programs
   • Center of Excellence and Ongoing Maintenance