

Session Abstracts

Tuesday, September 19 – Tuesday Workshops – NEW!

Workshop 1: Long-Range Financial Planning

Municipalities are increasingly required to understand and quantify the long-range fiscal consequences of past and present decisions made by Council. Asset management plans, rate/fee studies, grant applications, debenture requests, and Financial Information Returns all require varying degrees of long-range financial analysis. This session will describe the key demographic, revenue and expenditure inputs required for preparing sound financial projections. The session will conclude with an interactive session identifying the top five must have financial performance measure outputs through the use of case studies. Case studies will include the Region of Peel, City of Leduc, City of Brampton and Town of Innisfil.

Speaker:

Craig Binning – Partner, Hemson Consulting

Workshop 2: Budgeting Approaches for Municipalities

A variety of budgeting approaches and financial policies will be reviewed and discussed at the seminar. Municipalities across Ontario could utilize a variety of different budget approaches for Councils to assist in setting their annual property tax rates. Establishing financial policies that are “council approved” prior to the approving annual budgets and tax rates is also another important measure/approach that could be utilized by Ontario municipalities. Several of the approaches and financial policies come with their own pros and cons along with their own unique challenges. Topics to be discussed include: Gross Expenditure/Revenue Based Budgeting, Net Based Budgeting, Departmental Based Budgeting, Service Based Budgeting, Zero Based Budgeting & Service Reviews, Key Financial Policies (Assessment Growth, Surplus, Debt), Multi-Year Operating & Capital Budgeting (4 year Budget/Rate Approval), Budgeting Approaches and Public Engagement.

Speaker:

Larry Palarchio - Director of Financial Planning & Policy, City of London

Workshop 3: Automating the FIR with CaseWare

Completing the Municipal Financial Information Return (MFIR) template and assuring it agrees to your Financial Statements is time consuming & prone to error. See how to save weeks of time & reduce the risk of errors by auto-populating your MFIR spreadsheet with CaseWare.

Speaker:

Jamie Black - President, F.H. Black & Company Incorporated

Wednesday, September 20 - Workshop and Updates Session

Asset Management - Keep Calm and "Reg." On!

Have you read the new AM regulation? Do you understand how it will impact your annual reporting requirements? Are you prepared to address these requirements?

Some municipalities are struggling to incorporate asset management planning into critical municipal processes such as the capital and operating budgets. Soon, municipalities will be required to prepare detailed reports on their AMP progress. Following an update from the Ministry of Infrastructure on the new regulation, this session will explore these requirements and how municipalities can address them.

Speakers:

Maureen Johnson – Manager, Municipal Infrastructure Policy, Ministry of Infrastructure

More speakers to come

Session Updates

As a result of your feedback, MFOA has once again put together a session where you can hear the latest and greatest updates pertaining to the topics of significant interest to municipal finance officers. We will provide updates on key changes that occurred in 2016/2017, as well as current developments and what's coming down the pipe in the near future. Don't miss this one-stop session for your sector-relevant updates.

- 1) Ministry of Municipal Affairs
- 2) Ministry of Finance
- 3) Gas Tax
- 4) PSAB
- 5) and more!

Thursday, September 21 - Concurrent Sessions: 11:15 am – 12:15 pm

Session A: Aligning Budgets with Strategy: How to Draft a Multi-year Budget that Aligns Organizational Strategy with a Fiscal Framework

Until September 2015 the City of Vaughan had over 400 initiatives that were linked to its organizational strategy. The funding for these initiatives were weakly linked to the strategy through the annual budget process and prioritization was often misunderstood by both staff and Council. At the end of September 2015, the City of Vaughan approved a new strategy map, which considered sixteen Term of Council priorities to advance infrastructure and services, as well as three Service Excellence themes: Citizen Experience, Operational Performance and Staff Engagement. During the 2016 budget process, Finance staff implemented a conceptual budget framework based on status quo pressures, growth pressures and new service level pressures to prioritize and effectively link both the operating and capital budgets, in a multi-year approach, to the new strategy map. Work continued in the 2017 budget process to refine this approach even further.

Speakers:

Laura Mirabella-Siddall - Chief Financial Officer and City Treasurer, City of Vaughan
Rosanna DeFrancesca - Councillor, Ward 3 (Woodbridge/Vellore), City of Vaughan

Session B: Revenue Alternatives – information to come

Session C: HST: Pitfalls and Recovery Opportunities for Municipalities

In this presentation, we will explore some problem areas to focus on that may help to ensure a better CRA HST audit outcome. Also, we will provide some insights into areas where you may not be optimizing your HST recovery.

Speakers:

Daryl J. A. Hooley - Senior Manager, Indirect Tax, Collins Barrow Toronto
Sameer Noormohamed - Manager, Indirect Tax, Collins Barrow Toronto

Session D: Smart FIR

This past year the FIR Modernization was launched which replaced and enhanced the existing system while maintaining the current business process framework. Now that the new platform is in place, find out more about the enhancements that are coming to access and analyze relevant data.

Speaker:

Jim Simos - Coordinator, Financial Analysis, Municipal Finance Policy Branch, Ministry of Municipal Affairs

Thursday, September 21 - Concurrent Sessions: 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

Session E: 5 Ways to Reduce Your Total Cost of Risk

Each Ontario municipality is a unique entity defined by the services provided; geographical location; historical past and the special events celebrated. These distinct qualities also define your risk profile and your subsequent risk financing requirements. When you choose your insurance provider do you simply look to make a quick business transaction to purchase a low-cost policy or are you looking to enter into a relationship with a trusted business partner that understands your distinct risk profile and can work with you to reduce your total cost of risk? There is a shift from thinking of insurance as a commodity to thinking of it as a service. With that in mind, consider how your current policy actively helps to improve your risk performance. In order to reduce your total cost of risk, 5 factors must be employed in unison: 1. Champion a multi-department total cost of risk method; 2. Implement a structured and tested claims management process that drives down costs; 3. Employ custom risk management services that helps to mitigate incidents before they occur; 4. Commit to partnering with an insurer that has extensive expertise and experience; 5. Gauge metrics and monitor

Speaker:

Larry Ryan - President, Frank Cowan Company

Session F: PSAB Update and Asset Retirement Obligations

In spring 2017 PSAB issued an exposure draft for a new accounting standard that addresses the reporting of legal obligations associated with the retirement of long-lived tangible capital assets currently in productive use. In addition, PSAB is working on other new sections that will impact municipality financial reporting. Are you ready? KPMG's team of subject matter experts will update you on these pending new standards, and discuss how they will impact your accounting and financial reporting.

Speaker:

Bailey Church - Partner, Accounting Advisory Services, KPMG LLP

Session G: MPAC - Strategies for the Future

Municipalities and MPAC are key partners in Ontario's assessment and property tax process. Join Carla Y. Nell to discuss strategies that focus on strengthening MPAC's partnership with municipalities, including a new Service Level Agreement and Assessment Base Management initiatives.

Speaker:

Carla Nell - VP Municipal and Stakeholder Relations, MPAC

Session H: The Evolving Role of the Municipal Treasurer/CFO

From Operator to Strategist – Never Stagnate – Always Innovating: The continuing expansion of the Treasurer/CFO role and the speed of change occurring in municipal sector demands that current and aspiring Treasurers/CFOs expand their reach beyond traditional stewardship/financial operations roles to that of trusted strategic advisor and catalyst for change. In this session, we will reveal MFOA's new "Role of the Treasurer" handbook as a tool to help Treasurers/CFOs communicate this changing role and the skills that are needed to transform into the trusted strategist.

Speaker:

Tammy Carruthers (Wolters) - Principal & CEO, WSCS Consulting Inc.

Thursday, September 21 - Concurrent Sessions: 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Session I: Dashboards, Info-graphics & Executive Summaries

From ERP to budget software, support for creation of dashboards, info-graphics, and executive summaries for your Finance team is nearly ubiquitous. Increasingly, finance is being asked to provide these tools for council. Supplying them with a well-designed graphical communication will enable rapid analysis and decision making. Providing a weak, ill-conceived solution can be much worse than not providing one at all however.

Building on last year's presentation (Best Practices for Communicating Financial Information) this session will outline what makes for a good dashboard/info-graphic/executive summary and what can go wrong when data isn't communicated well. We will review the best practices and show how they are essential to avoiding damaging miscommunication and the resultant poor decisions.

Speaker:

Jamie Black - President, F.H. Black & Company Incorporated

Session J: Maximize Provincial and Federal Funding

- Approach to Government Funding
- Upcoming Funding Programs
- Samples of Approvals last year – Access to Information
- Sample Demonstration of our Toolset.
- How to design a grant strategy
- Review an action plan of the steps to be carried out to make a successful application

Speaker:

Mike Janke – VP Grants & Incentives, Fairtax

Session K: Tax Sales – Lots of Change!

A number of important changes have been made to tax sale legislation and regulations. These changes will have important impacts on tax registrations and tax sales. Come to our interactive presentation and discussion and learn about: tax registration after 2 years not 3, register forfeited properties immediately, advertise for sale 90 days later, new notice requirements, the end of payments out of court, and more.

Speaker:

Jeff Oberman - President, RealTax

Session L: Learn To Speak Softly – But Still Carry a Big Stick

40 years ago, the prevailing leadership philosophy was based on a command and control type of model. "Do as I say, because I'm the boss". Rightly or wrongly, times have changed and new leadership philosophies focus on concepts such as servant leadership, emotional intelligence and (making a strong comeback) is a generous dose of common sense.

This session will examine some of these philosophies and approaches with the intent of promoting more positive, personal interactions that still achieve the overall goal of effective financial management. The leadership landscape is indeed changing but for the better for all of us.

Speaker:

Garth Johns - Leadership Professional and Human Resource Consultant

Friday, September 22 – Concurrent Sessions: 10:30 am – 11:30 am

Session M: Lessons Learned from Communicating with Council

In recent years, the City of Guelph has seen the implementation of a new dedicated stormwater user fee and a long term infrastructure levy. In these particular cases, active consultation and communications with Council and the community were a key part of success; however other initiatives have not been as successful. This presentation will provide lessons learned and strategies related to communicating with Council.

Speaker:

Tara Baker – General Manager, Finance/Treasurer, City of Guelph

Stephen O'Brien – City Clerk, City of Guelph

Session N: Development Charges and Cost of Growth Analysis – Town of Whitby Case Study

This session will discuss the implications of the recently updated Development Charges Act using the Town of Whitby as a case study. We will focus on the developer consultation process and the Cost of Growth analysis included in the DC Study.

Speaker:

Craig Binning - Partner, Hemson Consulting

Town of Whitby Staff - tbc

Session O: Performance Measurement: Macro to Micro and Back Again

Performance Improvement Measurement is on everyone's mind now. So are the aspirations of Poverty Reduction and Climate Change. How do you take micro-projects like improving the cycle-time for vehicle maintenance and connect them to audacious goals like "A Clean and Safe Environment?"

Speakers:

Melinda Munro - Consultant, Munro Strategic Perspective, Windsor

Ed Archer - CAO, City of Greater Sudbury

Session P: Climate Change

As a front-line operator, municipalities play a critical role in climate change mitigation and adaptation. This presentation draws on examples from Windsor and Kitchener to showcase how cities are integrating climate change implications into asset management.

Speaker:

Dustin Carey, Corporate Planning Analyst (Climate Change), City of Kitchener