



*Government Finance Officers Association, Alberta Chapter*

*Winter 2015 Newsletter*



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THE *Fairmont*  
BANFF SPRINGS

Conference plans are underway for the 2016 conference to be held at the beautiful Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel.

Room reservations are now available. Room rates have been set at \$259.99 (Fairmont Room - Single or Double). An additional \$12.00 daily charge by the Banff Springs (by way of a service charge) will be added to your room rate to cover portage, housekeeping and conference services.

For complete details on additional categories of rooms available at special conference rates, or to make a reservation, please call the Reservations Department at 403-762-6866, or the Global Reservations Centre at: 1-800-441-1414 and say you are with the Government Finance Officers Association, or quote our group code: 0516GOVE.

The conference registration desk is now open and taking registrations as well. Here is the link: [https://www.gfoa.ab.ca/conference\\_register.php?cid=12](https://www.gfoa.ab.ca/conference_register.php?cid=12) to the conference registration page should you wish to register right away.

The Board of Directors has passed a motion to once again offer a half price rate for First Time Attendees. Please contact **Candace Coombs** if you are interested in learning more details about this special offer. There are a total of 25 spots available on a first-come, first-serve basis. One first-time Attendee per municipality please.

In addition, the Board invites Municipal Interns to attend also at a special half price rate. To qualify, these individuals must have a current GFOA membership and be a new Municipal Intern for 2016. Please contact **Candace Coombs** if you are interested in learning more details around the Municipal Interns conference rate.

**May 29 to June 1, 2016**



## From the Professional Development Task Force:

### Upcoming Professional Development for the first half of 2016.

Typically our workshop locations are found along the Highway 2 corridor for ease of travel and convenience.

Should a municipality desire to have one of our workshops held at their location and can find enough interested Attendees (prox. 20) in the area, please contact [Candace Coombs](#) for consideration. Confirmed locations and dates will follow around the end of the year.

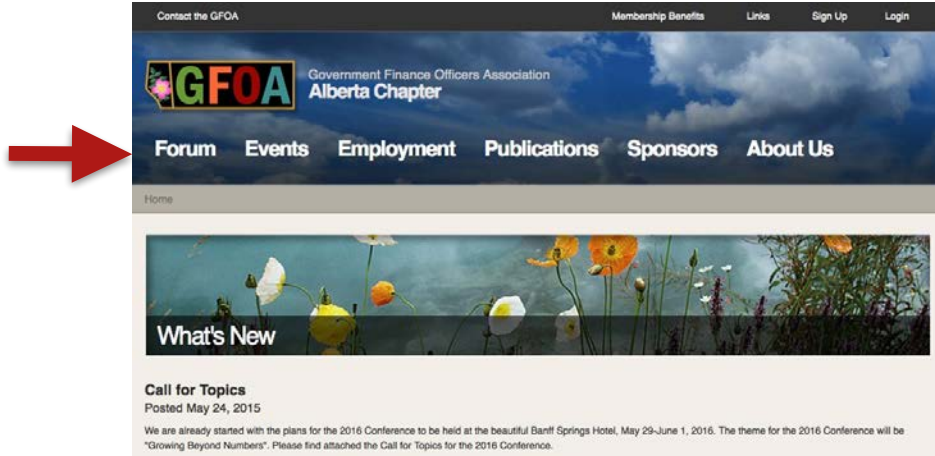
Click on the hyperlinks for more information and to register today.

Workshop Registrations	Dates	Locations	Member Rates	non-Member Rates
<a href="#">PSAB Updates - Registration</a>	<a href="#">PSAB Brochure for Jan. 13-15, 2016</a>	Webinar	\$250	\$300
<a href="#">PSAB Updates - Registration</a>	<a href="#">PSAB Brochure for Jan. 27-29, 2016</a>	Webinar	\$250	\$300
<a href="#">Municipal Finance Overview: For additional Information or to register</a>	<a href="#">MFO Synopsis for Mach 7-11, 2016</a>	TBA (North)	No Charge	No Charge
<a href="#">Municipal Finance Overview: For additional information or to register</a>	<a href="#">MFO Synopsis for March 21-24, 2016</a>	TBA (South)	No Charge	No Charge
<a href="#">Long Term Financial Planning - Registration</a>	<a href="#">LTFP: Information for May 4-6, 2016</a>	TBA, Red Deer	\$1,275	\$1,575
<a href="#">Municipal Fundamentals Registration</a>	<a href="#">MF: Outline for May 4-6, 2016</a>	TBA (North)	\$975	\$1,275
<a href="#">Municipal Fundamentals Registration</a>	<a href="#">MF: Outline for May 18-20, 2016</a>	TBA (South)	\$975	\$1,275

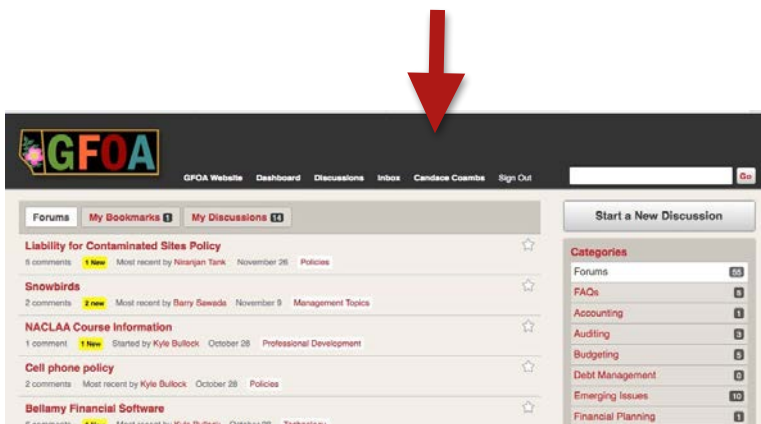
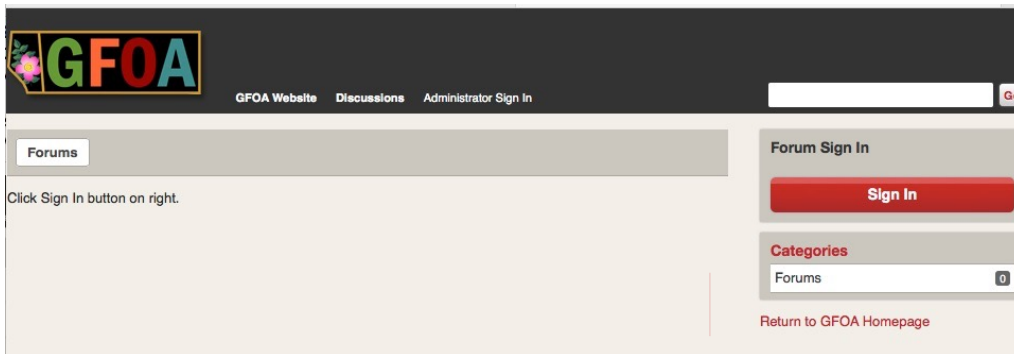
# From the Communications Task Force:

We have added new functionality to the **Discussion Forum**. GFOA members can now bookmark any discussion topic and receive an email to advise you whenever there has been any activity on that particular discussion.

1. To set up this up, click on "Forum" on the GFOA website homepage.



Here is a screen shot of the "Sign In" page. If you have not signed in to the Discussion Forum before, you will be prompted to "Sign In" here. 2. Click on the red 'Sign In' button and enter your email address and password. If you need help signing in, please contact [Candace Coombs](#).



3. Once you are Signed In, simply click on your name at the top of the menu.

4. Click on "My Preferences" on the left side of the screen.



5. Check off 'Notify me when people comment on my bookmarked discussions'.



6. Now, you can go back to the Discussions and click on any star opposite a discussion and it will change in colour to yellow.



7. You will now receive an email that will include a direct link to specific discussions you have bookmarked!

## From the Emerging Issues Task Force: Coming soon...

**“HOT TOPICS”** - As finance officers, we all follow a common annual cycle which includes budgeting, financial statement audits, taxation & assessment practices and many other annual processes that are unique to municipalities. The Emerging Issues Task Force will be featuring short articles which will provide the GFOA members with information and useful links on topics such as these that affect municipal finance. ***Further discussion of our featured topics in the GFOA discussion forum will be promoted!***

**Economic Updates** – With the uncertain economic climate in Alberta, we will



### **GFOA Lifetime Achievement Award.... Thank You**

On May 27, 2015 during the 2015 Alberta GFOA Conference I was honoured to be awarded with the 2015 Lifetime Achievement Award. I was surprised and humbled to receive this award from my colleagues and peers. Recognition by one's peers is the highest honour one can receive.

Alberta GFOA has been an important part of my professional career in local government. This recognition means a lot to me as I transition to retirement. I wish to express my sincere appreciation to all for your support.

I am planning to stay involved in GFOA by joining the Emerging Issues Task Force and look forward to continued association with friends and colleagues on GFOA.

Thank-you,

George Huybregts

June 2015

## Organizational Excellence in Municipal Government – Part 1 of 3 Part Series

### *What IS the Organizational Excellence Framework?*

Everywhere you look there are articles, resources, consultants, and gurus compelling municipalities to 'try this' or 'change that'. There is no shortage of ideas for improvement. But does your organization *need* to change? And with all these ideas and flavours du jour, where do you start?

That is where the Organizational Excellence Framework (OEF) tool can add significant value. Through the completion of the self-assessment, the client is led through a process of developing an improvement plan that includes specific guidance that is unique to the organization's needs with the direct purpose of making the organization more high performing.

In other words, the OEF stimulates improvements with *intention* – specific, easy-to-implement, and measurable action tasks that encourage participation throughout the organization.

Interestingly, **only 10%** of the working population is **aware** of excellence models (Australian global research). Here are some quick facts regarding the benefits resulting from implementation of an excellence model:

- **25** years of research has proven the benefit of excellence models
- **95%** of improvement opportunities for an organization originate with ideas and suggestions from people doing the work
- Municipal organizations have reported high (>**90%**) satisfaction ratings by residents and businesses; strong balance sheet positions (**AAA rating**) and lower mill rates as a result of increased organizational excellence related activities

The evidence is clear. If your organization wants to increase performance and sustain high performance, the **Organizational Excellence Framework** is the place to **START**.

You can begin today by evaluating the culture of your organization. Try the [OEF Teaser Assessment](#) to self-assess your organization against the 9 principles common to high performing organizations. The assessment will take 5 minutes to complete and the complimentary report will be delivered about 1 minute later by our valued partner, QLBS.

**Part 2 - How the Organizational Excellence Framework can help municipalities**

**Part 3 – The Organizational Excellence Journey – Getting Started**

*Tracey Seitz Burkholder, Contigo Business Services Inc., is a GFOA Member, CPA, CMA and Registered Organizational Excellence Specialist (ROES).*

