



VTGFOA Board Meeting

November 20, 2019

Minutes

Present: Abbie Sherman, Casey Rowell, Cheryl Lindberg, Shelley Quinn, Gail Ostrout, Dawn Monahan, Suzanne Lowensohn, Sue Gage (late), Jeffrey Graham (joined last 5 minutes)

Regrets: Lara Aley

1. Call to Order/ Changes to Agenda--- Abbie Sherman, President, called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m. Appointing a representative to the NESGFOA Board was added under Other Business.
2. Approval of Minutes – October 16, 2019 Regular meeting

Upon motion by Casey, seconded by Shelley, the Board voted to approve the minutes of the October 16, 2019 meeting. Motion passes.

3. Treasurer's Report
 - a. Monthly Financials: Quiet month We have \$7,226.42 in our account, consisting of a Scholarship balance of \$3,286.11 and unassigned of \$3,940.31. We are down a little with our dues from where we expected to be. It may be because we didn't have a Fall conference.
 - b. Reimbursement Request: Reimburse Abbie for the gift card for Bill.

*Upon motion by Cheryl, seconded by Gail, the Board voted to approve the financials as presented.
Upon motion by Casey, seconded by Shelley, the Board voted to approve the reimbursement.*

4. Education Committee Report – Abbie reached out to Melanson Heath and they advised that Erica Lussier is willing to give a presentation on Fixed Assets. Erica is looking to see if other Accountants in their firm who work with Vermont towns might be aware of another topic to present on. At this point, there is no cost for these speakers. Abbie also spoke to Ben Rose at VT Emergency Management Association. They will do a disaster recovery presentation geared towards finance professionals. Cassandra Ryan from Vermont Dept. of Finance & Management is willing to present on Uniform Grant Guidance at a future workshop. Abbie has been talking with VLCT about October 2020 and what they found out about options. The preliminary figures are \$54/person Killington and \$58/Okemo.

There was some discussion about locations for these workshops and VTGFOA has committed to moving the events around the state. We try to make a small amount of money, but with these prices, we would have to charge more which we don't like to do unless it's due to the presentations and not necessarily the venue. Keep your eyes open for places that could hold up to 50 people. Vermont Convention Bureau is an option for assisting in finding a location. Abbie shared that her agency uses them when they have an event. We would issue an RFP and then places would contact us if we were a member of the VCB. We want to look into this option to see what it costs vs. the benefit. We still need ideas for the June workshop as well.

Suzanne mentioned that if there was enough interest in an introductory course to Governmental Accounting, that she could do an online course through UVM. We should plan to ask at the Winter workshop for potential interest.

5. Membership Committee Report – Nothing to report
6. Legislative Committee Report – Jeff was not there at this point.
7. President’s Report – Policy Review and Updates:
 - a. Ethics Policy: Abbie sent out our existing policy and the new proposed version mirrors the National policy. The new version is much more like an oath vs. a policy. There is not anything about consequences or disciplinary actions that would happen if you didn’t follow the Code of Ethics. It was discussed that we should check to see if our policy incorporates all of the new GFOA policy, but doesn’t have to be identical. Abbie said that she would work on combining the two and bring it back to the next meeting. The group should collectively come up with ideas on wording that can be used in the policy to address an issue if one arises. Please send your thoughts to Abbie before the next meeting.
 - b. Scholarship Policy: Abbie was reviewing the policies of other States for their conferences. They are using discount codes on registration, rather than referring people to their association. It has been done this way in past so that the Board could review the applicants for need vs. just giving a discount to the first 15 registrants. There was discussion about reimbursement policy and whether or not it should be to an individual or to the Town. This year was different from previous years in terms of the approval process. Abbie would like to see set dollar amounts for full conference and partial conference, etc. At this point, we are going to add language in that we only reimburse the employer, not individuals.
8. Other Business:
 - a. Newsletter Update: Casey updated the group on her progress with the newsletter. She didn’t have anything hard copy to show them, but she did spend time researching different programs that would work to design the letter. She was hoping to make it a 1-pager, but that’s not likely to happen if we want to share valuable articles and such. Abbie mentioned Microsoft Publisher or Adobe InDesign as additional programs that might work for the design.
 - b. NESGFOA Conference Updates (2019 and 2025): Cheryl indicated that the 2019 conference is not finalized. They are hoping to wrap up by end of this month for the New England Board. The Conference went way over budget. Cheryl had mentioned to Abbie if we could spare any money to give to NESGFOA, it would be appreciated. New England does have the money to pay it. Abbie suggested maybe we sell the flannel bags and give that money to New England. Abbie is concerned that NESGFOA might decide not to have it in VT again because of past experience. There was a lot of positive feedback overall about the location and the conference. Cheryl has talked with 5 locations about possibly hosting the 2025 conference. She would like someone to go along with her to site visits to some of the locations. The Lodge at Spruce Peak and Jay Peak have already submitted proposals.
 - c. Appointing a Representative to the NESGFOA: We need to replace Bill Hall. There are typically 3 members from every State. The person doesn’t have to be a State Board member, just a member of the VTGFOA. It consists of a 20-person Board and an Executive Director. The time

commitment is as follows: a January phone call for a couple of hours, April meeting in person at the Spring conference in Waltham, MA, a Board meeting in June(the Association pays travel and overnight costs), a September meeting and another meeting in November where travel and overnight are also covered. You might also participate in Sub-committees.

Cheryl made a motion to nominate Abbie as the NESGFOA representative, Sue seconded, and the Board voted to have Abbie as the NESGFOA representative. Motion passes.

9. Next Meeting: December 18, 2019, 1:30 PM, Conference Call
10. Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Minutes by: _____
Casey Rowell